

*Over the past several moons, Barad Tirgul was making its presence known on Orin Rakatha. Hordes of uruk-hai – shock troops normally intended for wars on Thruanduil, but stuck here with the plane having barred its gates to other worlds – were roaming in great numbers. □ Barad Tirgul's Tower Leader, Lord Carfleen, had made an ambitious approach to recruit Dreadlord Araikas to his cause, but naturally had been rebuffed. □ And more recently, Barad Tirgul had captured a number of evil High Priests from our Towers, who could not be tracked in the usual ways. □ As the Valley defends all its people, we undertook a Darkhome-sponsored mission to recover our High Priests and take appropriate action in the area we knew them to be.* Rather than a blow-by-blow account of our mission, I shall summarise the pertinent points.

The Valley group comprised: myself (Kevralyn Soulfire); Lancorin Bloodcall; Master Delta; Nathan; High Priestess Sasha of the White Path; Maggot, High Priest of the Dark Brethren; Vallan, High Priest of the Reapers; Kakarot, Priest of the Reapers; Obelisk 0, aspirant Knights Martial; Garret, Master Pathfinder; Driedyn of the Grey Path.

We recovered all our High Priests, who had had their talismans taken. Two of our High Priests were escorted safely to us by the Kalid, in a return gesture as we had earlier released two of their High Priests, figuring that leaving them alive might leave us more options in the intensely hostile area.

High Priest Rainen – one of our recovered - was able to cast a vision using our party which revealed that Lord Carfleen sought to summon the Witch King to Orin Rakatha. Following this revelation, we sought to make allies in the area to prevent this occurring at any cost. Master Delta passed this information on to the leader of one of the Halmadonian factions in the area, Sir Godwin, Knights Adjutant of the Order of Purity. Sir Godwin sought permission from his Tower Leader to change his course of action in the area (initially he was pursuing the Lord of the Barad Tirgul Houses) and – this being granted – called an inter-Tower meeting under a pact of neutrality, hosted by a Shadowsfall Judge Hawson.

We had determined that Lord Carfleen had the sorcerous ability to instantly summon his closest allies to him, which the Evil Sphere revealed to be his four lieutenants (Sir Raul, Commander of the Knight Vassals of the Witch King; Shredder, Commander of the Uruk-Hai; High Priest Interrogator 'Dagon' of the Guiding Hand, Head of the Morgothian Priesthood; Amonin, Head of the Morgul Wraiths). As it was possible he had taught this ability on to some of these, we were also obliged to first remove their subordinates (Head Hand, Uruk-Hai Commander, High Priest Aron BloodSeeker, Sir Lamis – Champion of the Knight Vassals of the Witch King).

Despite the Sir Godwin's displeasure at not having the honour of the opportunity to go against Lord Carfleen himself, we co-ordinated such that:

- The Saldoreans were to occupy the uruk forces
- The combined forces of Halmadons Heights and Kalid were to attack the Knight Vassals of the Witch King, led by Sir Raul
- We went after Lord Carfleen personally, his apprentice and primary lieutenants (save for Sir Raul)

We used a scroll received from High Priest Andrew of Halmadons Heights to dismantle the wards that Lord Carfleen had set up around his summoning circle and removed his powerful allies one by one. With only a couple of hours before the ritual would complete and the Witch King would be summoned, we killed Lord Carfleen and his forces, causing the ritual – and Carfleen's schemes – to fail. There were forces from many Towers and factions in the area. These included:

## **Dymwan**

Dymwan were expressly working with Lord Carfleen, sufficient that they felt the need to gloat about it & inform us they had the freedom of the area. We determined that they had created the wards for his ritual. The Dymwan we met we destroyed, including their leader in the area High Priest Lashrac Wraithspawn. **Annach Moranonil** The drow/duergar forces in the area included a number of Houses including Agraathan, Alzor and Morcaraelin. They offered us hospitality and advised us of what they knew of Lord Carfleen's powers: it transpired that he had the sorcerous ability to magically summon his closest allies to him. We later established these 'allies' were his four lieutenants.

### **Spire**

bonean forces in the area included those from the Clan SuBanessen. We learned that they sought the 'lir', a magical creature thought to have been rescued by High Priestess Sasha but later claimed by Lord Carfleen. They also spoke a couple of times about the 'Pentacle', which was 'of their Tower'. Mixed responses from the groups: one chatted peaceably with us, another had summoned a creature of fire and sought to fight without any ado. We also happened across a hepath bound in a warding circle, which we left alone despite its protests.

