

Setting off from our towers, a mixed group at the command of the Cabal, we were sent to meet with the Azard- An at a site a day or so to the South West of the White Retreat. The job was to purchase a powerful item described as an Artefact that the Azard-An had recently captured from the Khalid.

The three sorcerers amongst us (Giles, Scrope and Rowena) had been issued monies by the Cabal in order to purchase the item. The rest of us comprised a wide ranging band including several Heroes of note from our alliance such as Melkeron (White Path High Priest), Gurthang (Morgoth High Priest), Jihad (Assassin) and Brother John (Hospitaller High Priest) to those who had status such as Phaid, Dark, Sister Mary and Barf, to those who were inconsequential such as myself, Bubble and Squeak.

We had an uneventful journey to the meeting place - a hut large enough to sleep us all and arrived there a day before All Hallows Eve. Unsure if the Azard-An would be arriving that night or the following day, we occupied the hut ensuring that the (fairly powerful) undead around were dealt with first.

Whilst there we were attacked by hauntings, beings that appeared out of bright surfaces, mirrors, armour, and the like. There seemed to be four, each being powerful. No pattern to the arrival of these hauntings could be ascertained, sometimes an hour would pass and then one appear, sometimes only a few moments would pass before another. While they were affected by pain and flinched when hit the wounds had no lasting effect upon them. These hauntings were a constant threat to us whilst in the hut.

During the night a vision occurred of dead Azard-An who had been at the post some days earlier. We watched them go about their business waiting for someone to arrive - we were unsure if these were the Azard-An we were going to meet, but we found that we could not interact with these four. Interestingly we speculated about a connection between hauntings and visions but were unable to determine any.

A group of Dai-Fah-Dyne approached and requested assistance at the World Window (which is an inter-planar travelling tunnel half a day away) as there was a serious undead problem in the area. Squire Jeffrey (an enterprising Humacti) volunteered himself to go and it was determined that those who were not too powerful would go and investigate the doings at the world window and report back. The more powerful should dedicate themselves to the accomplishment of our primary mission.

Later that night we were approached by a group of ShadowsFall, who wanted to come in out of the rain and rest before continuing their journey onwards towards the World Window. We permitted them to come in after warning them about the Hauntings, and whilst they were there a haunting attack took place. The ShadowsFall left immediately following this attack. In our discussions with the ShadowsFall it was revealed that they had had several encounters with groups of undead - more as they drew nearer.

With morning the group split with those of us going off to investigate the world window leaving and the rest remaining behind to meet with the Azard-An. Squire Jeffrey had left at dawn and planned to meet us along the way. I took on the role of scout for our party, with Phaid leader. After travelling for an hour or so Phaid told us that we were likely to meet a Necromancer and that he was going to do a deal with him. The Humacti's in our party were distinctly unhappy about this, but when Phaid said that he was happy for the Necromancer to be slaughtered after the deal was struck. The Humacti's were much happier and agreed to go along with this. We travelled down the path dealing with the more numerous and powerful bands of undead along the way. Meeting some Dai-Fah-Dyne guards who would not let us pass suggested some intra tower problems. Bribes worked and got some information as well.

Finally we met with the Necromancer. It appears that this particular Necromancer was a Chancellor of the Dymwann, and that we would have no chance of killing him - he was far too powerful for us. Phaid did the deal with him and the Chancellor left. Needless to say the Humacti's were very unhappy.

Continuing our journey we encountered a group of ShadowsFall, the group from last night. They refused to let us proceed and after some discussions a combat broke out as they sought to kill us. We were driven back but regrouped and managed to drive the ShadowsFall away. Our investigations indicated that there were two competing groups of Dai-Fah-Dyne, those at the World Windows and those not there. Those not at at the World Window were trying to prevent assistance getting through and thus force those at the World Window to lose the concession. Moving on we encountered the Dymwann Chancellor (plus powerful undead guards) who were fleeing the undead at the World Window. It seemed as though the World Window had been ripped through and that an army of undead were now flooding into Orin Rakatha - more than he would want to be around. We also met up with Squire Jeffrey who had just come back from there with a Dai-Fah-Dyne and he confirmed this story. We decided to head back and after fighting our way through several more bands of undead returned to the hut.

