

Kevralyn Soulfire, Matriarch of House Tul'Draka (Party Leader) Quicksilver, White School
Guildleader Nerak Soulblade, 1st
Warrior of House Tul'Draka, Drow Baron in Darkhome
Teppic, Guildleader of the Grey Path
Lupus, Guildleader of the Grey Gauntlets
Kyle OmPaq, Guildleader of the Sentinels
Michael, White Sorcerer
Velkin Nightshade, 24th Assassin of House Tul'Draka
Doktor Tannenbaum, Healer
Ligner Larsson, Good Priest
Hak Leafbiter, Reaver
accompanied by Sylar of the Dark Seers

Mission Brief

In Leaf Fall Moon (nearly five moons ago), the Oracle of the Fire Wind Walks-in-Dreams was found dead within the Valley Nation. He was swiftly replaced by a Shadowsfall named Adjudicator Braes.

The Oracles to the Mystics had called a meeting - inviting all Nations to the Butler's Boon waystation - to consult upon where the Temple of the Four Winds should be located upon Orin Rakatha.

Our group was in place to provide security of the waystation, liaising with a group led by Cirith, Guildleader of the Humacti, also in the area.

Points of Note

External

- The Oracles have clarified that "The Temple" is the location of whichever Oracle is in season, as opposed to a particular place.
- The Oracles have decided to move out of the Valley.
- Kiara, Oracle to the Dreadlord, has left the Valley and joined the Fortress of Pentar. She left having claimed the Axe of Law, which appeared to have been corrupted by the Cult of Hate and Pain.
- Our evidence suggests that Calex Wraithspawn and his cronies attempted to severely disrupt the Oracle meeting, their aim being to kill everyone inside the waystation. Additionally, they had set it up in a way that it would look like the Fortress of Pentar was responsible.
- The Keepers taught us how to perform a Pact of Neutrality. We enacted this around the waystation successfully.
- The mistweaver Ushrak told us we needed to save the Sneverheim. He was also angry about the fate of the Pordaradrim. He recommended we sort out the Sneverheim issue before the next Time of Reckoning.

- There have been some poisonings within Darkhome and Aether Town that we believe are due to hostile actions of the Fortress of Pentar, with whom the Valley is at War.

Valley Internal

- Quicksilver has been granted the position of Sector Lord of Aether Town for the next six moons, in order for it to be ratified at that point.
- Sorcerer Michael has become the Acting White School Guildleader.
- Sorceress Ksandra, Baron of Darkhome, has become the Red School Guildleader.
- Different representatives of the schools of magic answered the call for a meeting around magical matters in the Valley and have agreed to form a 'Council of Magic'. Lord Giles has taken the position as the head of this group.

Chronologically

Earth Day

Our group was tasked with ensuring the security of the new waystation known as the Butler's Boon, recently created by Lord Khandis's party, in South-Eastern Orin Rakatha during a meeting called by the Oracles to determine the fate of the Temple of Four Winds. Using the Wizards Concillium's new teleportation network, we teleported close to the waystation where we were assailed by a number of uncontrolled undead, including a couple of mummies. The speculation was that this was because the waystation's origins were linked to the Borovne Estate (with its own ties to undead). Once we were within the courtyard of the waystation, we came to understand from the "Butler" of the waystation that its natural protection would keep the undead from approaching any closer.

Upon entering we noticed a strange large silver box on the table. As we felt this seemed out of place, we did some investigating. It appeared that only the people wearing rings that connected them to the Storyteller upon the Place of Myths and Legends (or however it is known now) were able to put their hands upon the box. One of these was Sorcerer Michael, who first communed with and then identified it. During his identify, there was a loud booming noise from underneath our feet and the ground shook so violently we were thrown to the floor. It seemed we were sucked into another place, our magical and spiritual protections were sundered, and everyone appeared to be greatly harmed. While on the floor we were attacked by story-telling blanks who struck quite forcefully.

