

The Opening Move

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I will begin at the end with a note of sadness. I chose the path we took and others followed. Nathan volunteered, as did certain others, for the role he played in the ritual I undertook to shatter the Rod of Yugantir to break the power of the Windwalker but none of us knew the full price. His spirit is still out there somewhere, this much I know, taken somehow by the remaining essence of the Windwalker. We will recover him and restore him back to us even if it costs me my last breath.

Next I would like to say to all those who followed my lead in the past few days that there will no doubt be moments of valour, cleverness, victory and sadness that I fail to mention in the report below but that to each of you I simply say, Thank You. Regardless of the choices, even if you disagreed, you fought unrelentingly to accomplish the tasks that were required. The cost was high for us all but we have achieved a great victory, the opening move was ours and the light has struck back against the growing darkness and we have started the process of bringing the end of Agoth.

Those present for this mission were:

Quicksilver Nathan	White Sorcerer Grey Warden High Priest	White King White Queen (	<i>Taken</i>)
Shard Farsight Tersius Verrick Woolf McBeast	Grey Warden High Priest Heirophant of the Druids High Priest of the OSM Humacti Crusader Champ	White Bishop White Bishop White Knight White Knight (	<i>Taken</i>)
Myrtle	Sorcereress of Temple of	White Knight (	<i>Promoted Pawn. Taken</i>)
Randolphin Abroghast	Sorcerer of the Yellow Guild	White Pawn (	<i>Taken</i>)
Janith	Blue Wizard.	White Pawn (	<i>Retired</i>)
Camelot	Priest of the Hospital	White Pawn (	<i>Retired</i>)
Obelisk	Iron Guard Veteran	White Pawn (	<i>Taken</i>)
Lei Fung Spark Toshiro Hector	Humacti Crusader Champion Red Sorcerer Ranger Veteran White Hunter			

The other missing pieces for the White Side were:

T'Fal of the Condor	Shaman of the Stone Path	White Knight (	<i>Promoted Pawn. Declin</i>
Sir Severus	Halmaddons Heights Watch	White Pawn (	<i>Taken</i>)
Aliece	Wizards Concillium Sorcery	White Pawn (	<i>Retired</i>)
Halmaddons Heights	The Tower	White Rook	
The White Retreat	The Tower	White Rook	

In addition to the game itself we were tasked with a series of responsibilities to deal with the political situation around the area of Kingsfort on Murandir. Rather than try to write a story I shall attempt to summarise each of these areas with the relevant information. I admit that in my role as group leader my notes are not as complete as I would usually expect but I should still be able to provide further information if anyone wishes to contact me for it.

The Immortal Game

Eight white pawns had been passed into the keeping of Quicksilver by Halmaddons Heights as it was suggested that our alliance had the flexibility to take on this game and win. During the initial days of our preparation I took up and pawn and investigated it.

The game is ancient, mind bogglingly so and has been through many incarnations – it's not always been chess but has always been white pieces versus black pieces. It is sentient and I felt it penetrating my mind and rifling through my memories and thoughts as though the invocation opened a two way link.

The design of the "immortal game" as it thinks of itself was to weigh two opposing forces via a competition to decide on the fate of a certain thing (the wager) in a lawful manner with minimum bloodshed specifically only those people so ordained/chosen as pieces. Over the years though, as it has gained in sentience, it has chosen players and pieces in order to judge "something" (this is sadly hidden from me) still in a lawful manner however there is a slight hint of chaos within probably introduced by the Chaos Jester who somehow subverted the game in its last incarnation.

I gained a subtle hint that the pieces themselves have changed over time, the queen was once

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a councillor/vizier etc. I have a quite a clear impression that we need to choose/create/summon a king for the Game to start and that this is an imperative task the need to complete this came upon me as soon as I took up a pawn. Formerly the Game's pawns (under the chaos infected game) had no role to play but this time the pawns role has been restored. I glimpsed that each piece has its own way of moving and own power within the game, that not all pieces are people and that once started the game will force a move & countermove at set time intervals.

