

Two groups representing the Alliance travelled to the Great Desert, Harvest Moon, to attend a slave market organised by the Dai-fah-Dyne of the Eastern Marches working for the first time alongside the Easterlings. The high status group comprised:

**Wolfhold:** High Priest BoShek, Administrator of the Dark Brethren Sect; High Priest Daark, Dark Brethren (Party Leader); Kevralyn Soulfire, 15th Sorceress of House Tumdurgul; Virana, of the Seers; Jihad Reim-Kennar, of the Assassins; Harlequin Voidstalker, 9th Wizard of House Tumdurgul; Thumper Kneebiter, Veteran of the Iron Guard;

**Valley Alliance:** Alabrion, Sorcerer of the Temple of Earth; runt, Hospitaller Priestess; Tersius, Druid Priest; Gutrot, Veteran Ranger;

**White Retreat:** Montezuma, Priest of Humact; Aldred, Veteran Crusader; Wilfred, Veteran Crusader; Caradac, Journeyman Seeker.

### Earth Day, 5th Day of Harvest Moon (Lammas)

We congregated at the North-Western corner of the Great Desert, where we met:

- Dunstan (Head of the White Path Sect)
- Mertram (Assistant Guildleader of the Temple of Earth)
- Lord Mian (then Head of the Necromancer and Reaper Sects)

Each Tower representative gave our group 300 Gests with which to buy back missing Alliance members. After this exchange an Easterling teleported us into the Desert, close to the Omar camp. As we approached, we were attacked first by Dymwan and then by Easterlings/Ordos Tribe who had with them an efreet.

We had been fore-warned of some treachery to implicate the Alliance as the assassins of an important visiting dignitary to the fayre. Our enemy's plan was to lure away the high status group while the deed was accomplished, murder the witnesses (including our low status group), and then name these as the culprits. To thwart this plan, we decided to pose as the low-status group.

### ***In the Camp***

We were met by a Halmadonian of the Order of Purity, brother to High Priest Magellan al Rasheed Mohammed iban Sullam Roc of the Micheline Sect, who has been missing from our Towers since Eostarre. The Halmadonian entourage included a captive Morgothian. From my enquiries, we learnt that:

- the Morgothian Tower is now known as Minas Angmar;
- there is an area of mistlessness in the Pass of Jade (near Halmadons Height). It has been there several moons but is not growing, and is not as large as the mistless area close to our Alliance;
- there is also a mistless area close to Minis Angmar.

The Halmadonian also declared Magellan to be "dead" and refused to receive his brother's personal effects, including talisman, when our healer runt offered them.

### ***Slave Market***

An Easterling guide showed us the layout of the site:

- bidding arena;
- palisade (no combat unless agreed between both parties);
- tavern (no weapons permitted).

Due to the inter-planar nature of the slave market, the currency used was 'favours' (small coloured stones with a faint magical aura - colour denoting value). The Dai-fah-Dyne bursar said that she would exchange Gests to favours at a rate of 10 Gests to 1 favour, with a commission equivalent to 10 Gests for each transaction.

The way to increase the number of favours were through competitions and gambling. It quickly transpired that most money was to be won in side-betting on the outcome of various competitions. Within the tavern several games were set out - chess, backgammon, and dice. Alabrion managed the evening's "investments" on our part.

A member of the Celestial Bureacracy won all her backgammon games. She - Lai - was from the "Ministry of Thought".

### **Fire Day, 6th Day of Harvest Moon**

We awoke to a Dai-fah-Dyne demanding 27 favours for our safe night's rest - a not-insignificant percentage of our current earnings. We paid another Dai-fah-Dyne for information on how the bidding works, and also to put "shadow bids" on various slaves we were interested in purchasing, upto a ceiling. We were disappointed to later learn that this had apparently not been communicated to the Dai-fah-Dyne bursar running the auctions.

A group of Saldoreans arrived during this time. The first auction was for a house-elf. The bidding dropped from the bursar's initial suggestion of 10 favours, until eventually the Saldoreans put in a winning bid of 5 favours.

An Easterling named Hut'nar introduced himself and asked us to assist in security arrangements (as we were honoured guests and were thus receiving preferential treatment), to

which we agreed. He also demonstrated a large amount of ignorance about the Shadowsfall and gave over some favours in exchange for basic information about them.

We received word that BoShek, High Priest of the Dark Brethren and Three Times Hero of the Alliance had been promoted to Guild Administrator of his Sect. Harlequin joined our group shortly afterwards, having tried and failed to approach the Annach Morannonil camp. The auctions continued as morning passed to afternoon, and some combat competitions were held, and a fortune teller provided some other entertainment.