The powerful people had investigated the environs whilst looking for the Azard-An traders and during the course of the day fought many undead, and at least one powerful necromancer. They

had met the traders who had agreed to come to the hut that night when it was safe. Returning to the hut they broke into the cellars where it seems an evil ritual of some sort had taken place - it was believed that this was the source of the hauntings and that we should be able to stop them in here somehow. However in the cellars there were also a number of powerful wraiths - these were eventually put to rest.

By now dark had fallen and both groups were at the hut. Now began a busy night filled with events. Throughout the night the hauntings appeared, with greater and greater frequency, we were also attacked at random intervals by smallish groups of undead wandering in from the woods. An Exorcist entered the building and spoke with us about the necessity to reverse the ritual that had been performed. He gave us the information required to reverse the ritual, but several things were needed we did not have, such as the bodies and items keyed to the bodies. The Exorcist mentioned great danger and it appeared in the form of Erlan Black (Undead Death Knight ex anti paladin of the Aldonar race) and loads of undead to give us a good kicking. He told us to go as he would be returning later that evening and had business to conclude. He didn't want us around.

The Azard-An traders returned with the item and spoke of the growing numbers of undead around. The item was revealed to be a mask, and identified by all three sorcerers. It appeared to be capable of helping ensorcelling, reducing the time taken and the cost required to perform it. It was also capable of allowing the wearer cast brown wizardry at vocal length. At our request the Azard-An withdrew for an hour whilst our sorcerers discussed the purchase of the item.

During the period the Azard-An traders were away, Lord Azard arrived and spoke to us. Calling "bring on the dancing girls" we were able to oblige by calling on Bubble who satisfied his desires easily. Telling us that it was crawling with undead outside and that under no conditions should we leave, he was a little unhappy at finding his men not here, but accepted this. He spoke to us about the war of the Azard-An with the Khalid and reminded us of how he had helped us in the early days of our arrival on Orin Rakatha. He pointed out that we also were at war with the Khalid and that it would be good for us to join together and that they really needed the money from selling this item to continue financing the war. We told Lord Azard that we needed the bodies of his men who had been killed here and he agreed to have them delivered in a little while so that we could perform the ritual to remove the haunting of this place. A little while later the traders returned and after long and protracted negotiations an agreement was reached and then they left.

Barely had the door closed on the Azard-An when in walked Baron Ulthar with Toril his personal bodyguard where he called a Dark Camp and Neutral meeting. Whilst this was going on Reorf

Cyrandor arrived and called a Good Camp meeting. At the Dark Camp meeting Gurthang was promoted to a position in command of the Fell Knights of the Witch King of Angmar replacing their former commander, Blood. Baron Ulfar also warned us not to travel outside.

After the notables left we were then visited by Lord Mian, with an undead creature, assumed to be a banshee. Lord Mian stayed long enough to cast some invocations here where it was safe and was then off again. Mian also gave us warnings about not travelling outside, that there were a lot of undead out there and that we should not go travelling for any reason whatsoever.

Lord Veltyn of the Cabal was the next arrival. He teleported in (how ostentatious) and wielded his arrogance like a whip. He had come to collect the item (mask) that we had acquired and to make sure that it was not lost (a boost to our confidence that was!) In addition he told us of the many risings of undead that were happening across the length and breadth of Orin Rakatha. He also told us that the assistant guild leader of the Humacti's and one of the chief high priests had gone out fighting undead and were now missing, presumed dead. After casting spells on people to help us he teleported away.

In walked the Exorcist and encouraged us to get on with the ritual, most moved down to the cellar and began to perform the ritual there. Under pressure of the many attacks from the hauntings we managed to complete the ritual and banish the hauntings.

Finally was the promised return of Erlan Black who stormed into the room, with a load of powerful undead, our defences proved inadequate to hold him. Gurthang cursed him and tried to attack but had no backup. Erlan felled Gurthang with a single word of power, who landed on me as I cowered in terror, and then Erlan beat him to death. Meanwhile his other undead paralysed many of us leaving us helpless.

A woman's voice from the main room advised Erlan to leave as now was not the time and that the value of this place had been destroyed by our meddling. Erlan was about to leave when he grasped Squire Jeffrey and said that he would take him to add to his army. At this Brother John leapt out and said "take me instead". Erlan Black accepted the exchange with an evil grin killing Brother John - apparently he had been looking for him for some time.

After this we fortified ourselves in and fought off minor undead attacks during the rest of the

night. At dawn the undead presence reverted to a much lower level, but still far higher than normal. I fear that this upsurge of undead does not bode well for us.