After we had dealt with the blanks, we took in our surroundings. We noticed around the edges of the dark room many picture frames containing detailed instructions on the operation of and disablement of "a bomb". These had not been present the last time the Valley had visited this waystation. As we had felt the force of the earthquake come from under our feet and the waystation was known to house a cellar, a number of the group went off to investigate. I believe they discovered some hepaths and several mysterious boxes that did not vaguely resemble the bomb sets we were reading about. After some while, the group there cast a ritual invocation and high magic spell upon the box, and one of the "bombs" with their wires and codes was then

revealed. A number of wards within the building popped up without warning, which meant the party were split into three groups, and we seemed unable to pass instructions through the wards, making it even more difficult to disable the bomb. The group in the cellar initially were experimenting with the bomb, causing more blanks to appear in the room upstairs and attack its inhabitants. Eventually, we cracked the code and were able to disable the bomb in front of us. I think this action returned us to the 'normal' waystation (as in, back upon the plane of Orin Rakatha), where the original mysterious silver box on the table had vanished. It was now very late and we felt that we would not be successful in disabling further bombs that evening, with tiredness making mistakes much more likely, and the other bombs were not apparent. Earlier that evening, we had been informed that there we had the choice of visiting two groups of three Nations to invite them to the Oracle meeting. Group one was Dymwan, Halmadons Heights and the Horde. Group two was Kysora's Dynasty, Jewelled Pavilion and the Labyrinth of Xenos. There was another Valley group led by Cirith in the area, who would visit the other Nations. Our group opted for the first group. Some of Cirith's group joined us later that evening where we conversed before retiring for the evening.

Fire Day

Sorcerer Michael reported he had suffered some visions where he had witnessed the waystation being destroyed, while the meeting with the Oracles and Nation representatives was ongoing. He seemed to feel that this was the intent of the person who had set the "bombs". In the morning we were visited by a member of the Shadowsfall, who had happened to arrive at the same time as a Keeper. The Shadowsfall was on the unfriendly side, looking around the waystation and not appearing in good humour. The Keeper was more relaxed and said that he had come to provide us with some useful information around how to create a Pact of Neutrality, which he relayed to members of the group.

We left the waystation to travel to the nearby teleportation site. En route, the undead had disappeared but we encountered a group of hordelings that were swiftly dealt with. Our teleportation destination was an off-shoot of the teleportation network, and did not work in the standard way. When we arrived at the destination, after what seemed like a surprisingly arduous teleport, we discovered a pile of Dai-fah-Dyne clothes and a body that had been torn to pieces and missing a head. We surmised that the teleport operator had been killed, meaning our return would be somewhat challenging. We nevertheless added the limb parts to High Priest Teppic's bag, in the hope that the requisite head would be discovered.

I would note that the reports of the demise of the Fire Wind Oracle mentioned he was literally torn "limb from limb". I feel it is worth observing that this is how I would describe the state of the Dai-fah-Dyne body before us.

We were also attacked by blue and yellow elementals, which we realised some hours later (after having dispatched them all) were helping power the teleportation device.

We came across a further dead body (believed to be Pordaradrim) on a ritual site. Only the very physically strongest on the party were able to slowly approach the ritual as the leaves on the ground were ensnaring the feet of all those who approached. All of a sudden, a blue elemental appeared, snatched the body, and teleported off.

We were further waylaid by some tree creatures that bolted us with large amounts of sap and headed to the trees to heal themselves. For some reason, one of them only seemed to be affected by Nerak's and my blows.

Eventually, we found the Horde group. Lupus went to converse with their representative and

pass on the Valley invitation. They agreed to come if we could deal with a local problem. Some of the nomads nearby had recently become unusually aggressive and they wanted it resolved. Not much longer later, we encountered a group of such nomads, who appeared to have strange markings on their faces. We killed them all.

Progressing further, we came across another group of nomads, but this time they seemed beholden to a suspicious-looking human figure wearing black, also with similar markings upon his face. He seemed to possess the ability to beguile people. It transpired he was a dirty shadowmancer, so we killed him and his group. During a long fight, he returned a number of times to "the stone", from which he seemed to gain healing. We noticed that approaching him and being struck by him seemed to drain our essence somewhat. He was casting black and white battle magic, and as has proved effective in the past, black magic harmed him.

After he was gone, we examined his ritual and took the components and some scrolls (in a new set of runes) there also. The prime ritual component was a whiteish orb which drained Quicksilver completely of his power and life when he touched it. Around this time, a number of us started to hear voices inside our minds promising us power etc, which we believed was linked to this orb. We duly ignored said voices.