### ***The Constructors from Delimos***

We were approached by a person in grey, introducing himself as from "inter-planar security". He tested our group's strength by fighting Gutrot, before requesting we take on a group of supposed "false traders" who had allegedly been offering slaves for sale outside of the market. He also suggested that the group may have slaves of ours, and paid half of the fee (in favours) up-front.

Following his directions we left the camp, coming across groups of elementals and constructs guarding the approach. One group had with them a Constructor who said that his master had given orders for none to pass beyond that point. He seemed lawful (almost honourable) and resigned to his fate.

Eventually we espied a dead figure bound to a tree, our arrival heralded a further group assaulting us, and indicating that the person in question was their master. After we had dispatched these, a group from Minas Angmar complete with Uruks arrived, and headed down the path from which we had come.

Next to the dead man was a note pinned to the tree, reading: "Let this be a lesson not to meddle in the business of the Iron Star". There were also two pieces of abandoned clothing nearby - one a Wolfhold tabard, the other bearing the symbol of the Church of All Time (an hourglass: one half white, one half black, partitioned along the horizontal axis).

The dead body was highly contagious, infecting those nearby with quite potent diseases. With Montezuma's protection, we were able to make enquiries through Virana about the victim, whereby we learnt:

- he was named Illuthian Shard, the Constructor;
- he was from the Plane of Delimos;
- his business was trading slaves;
- he had been here to trade the Church of All Time individual;
- he had never heard of the Iron Star;
- he had no idea why he had been attacked, nor who had attacked him.

Whoever had attacked him had neglected to take the large amount of favours in his pouch, which we claimed as our own before returning to camp.

### ***BoShek***

High Priest BoShek departed our company to deal with a traitor to Wolfhold; we were alerted to BoShek's return a few hours later and found the Pathfinder Philip trying to save him from a group of Uruks. As it was nearly night-time, they drew strength from the darkness and the Easterling guard shouted out that magical damage would be most effective. Harlequin duly obliged with some well-placed shocking grasps, which helped floor the creatures.

Taking the unconscious BoShek back to camp, Virana cast a vision to determine the source of the problem in which she played out his fight with Sir Gurthang. It seems the Hand of Darkness I gave BoShek had helped fell the traitor who, at his very end, had stabbed the Guild Administrator with a morgul blade. This would usually entail instant death, yet BoShek lived. Having now determined the source of the problem, our Hospitaller Priestess runt used her surgical skills to bring BoShek around.

### ***Darkness Falls***

We had received word that the Dymwan, who possessed two Alliance Pathfinders, would be meeting at a nearby ruin this night.

As we journeyed to the site we happened across a large delegation from House Morfeaglin who were interested if we had any healers in our group. We took care of the drow, but unfortunately two shades whisked runt away.

Unable to track her path, we continued to the ruin where we killed a Dymwan Necromancer and laid low his undead creatures. Soon after this fight, another Dymwan Necromancer arrived asking what had become of his acquaintance. Upon learning of his former colleague's death, he announced that we had saved him from performing the task himself. The two Pathfinders were there with him - as undead -, but lacking any source to counter the paralysis effects from his ghouls we were unable to stop him from leaving.

### **Steel Day, 7th Day of Harvest Moon**

The next morning, the Omar Chieftain arrived with runt at his side, and returned her to our group (his favoured guests) as a gesture of good-will. He had also expelled the Annach Morannonil camp from the proceedings.

### ***Eye of the Beast***

A few moons previously, we had been maneuvered into giving the Hammas Chieftain, Osama o-Jaffa, a stone known as the "Eye of the Beast" which he had subsequently been using as a means to capture slaves including some from the Alliance. Virana had arranged with the Seers to put a halt to this activity, and through a ritual we were transported close to the stone's location. As we passed through the ritual our two Good Sphere Priests collapsed, by which we understood that we were much closer to the centre of the Desert (which is known to have

detrimental effects on Good Sphere casters).

We fought a number of Easterlings, including one who called forth some sand elementals to assist in the fight. Following this, we came across the "dream" visions that precede the approach to the Eye of the Beast - seeing this time a Guardian of Ungoliant, an Ogre Magi, a Shadowlord, amongst other things. The anti-magic shell surrounding the Guardian however nullified most of the attacks of the Elserri Shadowlord.

