

A report by master alchemist Railin, High Priest of the Dark Seers

I write this to explain the background to some of the events that occurred at the Miners Rest and the local area in the early part of Harvest Moon.

Lord **Vetzlar** was the Valley master alchemist who worked for Lord **Blackwolf** the once head of Wolfhold. His position was usurped decades ago by the master of disguise known as **Raven** who spent years disguised as Vetzlar whilst at the same time running his network of evil spies throughout Orin Rakatha. Although a master of disguise he knew that completely taking on the persona of another person, their mannerisms, accent etc. would not work with anyone who spent a lot of time in close proximity to

Vetzlar

so he came up with a plan to remove all said assistants from the tower. He showed Vetzlar a very rare poison that he had found on his extra planar travels. It had both herbal and alchemical ingredients, all rare, which would be difficult to find and to brew. It was during one of these experiments that Raven arranged for an "accident"™ to occur which caused everyone in the labs at the time to become infected by the gas released. This affliction was not something that could easily be cured and certainly not in the Valley. Raven did have the cure and in exchange for regular deliveries of the antidotes Vetzlar and his assistants agreed to leave allowing Raven to take on Vetzlar's persona unopposed including the eventual position of Sector Lord of the Menagerie.

There were originally seven students under Vetzlar who were poisoned by Raven.

Grunwick Irontotem (Duergar Hospitaller), Unalla Moonhair (Female Duergar Pathfinder), Railin (Human Seer), Samuel (Human Assassin), Tovvel (Half Orc Assassin), Gwynn Stormbinder (Elf Yellow Wizard) and Renna (Female Human Warrior).

A number of years passed until Raven thus Vetzlar was "dealt with"™ by **Dreadlord Arakis** as the **Dark Pharaoh**,

leaving the Menagerie leaderless. This also meant that the regular supply of antidote ran out and the apprentices slowly started to die. It is not known what has happened to Vetzlar,

though rumours of his brief but occasional appearance in Valley Lands abound. Some of the apprentices returned in order to search the Menagerie's Master labs for the cure but without success.

The remaining apprentices formed a group called the **Magnum Opus** lead by **Grumwick Ironotem**, a

Duergar from Murandir who joined Vetzlar decades ago as an apprentice Alchemist. He was one of the ones poisoned along with his beloved wife

Unalla Moonhair

. Upon their poisoning they moved from valley lands and lived with the Wizards Concillium for a number of years until the antidote supply stopped arriving due to Raven demise. Two years ago Unalla fell into a coma and Grumwick returned to the Valley, desperate to find the cure. Vetzlar's labs were sealed and trapped so he joined the Hospital but his attempts to find a cure were unsuccessful, and over months of discovering cures only to have them unravel he was driven to take on more desperate experimental measures. These experiments involved him concocting both alchemical and herbal potions that he starting testing on live patients. The Hospital saw this decline in his mental health and suspended him from his duties.

Grumwick left about a year ago taking from the Menagerie a being called the **Gatekeeper** who could manipulate the Astral Realm to create small demi-planes where his experiments could be done in peace. He started taking Nomads for these experiments, and as time progressed the experiments got more desperate. The experiments required more and more resources but his funds were not limitless so he invited Alchemists from other nations to join him, swapping his research and knowledge of Alchemy for their help. His allies include the Fortress of Pentar, Wizards Concillum, Thessisin, Jewelled Pavilion, Circle Aflame and Dai-fah-Dyne. Time was running out and this desperation led to mistakes. In late High sun he has sent a group to collect some rare ingredients from

Governor Dullos

at the Miners Rest. In the past Dullos was happy to supply some of these ingredients in exchange for cash and the gift of the

Gatekeeper

whose influence raises the morale of his workers. However Grumwick's requests got too much and Dullos broke off the deal. Desperate for the ingredients to continue his experiments one of Grumwick's men, a Drow called Zilm drugged miners to dig for him, but in their muddled state they dug somewhere they shouldn't and broke into a Dymwan stasis chamber from the time of the Dymwan Wars. The sudden release of undead caused chaos, the Warden in charge of the mines sealed everything inside and called for Assistance from Sulphurtown.

About the Magnum Opus

An alchemical term meaning the great experiment, and also the name that Grunwick gave to a group of Alchemists. The group was founded by Grunwick (Hospital), Samuel Oak (Assasin) and Railin (Dark Seer) all master alchemists who lived in Wolfhold and studied under Vetzlar. They and a number of others were afflicted by Raven to a rare poison in order to kill or keep them away from the Menagerie.

The main goal of this group is Alchemical research in various fields and Grunwick used his own considerable resources to gather allies for this. On the surface they seek to pool Alchemical knowledge, document standards and work together on the study and experiments required to progress the arts of alchemy. Grunwick supplied the group a means to operate safely outside their nation's lands.

This group consisted of the following nations, Valley Alliance, Fortress of Pentar, Jewelled Pavilion, Circle Aflame, Thessisin, Wizards Concillium and Dai-fah-Dyne.

The research and experiments are varied but the main goal that Grunwick used to gather these allies in the discovery of a substance called the prima materia that will lead to the creation of a Calculus Albus (Philosophers Stone). This research has been backed up with tales of the Smaragdine Table (Emerald Tablet) and the legendary Alchemist Hermes Trismegistus the Thrice Greatest who some think was Vetzlar's teacher.

The Magnum Opus owned three main labs each composed of a pocket dimension made of the stuff of the Astral Realm which are called Thaumistia (Arcane), Annwn (Spirit) and Alnwick Gardens (Herbs and Poisons). Though most of the occupants of these labs left or were slain, it is not known of their current status.

Master Alchemist Railin