

Attendees: Kevralyn Soulfire, 1st Sorcerer of House Dranath and Baron of DarkhomeKiara,  
Oracle of the Dark Wind and Baron of Darkhome  
Grandmaster Delta, Oracle of the Blood Wind  
Khandis Greykoil, 12th Sorcerer of House Dranath  
Kylar, High Priest of the Evil Sphere, promoted to Dread Knight  
Drokal Greyspire, High Priest of the Neutral Sphere  
Driedyn, High Priest of the Neutral Sphere  
Ksndra, of Darkhome, promoted to Sorceress of the Red School  
Obelisk, Warrior of the Forge  
Kyle, Warrior  
Scarlet, Warrior  
Theran/Malice, Archer  
Vallan, of the Temple

Dreadlord Araikas met with us at the Knights Beacon waystation, to brief us on our mission. By informing us of certain things, we would be marked for permanent death by the Shadowsfall, however all were willing to take this risk. Shortly afterwards, a Shadowsfall Knight of Judgement arrived to proclaim this was the case. The Knight of Judgement also asked for our claims that the Shadowsfall had broken the Law on my previous mission. He claimed that the Archivists were taking on a certain role in the story and hence were not breaking the Laws of Orin Rakatha by 'appearing' as other Tower members. He gave a similar wheedling reply for the accusations over tower members being attacked in waystations - apparently the Shadowsfall do not have a Tower so Towered rules do not necessarily apply to them, however they are not considered Towerless either.

In the end the Knight of Judgement tired of verbal challenges from members of the group and uttered the comment "damn the mystics" or words to that effect. A fight broke out with the Shadowsfall targeting Dreadlord Araikas and showing an ability to stop time for a particular individual. The Knight of Judgement had mentioned he had worked with the late Judge Helm Brighthand (a Shadowsmeet Judge who had abilities were time is concerned) so it appears he had picked up some training from that quarter. The Shadowsfall were unsuccessful and we returned to our briefing.

Dreadlord Araikas had managed to embody all the Evil Sphere shrines upon Orin Rakatha, bar one, the master Evil shrine. This was under control of some members of the House of the Weaver, so a deal was struck with their Tower Leader in order for its power to pass to the Dreadlord.

Dreadlord Araikas also named and knighted High Priest Kylar as his first Dread Knight.

Dreadlord Araikas also clarified the involvement of the Knights of Our Dark Lady, who are the martial arm of the Halls of Sutekh. The Halls of Sutekh follow the Evil Aspect of Set and Kamenwati the Undying, Keeper of the Scripture of Set, was intending to use the Dreadlord's ascension to renew the Avatar of Set on Orin Rakatha.

The location of parts of the Black Pharaoh, the mystic, was not known to us and so a combined vision was cast by members of the group. It revealed that six parts were buried nearby, and that two were located on the Sativa, all in kenoptic jars. The vision also revealed a member of the Celestial Bureaucracy declaring that this was not the way it should be, and that he could see us over the centuries watching him, and that we should seek him out.

There are four remaining mystics known to us. The Green (aligned to the Neutral Sphere), The Traveller (aligned with the Good Sphere and followed by the Adamancers of Halmadons

Heights), the Black Pharoah (aligned with the Evil Sphere), and the Master of Time, who dwells on the Sativa (the Place of Myths and Legends). In the past, there were more mystics however they gave themselves to become part of the fabric of Orin Rakatha, such as the Towers themselves. As time has passed, the remaining mystics have become less of what they once were and more drawn to the Spheres, hence the Traveller opposing the Black Pharoah. It transpired that the Traveller and possibly the Green had decided that the Black Pharoah should be bound, and hence the Shadowfall and Halmadonians had worked together to do this. However, the message that had been received from the Oracle Shard was that 'He who is bound should be unbound'. We now know that Shard (North Wind) is linked with The Green; Dreams of Shadows (Fire Wind) is linked with the Traveller; Kiara (Dark Wind) is linked to the Black Pharoah and Delta (Blood Wind) is linked with all three. We also learned that Dreams has been residing in Halmadons Heights recently and he confirmed, via a dream, that the Halmadonians were receiving guidance from the Traveller.