We then came across the group of Dymwan to whom we were to extend the invite. Nerak and I conversed with a High Priestess Sarah surrounded by a number of human Dymwan who seemed keen to point out that High Sorcerer Tornado currently leads the Cadre. The Dymwan group seemed somewhat unsure of why they should care about the Oracle meeting. Although I believe we convinced the representatives there, who said that they would pass on a name, it appears that they were subsequently overruled as the Dymwan later declined to attend. Around this time, we noticed the orb carrying by Quicksilver started to emit pulses that would drain the essence of those around it.

We came across some Labyrinth drones who were later to have understood to be saying "void anomaly detected". They had with them a minotaur. Given that they attacked, we dealt with them in the normal Valley way, although afterwards we realised that the minotaur could likely have solved our immediate essence-draining problem if we had fed it the orb.

We came across the last group whom we wished to visit - the Halmadonians - and Sorcerer Michael diplomated with them. I believe there were a couple of representatives present from the Orders of Purity and Chastity. They also accepted our invitation.

As we returned to the teleportation site, we came across the body of the Horde representative who said he would attend the meeting. Examining him, we noted he had been murdered by what looked like a very significant axe wound, and also had an unnatural corruption that was festering and seemed to be spreading. It did not take us long to find the perpetrator, as we came across a group of Horde (including some of whom we had spoken with earlier) led by a huge enraged troll or some such beast. The giant troll was carrying a huge axe, which seemed to slice through armour as if it wasn't there, with blows as forceful as you could ever imagine. At some point our group realised that the troll was quite enjoying being hit, and that being assailed with "remove pain" invocations was the way to attack him. The troll responded by spirit-wracking himself a few times and getting even more angry. We later surmised he was connected to the Cult of Hate and Pain. He called upon some higher power to leave before he was overcome, but the axe he was carrying lay before us on the floor.

Sorcerer Michael examined the axe with his powers and realised that it was one of the sacred weapons of Law, only that it had been corrupted by the cult of hate and pain, in that it was also one of the four Weapons of Hate. As Michael had some mental defences against the axe's

powers, he picked it up extremely carefully and transported back to the ritual site.

Having not found the head of the teleportation site operator, and thus having no-one to operate it for us, Quicksilver decided to investigate the site himself. He deduced that he would be able to power the device if he summoned and bound some blue elementals which he then called forth. We carefully parried these elementals until his ritual was complete, and we quickly filed back through the portal.

It was early evening and we were back at the meeting place. Mindful that we were in charge of security, we now had with us an orb connected to shadow that was regularly draining essence of those around it and some live bombs that had yet to be disabled within the waystation itself. Quicksilver took the orb outside of the waystation as we were concerned about its presence within, given the waystation's former sordid history. When Cirith arrived back at the waystation, we passed him the orb so his group could transport it far away from the meeting which he duly did. It is our hope that this orb is taken to be purified by the Life Sphere so that its corrupting influence can be dealt with.

We looked for bombs but these had all disappeared upon our return to the waystation. Instead, we found some anchors to the Plane of Shadow in the basement where the bombs had been. Shortly after we arrived back at the waystation, we were visited by an unusual individual from Axos who was wearing very strange glasses, as if some contraption were built into them. He wished to speak with Sorcerer Michael about a ring that Michael was wearing. Apparently a set of rings - including the one that Michael was wearing - were recovered by a group calling themselves "The Misfits" on a mission some time ago, when they were all gifted them and put on the rings without particularly questioning these so-called gifts. The rings hold within them champions, but their true power is being blocked from being unleashed. He wished Michael to simultaneously cast a vision with one from a Dark Seer, to understand the ring's true nature, so Sylar obliged.

It was my subsequent understanding that each of the rings is bound to a different Sphere, including the Necromantic Sphere. Unfortunately for Michael, his ring is bound to the Evil Sphere. Unleashing the potential of these champions is necessary to prevent a fourth ascension of the Evil Sphere, which could lead to the annihilation of life upon Orin Rakatha. In order to stop this utter catastrophe, the Axian informed Michael that he would need to call upon the ring's power. Michael seemed somewhat upset by this news.

Pact of Neutrality

Being able to make no further progress in other matters of security, we then needed to undertake the Pact of Neutrality as taught to us by the Keepers.