Having defeated them, a strange creature approached, asking us to leave the area. Upon our refusal, it promised to inform its master. Any blows upon the creature were reflected back on its assailants. We determined it was likely the Lifebearer for the Hammas Tribe, and once we invoked, we attacked the Hammas camp. Osama o-Jaffa was present and despite calling a number of times upon the desert to resist many magical effects he was eventually slain. The Lifebearer, which had been healing the Tribe (and even resurrected one of its members during combat), moved towards his body repulsing people out of its path, and immediately teleported o-Jaffa away.

The box containing the Eye of the Beast lay at the centre of a circular ward. Most of the ward recognised as unranked power, but a conical portion was unlevelled magic which I determined to amplify the effects of the Eye, and support the spiritual ward surrounding the box.

Moments later, Ashanti of the Hashi-Shan tribe arrived, flanked by seven Morgul Wraiths. He thanked us for ridding him of a "troublesome Chieftain" then requested we leave. He stepped through the ward and claimed the box. Various elements of the party were not content to leave without a fight despite our healers' poor conditions, but Virana triggered our means of return once it became apparent how the combat would pan out.

### ***Visitors to the Auctions***

Back at the camp, more competitions were taking place. The combat competitions favoured genuine skill and agility rather than brute force, and I won the tournament of two swords.

A member of the Church of All Time came to our camp, telling us that he sensed danger drawing to the area. He asked us to call him 'Geoff' but told Wilfred that his name was High Priest Darkfire (two elements favoured by that Church, who also cast both Good and Evil Sphere). He also mentioned that he had visited the fortune teller's camp, and finding it to be empty, had drawn to cards: one, a Tower; the second, a Sun. As the Church are known for their prophecies, and the fortune teller had already made some pertinent predictions, it seemed worth noting.

A White Sufi was present around the tavern; within, she was preparing the low-status group to journey upon a dream walk, and thus requested some quiet. Their bodies would need guarding while their spirits travelled. She mentioned that they were to be seeking the missing Magellan, who she claimed to have met before he departed in search of a Black Sufi.

A while after they were settled, and the visitors had departed, Lord Mian arrived with a host of undead. He asked about the proceedings and took a substantial number of favours from our group. Shortly afterwards there was a commotion, and the undead had attacked the Easterling Head of Security. We elixired the latter, only to find Lord Mian now wearing the colours of the Dymwan. There was more skirmishes with the undead (which included two vampires, one spectre, an undead knight wearing a Micheline tabard, and two fetches) which laid Montezuma low. The Easterling (now recovering) ordered us to kill the infractors but some of the group seemed reluctant to do so and merely ensured he departed the premises. Alabrion and I then negotiated for the life of our colleague who the Easterling had threatened to kill. He was later mollified [slots](#) by some not-insignificant bribes.

Following this breach of security, we were mainly confined to the camp with only four people allowed at the tavern at one time. Two blue elementals were drawn to the dreamers and were taken down by these four.

Later, a Melnibonean named Kernos'Dir Drago of the Dreaming Spire arrived with some guards and a Hepath that called upon earth magic. Eventually the Easterling Hut'nar demanded that he leave within a spell duration as the Hepath was not under control (welding anyone close).

We were surprised to see a young girl walk through our camp, accompanied by a burly-looking guard with an enormous sword. They were dressed in Dai-fah-Dyne colours yet did not acknowledge the traditional greetings. Not much later we heard a scream and saw the girl fleeing, pursued by a group of others who I believe were also wearing Dai-fah-Dyne colours. By

the time we reached her she was very much dead, and the assassins (with obvious envenomed daggers) called out "kill the witnesses - they're the low-ranking group!" In the end they were slain save one who we restrained for purposes of questioning, eventually passing him into the care of the Easterlings. It transpired that the victim was one of the Dai-fah-Dyne Sultanas. We were aware that during this Market a rare meeting of all four Sultans (from the different Marches) was taking place.

A man named Umbari, from Maeglor, arrived with a hand-cuffed Jolan Haarstan (one of the original missing White Retreat party, whose release Melkeron had previously negotiated with the Quahib Tribe). He wished 170 Gests as per the arrangement.

We were alerted that the Denier Tribe were interfering with the dreaming low-status Alliance members. They returned to Orin Rakatha in a poor state - needing elixirs and one dead. We tracked the location of the disruptive dream ritual, fighting Denier who were working alongside some Ordos.

The Secretary of the Black College of the Wizards Concillium arrived and came to a deal with our party leader Daark over auction arrangements.