Later on, another Dreadlord Asinor arrived to challenge Sir Kylar and the group about the Great Lord of the Dark. It should be clarified that Dreadlord Araikas had rescinded his ties to the Great Lord of the Dark several years ago (at the fall of Wolfhold) although has retained the title for various reasons. Our Dreadlord Araikas had provided us with some powerful seals that we were to bury at the sites of the Black Pharoah's remains, in order to bind the Great Lord of the Dark so he has no power on Orin Rakatha. After a brief discussion we attacked Dreadlord Asinor and he fled to the Sativa.

The next day we located the ancient member of the Celestial Bureaucracy (Starry Wisdom Sect) who had endured to this time in order to pass on the knowledge of where the kenoptic jars were buried. However, several towers all claimed themselves worthy to receive this information - Kalid, Saldorians, and Halmadons Heights - and so he had set some trials in order to determine who really was. It was written in the stars that the correct group would succeed. Naturally our combined skills allowed us to navigate the tests of strength, the mind (knowledge), faith, and nature - and we were provided with a celestial map by the Celestial Bureaucracy. The previous night, members of the party had had different dreams of where certain parts of the Black Pharoah were buried, which Khandis was able to align with the map that we had been given by the Celestial Bureaucracy. We set out to claim those nearby, a task that we completed the next morning, meaning that we had collected six of the eight buried parts of the Black Pharoah.

We then journeyed to the Master Evil Node, where Baroness Kiara performed a ritual to take the shrine into herself. Shortly afterwards, Calex Wraithspawn, the challenger to Lord Mian for the Tower Leadership of the Dymwan, approached the group with undead including a Death Knight. After Delta had fought the Death Knight for a while, Kiara - empowered significantly by the Master Evil Node - decided to challenge the Knight to a duel and won, causing Calex to walk off once he realised how the fight was going to go. It is worth noting that he had sent 'observers' to track our movements across Orin Rakatha. According to one of Lord Mian's Dymwan, these Observers are used to gather information which can be accessed remotely by its masters, and can be destroyed with spiritual damage.

In the evening we were assailed by a number of forces. Firstly, Halmadonian Knights of Purity led by Sir Godwin, and accompanied by his Adamancer. The Adamancer has the ability to teleport the Halmadonian forces away from the field of battle when they are losing, which he has done on a number of occasions now, and this time proved no different.

Some Melniboneans also attacked. Of some concern is that one of the hepahths (Straasha, I

believe) turned on his master and declared himself free.

Over the course of the mission a number of potent hordelings accompanied by some Shadowfall also attacked.

With a full moon in the sky, we received reports of our counterpart group in the area holding off the massing Crimson Feast. Apparently this phase of the moon causes them to beserk for about three days.

Dreadlord Araikas arrived with Kamenwati the Undying in the evening to collect the Evil Sphere node from Kiara and then transported us to the Plane of Myths and Legends in order to collect the final two part of the Black Pharoah. The Dreadlord said that the stories would be drawn to us, which made things more convenient. He offered us the choice of whether we travelled solely in spirit, leaving our bodies in the waystation to be guarded by the Knights of Our Dark Lady, or sending both body and spirit together to the Plane.

He also said that the Ascension of the Evil Sphere would take place that night.

Once upon the Sativa we were immediately assailed by figures in black and purple, although their faces looked blank like story creatures.

Shortly afterwards High Priest Andrew of Halmadons Heights arrived to challenge us on why the forces of the Great Lord of the Dark were stirring and what we were up to. When I spoke with him a couple of moons ago he had indicated he greatly feared the consequences of what the Great Lord of the Dark would do to Orin Rakatha if he held sway here, but now we were able to confirm that we sought to bind the Great Lord so that he would be inaccessible from Orin Rakatha. As proof, we showed him some of the seals that Kiara was carrying, which were imbued with the power to do so. High Priest Andrew was somewhat conflicted as he could see we spoke the truth and that our motives appeared aligned, however he was under orders from his Tower leader to slay us. He said that he would return in the morning with his answer, and acknowledged that the Evil Sphere had indeed ascended.