We were required to perform four rituals: one of a physical nature, one of a magical nature, another of a spiritual nature, and lastly one "other" which we were given to understand should represent our people in some way.

As circles are a powerful symbol within rituals, we formed a circle ourselves and appointed one member of the group to intone the call to the Mystics. It is the passion and heart that are put into the rituals that make them powerful. A repetitive chant in unison from a group assembled can also add weight to the ritual, and so Quicksilver directed us to repeat some of the choice phrases he made.

For our first ritual, we had Kyle and Hak stand within our circle and start fighting each other. After they start putting some physical effort into it (perhaps initially being mindful of Valley Law), the call was heeded and a number of mist creatures (hordelings) came and attacked us with

physical blows.

For our second ritual, Quicksilver cast every colour of Magic into the ritual circle, while I armed all those who wished a magical blade as part of the ritual. More mist creatures (of the more magical mist-goblin variety) came to attack us, although their strength seemed significantly weaker than the large hordelings of the previous fight.

For our third ritual, Teppic (good), myself - Kevralyn (evil) and Lupus (neutral) invoked our Spheres within the ritual circle, while others invoked on the ring of the circle. We each spoke firmly some words that we see as how our Spheres are represented and then straight cast an invocation of each type into the centre of the ritual circle. Two mist shamans arrived, who were exceptionally powerful and able to easily Heal themselves and Harm others without any obvious strain to themselves. Eventually they decided we had done enough to pass their 'test', and settled down to watch further proceedings.

We had had much debate about what might be appropriate for our fourth ritual, "other". Initially we had considered the use of psionics, but finally we settled upon our diversity. This time Teppic led the ritual chant and we all joined in the ritual demonstrating our different skills (for example casting our primary element into the ritual circle). The Mistweaver Ushrak arrived in an angry mood, talking of the Valley's failure to look after the Sneverheim and Pordaradrim as they should.

Ushrak would switch personality as he transformed into representing members of different Nations, some of whom were more friendly and genial and others who were clearly hostile towards the Valley. I recall there being more of an extended fight with a variety of hordelings while he did this. Eventually he decided we had done enough for the fight to be called to an end and asked us what we wanted.

We requested a Pact of Neutrality to be placed over the area of the waystation for 8 hours - long enough to safeguard the meeting. He then asked who should receive his blessing. We quickly settled upon Quicksilver as the most appropriate candidate. Ushrak then challenged Quicksilver to fight him to the yield, but seemed to somehow reduce Quicksilver to some more basic skills than he is used to prior to the fight. After some sparring, Ushrak seemed to injure Quicksilver's leg enough for him to drop to one leg, and then asked if Quicksilver would yield. Quicksilver defiantly refused to yield, which pleased Ushrak greatly, so the Mistweaver decided he would yield to Quicksilver instead.

Ushrak reminded us of the Valley's obligations to protect the Sneverheim and warned us that it falls upon us to rescue a particular Sneverheim known as Radnar Stormheart, who was believed to have been captured and tortured by Calex Wraithspawn. When I asked him when we must do this by, he recommended having completed it prior to the next Time of Reckoning. As we may seek to put in place a wider Pact of Neutrality at this future time, I believe we should take this message seriously and prioritise the rescue of the Sneverheim in question.

We returned to the waystation and began to prepare for the meeting. The Oracles Delta and Kiara arrived first, with Driedyn arriving later. Kiara claimed the Axe of Law, saying "it belongs to Him" quite emphatically, which we took to mean Dreadlord Araikas. We warned her that it appeared to be corrupted by the Cult of Hate and Pain but she said that she was so overflowing (essentially) with Law, it didn't affect her. There was talk of her being able to cleanse the taint from the weapon.

The Shadowfall were also early to arrive. We met Judge Braes who had recently been promoted from Adjudicator. His face was doubly masked, with a distinctive gold-coloured mask. He was accompanied by Judge Flam who said he was there to help guide the new Judge in his

duties and also perform some kind of translation function. Apparently Judge Braes is currently extremely limited in what he is able to communicate in normal verbal terms.