### **Labyrinth of Xenos**

The LoX were there to recover 'nodes' that they considered their property. Initially they identified Obelisk 0 as a node, but were content to leave him for collection at a later date. Some of the objects in Lord Carfleen's possession were determined to assist inter-planar travel/communication.

### **Knights of Our Dark Lady**

Our group did not meet the KoODL personally, but another Valley group had been left scattered by their forces, led by Sir Malleus du Egrise (known to the Valley – he was one of the Black Side in the Eternal Game). Later reports indicated that Sir Malleus had been defeated in the field by Sir Godwin of Halmadons Heights; if correct this would be a notable achievement by the latter.

### **Halmadons Heights**

Three Halmadonian factions:

- Order of Chastity (friendly disposition – they had actually assisted Drakken and others of Darkhome when the Knights of Our Dark Lady attacked)
- Order of Purity (currently crusading against evil on Orin Rakatha, starting with Barad Tirlgul)
- another headed up by High Priest Andrew of their Dreamers Sect.

Information we received indicated High Priest Andrew would be able to assist us in destroying the wards that Lord Carfleen had placed around his ritual, and this proved correct: High Priest Andrew authored us some scrolls that needed to be read aloud following a commune with the ward: this destroyed the ward. High Priest Andrew also confirmed he had been responsible for teaching the Kalid how to use the Plane of Myths of Legends, the ability that was used by the Kalid when they sought to assault Dreadlord Araikas at the Time of Reckoning last year. He also confirmed that this had been the outcome desired by the Halmadonians, although - to quote - 'the Kalid took the risk'.

**Wizards' Concillium** We did not meet them, and they declined the Halmadonians' invitation to the multi-Tower meeting to oppose Lord Carfleen.

### **Kalid**

The Kalid were led by General Rancorn of the 3rd Legion. There were four Kalid groups in the area. We met one under hostile conditions and recovered from them a letter from the Halmadonian Tower Leader, Sir Danus Ramorfin of Illinia, that expressly indicated the complicity of the Halmadonians in diminishing the forces of the Kern Valley Alliance. As previously mentioned, General Rancorn's group later returned two Valley High Priests as we had assisted them.

### **Shadowfall**

The Shadowfall were led by Judge Hawson. The Shadowfall had earlier met with Lord Carfleem (although he had delayed their appointment considerably) and determined that he wasn't doing anything that broke the laws of Orin Rakatha. Additionally, they noted that – due to the way they are created, so much in that they are 'born' – uruks hold status and with the numbers that Carfleem was creating (at a rate of one uruk per day), the Morgothians would likely be gaining at least one extra Tower. The Time of Reckoning was almost upon us.

Although the Judge was initially and officially neutrally-disposed towards us, we met him a number of times and I would say that the relationship improved as time went on. He also said he would question the Halmadonian actions (of which we had recovered written proof) as regards teaching the Kalid how to use the Place of Myths and Legends so they could abuse it at the Time of Reckoning, although technically they may not have transgressed any laws with such an action. High Priest Andrew has apparently been useful to the Shadowfall before, with his knowledge of the Sativa, but as I pointed out there are those within our Tower who could similarly be helpful – he seemed interested in this.

Tedious comments about the Valley being responsible for the destruction of the World Window and thus current predicament on Orin Rakatha seemed to evaporate after the Shadowfall involvement in creating the Mist Lord (in the Tower of the Four Winds) in the first place was recalled.

### **Morgothian Houses**

The Morgothian 'Houses', led by Lord High Priest Amlack Dellfain. He was accompanied by a shadowy figure in grey who later, separately, provided insights that would assist us against Lord Carfleem. The Houses could not be seen to participate in overt action against Lord Carfleem, but were able to provide us with key pieces of information, such as the identities of his lieutenants and their known locations.

### **Thissessin**

Thissessin were working with Lord Carfleem's forces and attacked us without provocation.

### **Saldoreans**

Master Malon attended the meeting on behalf of the Saldoreans, and was scrupulously polite to all present. He confirmed that the Saldoreans who had held anti-human beliefs were originally of the Northern Tower which had fallen; and that those with such extreme beliefs were not allowed to join the remaining Saldorean Tower. Additionally, Saldoreans of the Free Thought Society dwelled within the Tower.

By my hand,

**Kevralyn Soulfire**

**Baron of Darkhome**