Through various investigations and eventually the game itself we determined the Black side:

Otion Wraithchild	Tower Leader of the Catacombs of Agoth	Black King	Taken
Kevralyn Soulfire	5th Sorceress of House Darnath	Black Queen	(Declined to play last move)
Scheg-Nistil the Nightwalker	Wolfhold As-gnazi	Black Bishop (Promoted Pawn)	Declined to play last move
Sayeed Shadetwister	3rd High Priest of House Darnath	Black Bishop (Promoted Pawn)	Declined to play last move
Tesseracton	Ex-Dymwan Cadre/Agothi	Black Bishop (Promoted Pawn)	Taken
Sabril	House Arduval	Black Bishop (Promoted Pawn)	Taken
Okarius MoonEater	4th Warrior of House Agrath	Black Knight	
Y'Shyer Shadebond	3rd Sorcerer of House Morannal	Black Knight (Promoted Pawn)	Declined to play last move
Sir Malleus Du Egrise	Knight of Our Dark Lady	Black Knight	Taken
Delian Venomeyes	17th Assassin of House Tiberius	Black Pawn (Promoted Pawn)	Taken
Verusk	Dark Aspect Worshipper	Black Pawn (Promoted Pawn)	Taken
The Turk	Wizards Concillium Constable	Black Pawn (Promoted Pawn)	Taken
One of the Nameless	Chittering Thing of Darknes	Black Pawn (Promoted Pawn)	Taken
Soul Capturer	Agothian Undead	Black Pawn (Promoted Pawn)	Taken
Catacombs of Agoth	The Tower	Black Rook	
Annach Morannal	The Tower	Black Rook	

It was also revealed that the White Player was King Paulandiss and the Black Player, Darketh NightSpawn the Heru Beleg Aratar although the wager between them which the game decided has yet to be made clear to us.

The first thing that we did, as night fell on Fireday was to attend a meeting with the Alliance of Light in order to distribute our pieces on the board. For until the board was set the game could not begin. Various representatives were present from Halmaddons Heights, the White Retreat, The Wizards Concillium, The Kalid and although they did arrive the Celestial Bureaucracy and Saldorians were also due. Once the first rank of pawns were set we had a pair of challenges to promote our Knights. Woolf defeated a group of Dark Spirits to claim his while Verrick challenged and slew an Agothian Knight of not inconsiderable power. The place of a Knight in the game was to attack in order to remove opposing pieces.

With the Knights earned the White Referee gave us leave to promote our Bishops and Queen. Bishops could be played to defend another piece or, as we found out later, to attack a pawn. Queens had leave to defend or attack at will.

The next day we set out to complete a ritual to summon an avatar of light to put our final piece into play, that of the King. Once the King was called forth the game would begin in earnest. During the course of a bloody battle (see Lizardman below) a ritual was completed that would call the avatar to embody Quicksilver (the only viable candidate we had as his reading of the rituals involved required the focus to be capable of casting High White magic) with the power needed to counteract the Darkness within Otion Wraithchild. This completed our preparation and we began the game.

The first thing we had to do was capture three pawns which would then make the rank pieces vulnerable to attack. The next stage was to remove nine opposing pieces in order to make the queen vulnerable to attack. Finally once the queen was removed the King would be vulnerable and we could attempt a game winning move.

Each move was essentially represented by single combat between the two pieces of that move with any "defending" pieces allowed to protect their own side but could not strike blows against

the other piece. Needless to say that given the nature of our foes this put us on the back foot a great deal of the time as our strength as a people lies in our teamwork rather than individual prowess however I digress.

Our first move as to play Sir Severus against Verusk as we lacked information about many of the opposing Pawns and felt Sir Severus could hold his own. Sadly we had overlooked the skills of the Dark Aspect as he unleashed venom to first blind and then slay the noble Watcher.