Overnight, Drokak cast a vision as to whether the member of the Chosen who could teleport between planes was awakened, and received an answer along the lines of "no, but we're watching you". Another story-like figure in purple & black made a 'threatening' appearance to him when he was awake in the morning. Our young warrior Scarlet, not being familiar with the ways of the Sativa, had an interesting conversation with some story creations, which led to us being assailed by "the fox ladies and their tails".

We then pursued the stories holding the two final parts of the Black Pharoah. One of these was the story of was the story of the Feast of Isis who, while married to Set had had an affair with Osiris, all avatars from the Axian Pantheon. Set had slain Osiris but Isis sought revenge and in turn had killed Set, and Isis had a child, Horus-Ra, with the Sun God Ra, who went on to oppose Set. The second story was the fall of the Tower of the Four Winds, which we have come to learn in the past, where the followers of the Icy North Wind turned to Necromancy (raising Wendigos and so forth) leading to a Crusade by the Fire Wind. The conclusion of the story also showed a vision of Kamenwati the Undying taking part of the Black Pharoah into himself to preserve it - perhaps why he became the 'Undying'.

After the first story, Dreadlord Asinor appeared, frothing threats, accompanied by several powerful creatures. He was dispatched.

After the second story, we were approached by Archivist/Judge Amos, who had attempted to attack Kiara on my previous mission and had on that occasion denied the legitimacy of the Temple of the Four Winds and its Oracles. It appeared he had had a change of heart, recognising the power of the artefacts now, and tried to persuade us that we should hand these

over to the Archivists, where they would be 'safer'. What I neglected to mention were that his Archivists had already tried and failed to remove the Mandala of the Fire Wind from our possession on a previous mission I led, so clearly they are not upto the job. Perhaps something to remind him of next time. Amos also mentioned that he followed the mystic known as the Master of Time, whom Delta had tried contacting in the past day (and had received a brief acknowledgement albeit one of some indifference towards our actions).

Anyway, as Delta and Kiara were not interested in handing over Temple artefacts, another fight broke out with Amos and his Archivists, with him once again displaying some significant psionic prowess. Although defeated, he was not slain.

With the final components collected and seals in place, we awaited our return to Orin Rakatha. While we were waiting, High Priest Andrew arrived with three Adamancers and several other Halmadonians. We had a long chat with the entire group taking part, where we repeatedly spoke of our and the Dreadlord's commitment to a Lawful ascension and how the Dreadlord wished to use the Cataclysm as a force for Law. Andrew mentioned that they had been observing our actions on the Sativa and had seen our group slay the Great Lord's Dreadlord and his followers, which helped back our words. Sir Kylar pointed out that the Halls of Sutekh regarded the Knights of Purity as another potential force as they were already starting to corrupt from within. Eventually the Adamancers and Andrew concluded that the Halmadonian Crusade was over, and that the important thing now was not their orders from Sir Danus but to help their people. Some of the Halmadonians decided to take an interest to ensure that the Great Lord's forces really were diminished. This was a pleasing conclusion for many reasons, not least as it meant that the Halmadonian Knights would have no cowardly escape from the battlefield without their Adamancers.

One by one, we were plucked from the Plane of Dreams by Dreadlord Araikas, although he had to fight the Great Lord to extract the last few members of the party, particularly Sir Kylar I gather. We awoke in the Knights Beacon waystation, and those of us who had risked leaving our bodies were relieved to find that the Knights of Our Dark Lady had guarded them successfully.