While we were waiting for the meeting to start, Judge Flam spoke with me about the contract that has been offered to the Valley due to actions around the time of the Oracle. He said that some amount of money had been set aside for this contract. He explained how Shadowsfall contracts work. They won't take out a contract on another member of their Nation. There are degrees of expense. A contract on a Nation Leader he said would bankrupt the Valley. Whereas a contract on someone of more Guildleader/powerful Sorcerer level would be more within our budget. There are different types of contract, for example: simply making attempts on someone's life, removing spirit strength or permanently killing an individual. Or indeed, we can ask them to undertake various tasks. Prices vary accordingly, relative to the perceived difficulty of the task. In all cases, they will evaluate the request and then get back to you later to let you know if they agree to the contract and the budget for this. If they agree to take out a contract, then they will not accept a counter-contract (e.g. someone paying a larger amount to oppose the contract you have just taken out).

There was some discussion later on amongst Valley people around how deep the pockets must have been for those who funded attacks on the Sector Lords at the most recent Time of Reckoning.

Members of other Nations started to arrive for the meeting. I took the decision not to inform them of the bomb threat which we had uncovered, for fear that it would jeapardise the meeting before it had even started. Our plan to mitigate the risk was for us to check on the bomb halfway through the meeting to see if it had reappeared.

The names of those representatives who arrived was recorded by Teppic (whose handwriting I may have slightly mis-translated), and as follows:

Dai-fah-Dyne: Sohayla Ibin Amar Ahmed Ibin Hahan PosuelWizards Concillium: Chancellor

Marius and Ambassador Markham

abyrith of Xenos: Enchanter Oros

Shadowsfall: Judge Flam and Judge Braes (Oracle)

Well of Eternal Souls: Arcat Dihoni

Enclave of Saldor: Pradotmar

House of the Weaver: The Prophet

Circle Aflame: Basil Valentine

Halls of Asguard: Bjorn Brinson (Seer)

Pordaradrim - did not arrive

Thissessin - did not arrive

Jewelled Pavillion - Name crossed through, the notes seem to read "Soroya her servant"

Reader - Pius Costelli

Halmadons Heights: Adjutant Sir Calam to Sir Bors, Knights of Chastity

Nations who were not on the list of accepting, but who attended nevertheless:Fortress of Pentar

- Gabriel Chide

epers - Captain Scarlett

Nations that have declined, were recorded as:Celestial BureaucracyKeisora DynastyDymwanL

aire Tinwe

Warriors of the Iron Islands

Cabal of the Dragon

Warriors of the Crimson Winter

No Answer:The Forgotten

Oracle Meeting Summary

In terms of the business of the meeting, the following is a summary of the outcomes:Kiara left the Valley and joined the Fortress of Pentar.

We agreed that the sitting Oracle is the Temple.

We agreed that the Temple will move out of the Valley Nation.

Several possible locations were suggested, and a decision will be made soon.

I passed on Kiara's views in that the Temple should reside in the 'freeland' (outside the border of any Nation).

Once the 'Temple' has moved the status of the Valley Sector known as the Temple will be reviewed.

During the meeting, a number of Nations offered to help guard or provide protection to the Temple. The Halmadonians offered to do this for the 'Good' Oracle when it was their season, and confirmed that they would not hinder access to any who came to visit the Oracle, no matter what their Sphere. The Dai-fah-Dyne offered to protect all of these Oracles for profit.

Fortress of Pentar

Gabriel Chide was one of the first to arrive at the meeting, introducing himself simply as "Gabriel". He was a confident individual who informed us that not all of those within the Fortress of Pentar were Chaotic, and that there was a Lawful aspect to some of their leadership (I believe he included himself in this assessment). He pointed out that the Knights of His Dark Majesty, beholden to Dreadlord Araikas, had very much purposefully chosen to join the Fortress of Pentar Nation, declaring that he saw it as the place that was most strongly associated with the worship of the Dreadlord.

Early on in the public meeting, once everyone had assembled, he challenged Oracle Kiara saying that many times the Fortress of Pentar had asked her for representation within their Nation but so far their requests had fallen upon deaf ears. He challenged Kiara around the relative worship of the Dreadlord and mentioned certain events that had already been 'foreseen'. To many peoples' surprise, Kiara agreed to his request, and they both immediately departed the waystation together, with Kiara carrying the corrupted Axe of Law.

Attack

Although Lupus left the meeting mid-way through to check if the bomb had re-appeared, and confirmed that it was not there in the cellar, there was nevertheless a disruption.