Blacks countermove was equally successful for them. A Soul Capturer of Agoth was placed against Randolphin. Despite a furious display of magical skill the Soul Capturer eventually won out and Randolphin was sadly slain and his piece lost. For reference in the future it seems that a Soul Capturer will drain the life from it's victims to restore it's life force and requires regular "Dispelling" (in this case Battle magic appeared to Suffice) in order to render it vulnerable to attack.

We were given a further four hours between moves which became the norm.

Having lost two pieces and still being required to play a Pawn we chose to send Obelisk a sturdy golem warrior up against a Drow Assassin one Delian Venomeyes. Being more prepared this time we ensured that he was layered with whatever protections we were able to place on him before the combat and in a rapid battle the obviously pregnant Drow surrendered and was removed from the game although not before she provided some additional information on the remaining pieces.

While I was speaking with the defeated Pawn a cry came back from the trading post. Blacks Countermove was to send one Sir Malleus Du Egrise a Knight of Her Dark Lady against Janith. Having heard tell of this Knights wrathful might against previous Valley groups it was felt that to even try to have a single individual stand against him was foolish and Janith retired from the game. The result of this was that although we lost a piece the black side did not yet have the three pawns required to strike at a ranking piece so still had a good view of potential moves.

At this stage we decided to start playing a longer game and made our first defensive move. Nathan as therefore moved to support Verrick creating a powerful potential charge from our White Knight on our next turn. Black continued their game plan moving along our line of pawns

and sent a Wizards Concillium owned construct called "The Turk" against our own Golem Obelisk. Unfortunately "The Turk" was more than a match for our only successful Pawn (thus far) and his piece was claimed after a long battle of both steel and persuasion as Obelisk tried to convince "The Turk" that his role could be more than that of a slave.

We now struck. Having already seen the White Pawn of the Dark Aspect Verusk in action we pitted our White Knight Verrick supported by Queen Nathan against him. While the Dark follower changed his tactics slightly we had their counter and in a convincing exchange Verrick took him from the game. Meanwhile the Black counter move placed their Queen to protect their Queens Knight, which gave us some concern over their next play.

Having some confidence now that once we understood the nature of the pieces arrayed against us we could form a reasoned strategy we now played Myrtle our resident advisor in all things to challenge the Soul Capturer of Agoth that Randolphin had so thoroughly probed the previous day. We knew from his experience that Myrtle had the capacity to Entrap this creature and keep it at her mercy before beating it down. So as planned she began the fight with a fine piece of timing to call the earth to swallow the fetid creature of Agoth. In a long and difficult skirmish (including a further casting of Entrapment to keep the thing controlled) she was victorious and the White Sides cheers split the air. To add further jubilation to the move the Black side then declared a forfeit move as they had planned to play the Soul Capturer in response to our move meaning we had won not only a piece but also a reprieve, and some further time to plan.

We returned to our tactic of long term planning and set our Kings Bishop to protect the next pawn we believed was on the Black sides list as they seemed to be making a steady advance across the board. So T'Fal a Shaman of the Stone Panthers was to be protected by Me. In response the Black side did indeed chose a Pawn but rather than T'Fal they struck out at Camelot. In a tense stand-off Sir Malleus Du Egrise, Knight of Her Dark Lady had to decide which of his oaths he would keep. His oath to play the Game to the best of his abilities or his oath to be Knight in Her Service. Camelot faced him bravely, his death assured should the Knight choose to take the field, however it was not to be. Camelot's faith was rewarded and both he and Sir Malleus agreed to retire from the field with neither able to claim a victory. While we had lost a pawn we had caused the removal of a powerful piece in their Kings Knight and we were buoyed with a sense of success.