I was approached covertly by a member of the Kalid Trueblood Legion who is trying to gain some assistance from Fortunes Keep for the Trueblood against the Cabiti (non-Trueblood) Legions. He handed over a highly redacted report signed Gabrille Childe of the Dothloadass as some sort of 'proof' of their good intentions but sadly did not have time to stay around for an Interrogation session.

Later, Dreadlord Araikas arrived to brief us once more. He had embodied the Aspect or Avatar of Set but was still firmly in control, which he said was a good sign where the Black Pharoah would be concerned.

We were visited by High Priest representatives from three Kalid Cabiti Legions from the Tower of the Hunt - Earthwarp, Stone Panther (Sharakar) and Children of the Brood (Slithering Bear Shaman). With the full moon still out, they did not have the Crimson Feast with them. With Dreadlord Araikas controlling access to the Evil Sphere on Orin Rakatha they begged for us to let 'The Great One' grant them their Evil powers. Sir Kylar, Drokai and myself had a conversation to determine their intentions. As was already known, there is a schism between the Cabiti and Trueblood Legions, but the High Priests made it very clear that it has been the Trueblood directing them (sometimes unwillingly) in the past, and they wish to break these shackles. It is the Trueblood who have the alliance with the Halmadonians and the Trueblood who have worked towards the downfall of so many Towers (including Wolfhold). They indicated

they would quite like to turn on their Trueblood 'masters' and were happy to maintain some sort of truce between our Towers, on the understanding that occasionally in the field things may turn to combat but this should not affect the relationship. We decided to support them and Dreadlord Araikas duly granted them access to the Evil Sphere. The Kalid said that our night would become more peaceful as they would direct the raging Crimson Feast forces 'elsewhere'.

We also received a number of high-ranking Drow visitors, including Lord Nightstorm, 2nd Sorcerer of House Agraathan, 4th in Line to the Throne of Annach Moranonil and Harlequin Voidstalker, 12th Sorcerer of House Tumdurgul, 3rd in Line to the Throne of Annach Moranonil and representative of the Beleg Aratar. They presented me with the appropriate regalia and acknowledged me as Patriarch of the House Drannath, a decision that also received the support of Dreadlord Araikas.

The rest of the evening was spent discussing with Dreadlord Araikas how members of the group could bond to different aspects of himself prior to his embodiment of the Black Pharoah, so that we would be able to return to us after the Cataclysm. These discussions were kept private from the Halls of Sutekh/Knights of Our Dark Lady who would no doubt oppose them if they knew. We had seen from some dreams sent by the Dreadlord over the previous few moons that his core personal attributes are: loyalty, perserverance, truth, duty, responsibility, law, resolve and strength. If we bonded to these attributes, then we could anchor the Dreadlord so that he could be returned to us in some form after embodying the Black Pharoah. More than one person could bond with each attribute, but if they were slain, the bond between that person and the Dreadlord would be lost. Those who were willing to give spirit strength could ensure that the bond remained permanent. Although eight bonds were required, there were more than eight individuals on the party willing to donate spirit strength to ensure that Dreadlord Araikas was returned to us.

The next morning, further Shadowsfall and hordelings attacked us declaring that our actions were wrong. They may have had a mistweaver with them, the name Arnold Sparkfist was mentioned. However our own Valley mistweaver, Ragamuffin, arrived, told the rest of them off and the crowd dissipated.

Under the blazing sunshine, we set about performing the rituals to bond ourselves to Dreadlord Araikas, as the dreams had illustrated. We had gleaned from our visions the previous night that three of the tasks could be failed by the death of the person or persons bonding, so we doubled up the participants on those particular rituals:- taking responsibility for the Ritual of Ashes by coming to an agreement with the Shadowsfall.

loyalty to the alliance, defeating the treacherous Vizier on Thanatos

- perserverance, defeating the Oppawang in a long fight

- law, by not falling to chaos when challenged by Barf and his chaos beasts

- truth, by reaching an agreement with the White King

- resolve, by causing Bael to flee in the Wolfhold power struggle

- duty at whatever cost, by defeating an Aldonar claw in a battle that Delta declared would be to the death rather than to the yield