### ***Evening Entertainment***

Haroon Abershay, Exulted Sultan of the Ruling Crescent and Warden of the Eastern Marches, and Arak Vembassa, Exulted Sultan of the Ruling Crescent, Master of the Southern Marches, were present to witness the conclusion of the slave market.

This included some final auction bids, and competitions including a "fight of the champions" - those people who had won the sparring competitions during the event. These eight winners included four from the Alliance (myself, Gutrot, Tormunda and Orlando - two unstatussed warriors). This time it was to be to the death, and we were able to use our full capabilities. I am pleased to say that the Alliance worked together to defeat the other Towers there (including Saldorean and Wizards Concillium), before settling the combat among ourselves - which I won.

The members of the low-status group also enacted a tale named “The Fall of Kithane/Fall of Shak” which gave some idea as to the origins of the Eye of [slots](#) the Beast – struck from a balrog by The Spider Queen. It should be noted that the Vizier Family hosting our stay are related to Fisal iban-Shak iban-Khamul – where “iban” means “son of”. While one eye is now with the Hashi-Shan Tribe, another should also exist elsewhere.

### ***The Iron Star***

I had also remembered that Umbari was the man who had purchased eight members of the White Retreat from the Ordos Tribe four years ago. I enquired as to who he had sold these to, and he replied that it was in bulk to a group (possibly from off-plane) who wore predominantly grey, and were often seen at these auctions. He had not seen them as yet, at this slave fayre, but agreed to point them out to us.

Jihad tracked a group from Minas Angmar to their camp, who apparently then removed their Morgothian colours, wearing mostly grey underneath. Most of the high-status group then attacked this group, and recovered a letter which was later translated by the industrious Myrtle.

*My brother of the Iron Star*

*It has been decided that our faction should attend the market this year. For the first time it will be hosted*

*There are a number of specimens that have currently been ordered. Your mark should be a psionic mor*

*On another matter we have been reliably informed by our most influential brother in Wolfhold that their V*

*Until we meet again at the Three Sisters.*

*Your brothers in arms,*

*Jurgit and Al*

Upon returning from the camp, the group were assailed by four morgul wraiths.

### ***Diplomacy***

Myself and Montezuma had stayed with the low-status group, for Haroon Abershay wished to talk with us about a number of matters:

- he was interested to know how we thought the Easterlings had handled the arrangements, and observed that their security had been breached seven times during the market;
- he also asked us what we thought of the Alliance hosting such an event next year, after the next Time of Reckoning;
- he asked us to pass on an invitation to host the event to our Towers, and suggested the Dai-fah-Dyne meeting up with Rednow Ffuts to discuss arrangements;
- apparently the Sultan does not spend much time within his Tower, and often travels to other Planes to conduct business there;
- the Dai-fah-Dyne continue to act coy when questioned as to the inhabitants of the Tower in the Lower Waite (with whom they exchanged Tower keys before the last Time of Reckoning);
- he did not know what part of Orin Rakatha the Alliance actually lay in, we apparently lie under the region managed by his brother, the Sultan Arak Vembassa (Southern Marches).

***Maeglor***

Umbari was also present at these discussions; he had purchased Flash (a White Wizard from our Alliance) whose skills would be greatly valuable to him on Maeglor. Following protracted negotiations between himself, myself and Montezuma we eventually came to an arrangement to contract to him a White Wizard in her place for the length of her natural life which I believe the White School has chosen to uphold.

On Maeglor there are different regions between their areas of Sanctuary (equivalent to our idea of Towers):

- the Void ("only the Ordas Valor go there" - a group of Priests to speak in our terms)
- the Absence (those who enter do not return)
- the Borders (fairly dangerous regions in which the Darkness lurks)

The Darkness is a sentient being that causes much fear. The spells of light would thus be useful against creatures of the Darkness, and are not to be learned on their home plane, covered as it is in shadow.

There are ways and means to get between Maeglor and Orin Rakatha - one can use the World Window (although if just specifying "Maeglor" as a destination, you are liable to end up in the Borders), but Umbari chose to pass between Planes at the time of Burning Night (when the Plane of Shadow eclipses our own). Originally he had been planning to return just after All Hallows this year, but given his recent purchase was making straight for the World Window.

Umbari also mentioned:

- he was not particularly fussed over who hosted the slave markets;
- which Towers tend to visit the slave market and why;
- that members of the Chequered Tower seek a creature known as "The Undying One" in

the area of the Valgrind Pass.

### **Sun Day, 8th Day of Harvest Moon**

The Dai-fah-Dyne informed us that during the night, creatures from the Children of the Brood Legion of the Kalid had broken into the slave pens, releasing some of the slaves.