It was during a pause in the game that we were visited by an old friend, at least of mine, the Black Queen. Lady Kevralyn came with certain information regarding the nature of the game and an intimation that political advances from King Paulandiss to Annach Morrananial might be looked on more favourably should the board be left populated with only those pieces with

allegiance to her. Some were wary of this offer as we had suspected for some time that the Black Player was Darketh Nightspawn the Heru Belag Aratar and doing anything other than trying to win the game could have a negative impact on the people of the Alliance. We did resolve however to try to keep her advice in mind during the course of our moves.

Our next move however was already planned. We were going to commit T'Fal a shaman of the Condor, Kalid Stone Panther against One of the Nameless. The referees approached and the field upon which we had arrayed seemed to be cast into Darkness. A number of chittering dark creatures were arrayed in a group seemingly intent on one of their number that appeared no different to the others. It was that one that took the field though against T'Fal and I. The fight began almost gently, with evil power being summoned on the things sword as though he was but the lowliest dark acolyte. It build swiftly however, every blow growing in strength until with a burst of fluid movement both T'fal and I were lain low, saved only by the Spirits of the Good sphere ensuring our lives. Within a second T'Fal called his ancestors to shine on him with protection and upon his foes with fury and he smote the evil thing again and again, his physical strength pouring into his spiritual power and rending the darkness into nothing. When the smoke cleared, and the things minions had been destroyed by our companions the Black Referee again looked chagrined as he announced that their move was again forfeit as their piece had been removed.

Following discussions with T'Fal who confirmed he could not take a similar foe but would be willing and able to engage a more physical beast the choice was made to play him again and try to remove "The Turk" from play. This time the fight was more challenging as the Turk frequently disarmed the shaman and I spent much of my time in the fight running around like a headless chicken and not providing the support I should have been. Fortunately for us T'Fal was more competent and the Turk was destroyed. Upon his death however a Shade Prince leapt out of the broken construct and proceeded to attack with a swarm of dark elemental followers. Once again however our approach of our group watching each challenge supported us well as battle was quickly joined and after a long struggle the Shade Prince was dispatched back to the shadow.

Next we chose to start to pull our forces together in order to set up a number of different potential strikes. To this end once again I was moved from the supporting T'Fal to support Woolf instead. This meant we had two supported Knights prepared to strike on our next move in order to try and remove the Black Kings Bishop who we understood to be carrying the orders from Otion Wraithchild and whose removal we believed would weaken their side as the split between Annach Morraninal and the Catacombs was encouraged. The Black response was short and not so sweet. The Black Knight, a duergar Ocarius MoonEater 4th Warrior of House Agraathan challenged our Wizards Concillium pawn who saw no way to stand against that foe and capitulated in short order.

With everything falling into place we set forth Woolf against The Black Kings Bishop Tesseracton. Unfortunately we had made a grave error in our preparations. We had believed the Bishop to be a High Priest but instead we were arrayed against a powerful Sorcerer. I was swiftly removed, weakened beyond help, and Woolf was blinded. A long drawn out game of cat and mouse was then played with Woolf performing admirably to try and locate and strike down the Sorcerer but sadly to no avail. Eventually too was felled and our move failed. This caused something of a stir amongst the referees as the rules of moves were discussed. We had not been informed that should we lose a challenge with a supported piece we would not only lose the piece moving but also the one supporting him. The result was that only the White Knight was lost and I was left on the board to move again in the future. Blacks countermove was interesting. They had chosen to play Tesseracton to take out Myrtle, one of our final pawns. Weakened as he was and thanks to some quick thinking on her behalf she was able to entrap him and lacking any of his greater magics due to previous combat she overcame him with ease and we had accomplished another part of our wider plan to limit Otions power in the game.