- strength, by remaining in situ for as long as possible when fighting Otion Wraithchild, before being banished to Maeglor

Despite a few tricky situations we were successful in all of these bonds, and eight generous people donated a measure of their spirit strength to ensure that the bond would be permanent. We were warned that forces were massing and heading our way: Kalid, Saldorians, and

Halmadons Heights. We never saw any Saldorians, but some of the Kalid Cabiti charged at the group before revealing that they had been joking. Further to our bargain last night they maintained that they had no animosity towards us, stayed for a drink, and then went off to cause some trouble elsewhere.

Dreadlord Araikas arrived with Kamenwati the Undying. We escorted him to a nearby stockade where an evil ritual had been set up to perform the embodiment of the Black Pharoah. We were to defend the area during this time.

Sir Godwin and his Knights of Purity arrived shortly afterwards, arrogantly claiming that if we yielded now our deaths would be quick. I returned the same offer, and pointed out that their Crusade had failed and that the Cataclysm was inevitable. Sir Godwin said that we would never live to see the Cataclysm but he was mistaken; a hard fight ensued, but without their escape facility this time the Halmadonians died on the field of battle.

Sir Borst of the Knights of Chastity came to visit us shortly afterwards. Softly spoken, he seemed reasonably well-disposed towards us and we agreed together that Sir Godwin's body should be cremated. He warned us that a raving madman was still on the loose in the field (Sir Danus) but said that now the Knights of Chastity would be turning to support their people and the other Grand Knight, Sir Leon, who was intended to be the Tower Leader. We parted in a cordial way, with wishes expressed that relations could be improved between the Halmadonian Tower and Fortunes Keep - particularly as Sir Leon is a follower of St Michel (popular within the Citadel).

Sir Danus and his forces of the Knights of Purity did indeed arrive, and it was not long before his mask of civility slipped. As our group had already noted, the Knights of Purity seemed to have lost their way - becoming more chaotic than one would perhaps expect them to be. During a long battle, where neither side had gained the upper hand, evil invocations started to emanate from within the ritual site and the Black Pharoah arrived in all his dark majesty.

Although we felt frozen in time, we heard him demand who opposed him, and Sir Danus replied that it was he. Bear in mind that the Halmadonians and Shadowsfall had worked together to break the Black Pharoah, a mystic, into small pieces, bury and hide him around Orin Rakatha, the Black Pharoah demonstrated his anger and reduced the human to a pile of ash and small gold necklace upon the floor. He declared that he was the Master of Judgement and found Halmadons Heights unworthy and that it would be destroyed. The Knights of Purity quickly fled from the scene.

The Black Pharoah then asked who else stood before him - we had his Oracle Kiara, and the Blood Wind Oracle Delta, who were best placed to answer. The Black Pharoah seemed on the verge of judging us, and not necessarily in a good way (best ensure everyone kneels should they approach or encounter him in future) but then hesitated and said he would defer judgement. The way he said this suggested that our bonds via Dreadlord Araikas were holding, as the Dreadlord wished to protect our people at all costs.

The Black Pharoah also declared that the Masters of Lore should be awoken.

We made ourselves scarce, as the awakened Black Pharoah seemed somewhat volatile and liable to destroy anything that displeased him in a second. We believe that he was led away by Kamenwati the Undying, as the follower of Set had planned.

The Halls of Sutekh are unaware of our bonds to Dreadlord Araikas and will likely seek to oppose us should we try to approach him in future. However, we must do this come the end of the year of Reckoning, at the time of the Cataclysm. We must ensure that Fortunes Keep comes through the Cataclysm safely, and we must return one of the Valley's most dedicated

leaders to his people.

By my hand,

Kevralyn Soulfire Matriarch of House Drannath Baron of Darkhome with contributions from  
Grandmaster Delta, Blood Oracle of the Temple of Four Winds.