Both groups departed to deal with the Kalid, including BoShek who was determined to fulfil his duty and see this mission through to its conclusion. We fought a number of their foul creatures, slaying several groups of mis-breeds and their human controllers. Additionally, two members of the Wizards Concillium approached and fought the low-status group.

BoShek then departed with some herbalists while we returned to the Towers.

By my hand,

**Kevralyn Soulfire**

**Hero of the Alliance**

**Priestess of Lloth, 15th Sorceress of House Tumdurgul**

### ***The Slave Market – Background and Summary***

*The Towers of Halmadons Height and Minas Angmar continue their war from which they take captives not slain in combat. Neither Tower will meet the other to exchange these captives, so they require a neutral third party. Thus in Eastern Orin Rakatha (the "Eastern Marches", as the Dai-fah-Dyne call it) a market has been established to host such exchanges and other transfers between Towers. It also attracts off-planar visitors interested in dealing with slaves, which*

*means that the Gest currency cannot be used.*

*Although the Slave Market has been running for many years, this was the first time that it has been hosted by the Easterlings working alongside the Dai-fah-Dyne/Eastern Marches. The latter have been encouraging the Easterlings to adhere more to the ways and Laws of Orin Rakatha and as a concession even the Shadowfall had been permitted entrance. The Shadowfall were most curious to observe the proceedings, but were one of the parties later made "unwelcome". The Easterlings seem to know little about the Shadowfall and were interested in learning more.*

*The Alliance had been invited by a very influential figure of the Omar Tribe - the hosts of the event - and had thus secured a privileged position near to the bidding arenas as well as the tavern (where weapons were not permitted) and palisade (where only agreed combat was permitted). The Easterlings did ask for some assistance when it came to security arrangements. The Dai-fah-Dyne later recorded seven instances of security failure and that was before the mis-breeds of the Kalid/Children Of The Brood broke into the slave pens. The slaves were auctioned off, along with other items (such as an empowered sword). As we were not using Gest - due to the inter-Planar nature of the market - currency could be "earned" by winning competitions and gambling, particularly in placing side-bets.*

### **Towers Visiting the Slave Markets**

The following Towers sent representatives who arrived, but were not participating by the end of the Market (many were banned by the Easterling hosts):

1. *Shadowfall - here to observe proceedings.*
2. *Minas Angmar - banned.*
3. *Annach Morannonil - banned, had been attempting to capture members of other groups also there to sell on which was not entirely in the spirit of the fayre.*
4. *Dreaming Spire - banned, as their representative could not keep his hepath under control.*
5. *Dymwan - banned, following an undead attack on the Easterling's head of security.*
6. *Halmadons Height - present at start but not involved in the trading. Arrived with a member of Minas Angmar. A member of Halmadons Height was up for auction and was purchased by the Alliance.*

The following Towers have also been known to attend the Slave Market:

1. *Celestial Bureaucracy* - here to buy others from their Tower, although they lost out on at least one. There is a special market for the Celestial Bureaucracy of late. As well as bidding on their own, they also purchased a pleasure slave.
2. *Wizards Concillium* - here to reclaim their "property".
3. *Saldorean* - regulars at the slave fayre, on this occasion purchasing non-humans including an elf and half-orc acolyte.
4. *Reader* - bought the towerless girl wearing High Priest Magellan's armour.
5. *Labyrinth of Xenos* - not seen here but often attend.
6. *Thissessin* - rarely seen but came once when one of their Chosen Champions was captured.
7. *Kalid* - occasionally attend but only to trade with the Dai-fah-Dyne, not to purchase slaves. Their Brood animals broke into the slave pens causing chaos after the market had closed.
8. *Dai-fah-Dyne* - running the proceedings. Eastern Marches particularly involved.

The following off-planar (or unknown) visitors were also observed in attendance:

1. *Plane of Maeglor* - an individual who was regular attendee to these events (several years), also acting on behalf of Quahib tribe. Purchased Flash, White Wizard of the Alliance although Montezuma and I subsequently negotiated a deal to prevent her permanent enslavement.
2. *Plane of Delimos* - trader/constructor. Had brought a member of Church of All Time with him to sell.
3. *Iron Star* - wear grey.
4. *High Priest from the Church of All Time*.
5. *A fortune teller*.
6. *The Blaze* - off-Planar slave traders who attempted to capture Myrtle. Emblem of a red square partitioned into four parts by a cross ('+').