We had one piece left on the board that we felt we needed to take out. Scheg-Nistil the Nightwalker an Ashnazi and Wolfhold ambassador to the Goblins. We didn't wish to break alliance law in the pursuit of the game but also could not wait to see if he was going to play in this fashion. So we made a risky choice. We sent Myrtle (by this stage our go-to Gnome) against him, not for a fight but for a solid diploming with a back-up plan of trying to goad the Ashnazi into making an illegal move against our King in order to have the Referees remove him from the game. Sadly neither came to pass. Despite Myrtles very best efforts the Scheg-Nistil was unable to be persuaded to retire and proved far too disciplined to strike at the "Hero of all Goblankind to which the Ashnazi belong" Nathan despite a terrible taunting. We had therefore lost the gambit and our most successful piece to date was removed from the game. The black side (in the last of a long series of coincidences) had apparently been about to send the Ashnazi against Myrtle but as she was no longer a piece the move was forfeit and the Referees retired for another night.

Having decided that to risk a further move against the Ashnazi (particularly given some of the groups personal experience with their Shaman in the past which concerned us) we had reached the point where we had to tip our hand and make a play against one of Lady Kevralyns allies. We had selected Sabril of Arduval as he lacked a name (important when dealing with Drow) and therefore decided he must either be a deliberate "weak link" placed into the game for just such purposes or that he was an ally of someone more powerful and would hopefully still himself be relatively weak (although we were expecting him to be bedecked in items which he did indeed prove to be). Verrick, still supported by Nathan, were given the job of removing him which they did in a rapid flurry of blows, a release of numerous items and a further flurry of St Michael backed fury which resulted in Sabril in a sparkly heap. The Black response to this was for the Black side moving their promoted King's Knight against our Queen Nathan. They could do this

as our final pawn had been promoted automatically to replace Myrtle as the White Knight (who had previously been promoted to replace Woolf in that position). The fight began with Nathan setting himself into a protected ward to cast at which point Y'Shyer Shadebond 3rd Sorcerer of House Morfaeglin simply took position behind him. As Nathan emerged from his invoke their hands fell upon each other in the blink of an eye, Shadebond fell away his mind shattered by the evil sphere, giggling as no Drow child surely every does? We cheered until with a groan Nathan collapsed to the floor, felled by an invocation of Death which we had failed to prepare despite our previous diligence.

We knew now that our King was open and therefore made the only defensive move we had. I was moved to defend Quicksilver. In response the Black side announced that the Black Queens Knight, defended by the Black Queen, would attack the White King and that since this was a potential game ending move the Black King would be invited to witness. Our group went tense when Otion Wraithchild, his face shrouded in darkness, appeared before us. There was then a scream of pain from Quicksilver and Otion both writhed upon the ground. Time was stopped and we could only watch as the two referees discussed the event and options. Apparently the meeting of the Avatar of Light and the Avatar of Darkness had resulted in both being destroyed. The referees decided that the course of action was clear, Last King Standing. Each piece remaining in play would be given the option of whether to step forward in one last play or withdraw. Of our remaining side all stepped forward barring T'Fal of the Stone Panthers who I would believe was marshalling his forces against a threat on Orin Rakatha that I will speak of later and therefore can hold no enmity against. Of the Black side the Knight who made the play had to stay and see his move through. Otion of course stepped forward as his retirement would cost them the game. Then Kevralyn stepped forward and in clear voice announced the withdrawal of each of her pieces leaving our final path clear.

The battle was joined and our group engaged the Tower Leader of the Catacombs of Agoth on a patch of clear ground near the trading post of the Valley people upon Murandir. The engagement was long, bloody and difficult but we as a group prevailed. Eventually he lay upon the floor defeated.
The threat removed.
The wager won.

Game Over.

Trading Routes and Charters

In this matter I am afraid I lack the complete information required to detail a full report. I would like to extend my personal thanks to Verrick and Janith for taking ownership of this task and performing so admirably. I am sure a full list of the charters awarded will be made available once ratified by Geran Bel Seradin but I am confident that the balance that was struck between Wolfhold, Reader, White Retreat and Local traders will prove to benefit all of those involved.

The Lizardmen

While we were about our business on Murandir we were asked to investigate the situation with the Lizardmen close to the area of the trading post. Our first contact was with a large group claiming to follow "the Red Crocodile" they had with them a pregnant member of the Shark Cult who (after some investigation) was bearing a child that responded to a commune by speaking "I am Scale, we are many". These followers of the Red Crocodile offered us an alliance if we would prove our loyalty to them by slaughtering the pregnant female (before we learned of the nature of progeny). My choice in this matter was swayed by those who argued strongly that murdering a lone, unarmed and pregnant female at any time was unacceptable and indeed we engaged the followers of the Red Crocodile in combat and slew them rather than carry out this act.

Following this I am told (as our group split with our ritualists to summon the King heading directly for the beach with others following on behind fighting a rear-guard action) all of our engagements with the Lizardfolk came to blows.

Then during the summoning of the Avatar of Light the Shark God came. Lancel they called him the fourth coming. His aspect is that of a tall, powerful, red scaled lizard with a long pointed tail and flames decorating his visage and dress. He smote around him with massive fury sending the broken bodies of those engaged with him across the battlefield. Unfortunately he arrived when a large portion of the group was engaged in the summoning of the Avatar and the cost to those defending was high. When finally the ritual was complete and we were able to join the fight there were few standing on either side. Lancel was eventually driven off, seemingly annoyed more than a feared of his life, diving into the river to escape.

After this reports came to use of the Lizardmen being driven into a frenzy. The followers of the shark god who had previously stuck to the dunes were taking the river and the Red Crocodile followers were being massacred, or else joining in the wild frenzy. Lancel himself seems to be growing in power and strength and will no doubt prove troublesome in the future.

The Dark Aspect

Investigations into followers of the Dark Aspect suggests that all of those followers of the Light Aspect (Horus, Ra etc.) of the Axion pantheon do appear to have left the area of Kingsfort. An engagement with followers of the Dark Aspect resulted in the location of a summoning ritual and the death of a large number of cultists.

There do remain a large number of tombs of the Axion garrison in an area close to Kingsfort which will no doubt require attention in the future.

Spies

Another thing we were asked to ensure was that any potential leads on Empire spies was followed up. As a result of information gained in the field we personally removed at least one cadre of spies consisting of Verusk a follower of the Dark Aspect (and White Pawn), An Empire Freeman and his "lady friend" and a further man in Red. The Empire Freeman and "lady friend" were handed over to security forces at the trading post following their capture and interrogation and I believe that the figure in red was captured following further debriefing of the prisoners at Kingsfort.

The Rod of Yugantir, Wendigos, Sacrifice and The Windwalker

And now on to the matter which caused so much strife. I shall start with a brief and potted history of this story as best I can although as always with a story so long I am sure of omit colourful details, but hopefully nothing of substantial fact.

Many years ago Set, one of the Dark Aspect in the Axion tradition dedicated to evil, cold, foreigners and poison. Was cast out and dwelt alone in the desert. There a man Ithaqua, known hence force as "The Windwalker", he too an exile, found him. They bargained and dealt with one another to create a deal. Set would imbue the Windwalker with a portion of his power

and the Windwalker would bring civilisations to the worship of Set. To protect Set against betrayal the Rod of Yugantir was created and a number of rituals created in order to Bind and Control the Windwalker. A final ritual was also created which would Destroy the Rod releasing the power.

The power set into the Windwalker was designed to grow over time and swell as the Windwalkers influence expanded. At the right time (during a conjunction of evil) the Rod would be destroyed and the increased power would flow back unto Set. If the Rod was broken at the wrong time this power would be dissipated and lost.

The Windwalker made his way to Orin Rakatha where he met with the Stone Panthers who held their own tower at the time. They spent their Blood in droves to bind the Windwalker into the earth of the Vale of Tears hoping that the vast Earth would trap and hold this dark Avatar. Even bound to the earth however the power of the Manitou (as it was known at the time) was insidious and dangerous. A cult called the "Lodge of the Hungry Wind" grew up which followed a practice of embodying one of its champions with the power of the Manitou to perform a task (defend the village, destroy that troll etc.) only to cast that champion out at the end of time. Most of those cast out died, some others however made it out into the cold wilds where they lived devouring the frozen flesh of others who had cast out. These sad creatures became vengeful and powerful. They became the Ancient Wendigo (plural).

Other cults can also be tracked back to the darkness in the Veil of Tears. The Borovine Estates where Vampiric practices took hold of a previously peaceful community and a sect worshipping "The Old Man of the Woods" by hanging victims to bleed from trees amounts the Towerless in the area to name but a couple.

Eventually the Manitou was found by the Kalid Earthwarp Pulse sect, specifically the descendants of the Otomi people. Over the course of the Valleys efforts to obtain the water, branch and earth to create a new Grove this sect attempted to gain the same power in order to raise a new Grove of Blood in order to reforge the Otomi practice of raising "immortals" (undead creatures of immense power) upon Orin Rakatha. This was done under the manipulation of the Manitou.

When the Grove of all elements was raised by the alliance the power that links the grove spread throughout the land. When this power struck the bindings placed upon the Manitou they "glowed" to those looking for them. At this time the Kalid Earthwarp pulse began to actively

attempt to destroy the bindings all call the Manitou forth and the Ancient Wendigo were once more spoken of as walking the land and the Lodge of the Hungry Wind began to be whispered again within the Stone Panthers.

The Garamites used to dwell within the Vale of Tears before they fled to the sub-plane of Earth where the Valley first encountered them. Their entire society seems to be based around the Manitou's teachings and they believe that the Rod of Yugantir is the rightful symbol of rulership for their King.

The Rod was taken during a Halmaddonian Crusade against the Borovine Estates and was until recently held by them.

The scrolls in question were recovered by a Valley group in Snow moon of this year while operating under the directions of Number 10 who had somehow recovered the Rod of Yugantir (there is a gap in my knowledge here).

During the course of our mission we agreed to a deal with Number 10 where we would hand over the scrolls to him to study further while we would take hold of the Rod to ensure that no-one could enact the rituals without fully understanding what was going on. We proved wrong in our trust in the alliance in this case. As it turned out Number 10 (also known as Simian) had cast a False Vision against us to fool us into believing that we had been handed the Rod in exchange for the Scrolls and ran off with it.

Later he and a small group of his mercenaries performed the ritual of binding at the site of the old White Tower on Murandir.

In order to try to rectify the results of the Binding Ritual being performed (that being that the Manitou was now free of its prison which took blood sufficient to lose a tower for to bind) we penetrated the nearby tomb of Sir Melenor, one of the original Fellowship, in order to locate "the regalia". Information we received from one of Number 10's seers who was duped as we were (at least I hope) was that the Regalia could be used to enhance the binding ritual and to perform the breaking ritual.

It appears that the Control Ritual will no longer function as the Manitou had grown beyond its power. Further interrogation of Number 10 (who is now in custody) may confirm this regard.

So it was that in order to break the Rod and dissipate the power of Set thus weakening the Manitou and hopefully eventually bringing an end to numerous cults that have grown up around this power (which may well include the serpent behind the Ravenon who seem to have ties to the Knights of Her Dark Lady) I chose to undertake the ritual of breaking. I asked first for those who would be willing to be sacrifice and then those who would be willing to participate in it, I will not go over the details of that dark ritual as they are being discussed widely elsewhere but at the culmination of it the Rod was indeed shattered and Nathan dead and his spirit trapped and another Vere walked, this time upon Murandir.

With that our mission was over. Victory and celebration in some ways were ours. In others we felt the pain of loss.

He will be returned.

Shard Farsight.