All of a sudden, the Shadowfall Oracle, who had otherwise remained exceptionally quiet during proceedings, sprung up and started heading out of the room towards the cellar. Judge Flam said that the Oracle had detected an anomaly in the area.

Not much time later, one of the bomb boxes appeared suddenly in the middle of the room containing all the Nation representatives and wards sprung up around the waystation that we could not breach. Even more unfortunately, the assassin Velkin, who had the knowledge to decode half of it, being on guard duty outside the building was on the wrong side of the ward and unable to enter the room to assist.

The Nation delegates reacted differently to the situation which they had not been warned about.

While we as a party immediately began trying to de-activate the bomb in the manner we had learned previously, the Dehori sputtered about this being a trap by the Valley whilst on the other hand the Halmadonian cast a light spell so that I could quickly read the instructions around which 'simple' and 'complex' wires to cut.

Given the time constraints and the unavailability of one the key decoders, the 'bomb' went off, and some constructs appeared in our midst, trying to attack us. After a while of us landing utterly ineffective blows upon them, we realised that these constructs or perhaps dream creatures were not managing to harm any of the people present, which we later attributed to the Pact of Neutrality that was in place. Some short time later, the constructs - who had clearly sought to harm those present - disappeared.

Although they had not managed to harm any present, this occurrence was disruptive to the meeting, and a number of Nations chose to depart shortly after this point - the Dehori in particular as I recall.

I shall record the disposition of and information from the delegates present as I recall.

Dehori

I spoke briefly with Arcat Dihoni of the Dehori, although quickly concluded that talks were unlikely to be fruitful. He seemed bristling with barely-contained dislike of the Valley (note: not Hatred in the manner of the Cult of Hate and Pain that we have witnessed elsewhere) and looking to find fault with our Nation wherever he could. He left promptly as soon as he could find an excuse to do so, citing it as another reason that his Nation had to mistrust and further dislike the Valley.

Arcat was a distinctive-looking individual, a slightly-built human with a large red skull emblazoned across his face, as per the skull on his Nation colours.

Labyrinth of Xenos

Enchanter Oros conversed briefly and politely with me during the meeting, not in the manner of the traditional Xenos manner, but as someone in control of his own mind. I would describe these interactions on the 'friendly' side. As he was about to leave, he passed on the message that Finneas would help the Valley with regards to reforging the nodes of White and Red Magic upon Orin Rakatha.

Wizards Concillium

I spoke directly with Chancellor Marius for some time, this being the first occasion that I myself have met him. He was most courteous. I should note that in the Oracle meeting itself, he indicated his disapproval that there was not a Mystic for Magic as there were associated with the Spheres upon Orin Rakatha.

With me, he also spoke of his vision where Magic was of equal importance on Orin Rakatha to the Spheres. He talked of how people must supplicate and beg the Spheres for assistance, whereas the elements are something you may command and control, which in his view is much more powerful.

I mentioned the writings in Lord Cardinaris's Book of the Dead, which he said he had also read, courtesy of some Aldonar individuals who lived in the Concillium. The Chancellor said that Cardinaris's observations that Magic were the less sentient versions of the Spheres was one of three errors he had noted in the Book, and that it was clearly written by someone with no command of Magic.

He wished the Wizards Concillium to be the home of teaching upon Orin Rakatha. He said that we are not accessing Magic in the proper ways.

I asked him how he knew what the blank Node was after the Valley had just obtained it from the waystation, and he said that it was obvious to anyone in tune with Magic upon Orin Rakatha. He re-iterated that we have one moon in order to sort out restoring the broken Nodes if we wish this Node returned. I told him that I was personally looking into the matter to ensure that the Nodes were reforged. He suggested we sort out both White and Red Nodes at the same time. When I asked him what his original element is, he said he had never had just one element but had always been a purple caster: first a Purple Mage, then Wizard, then Sorcerer. From the manner in which he said it, I have no reason to doubt it.

He said that there are 4 Nations that home Purple Sorcerers (Wizards Concillium and Valley being two of these).

From what he said, it sounds like there are other Nations upon Orin Rakatha who do not yet support his vision with regards to the dominance of the Wizards Concillium in the area of magical teaching.

He mentioned that he was already working with High Sorcerer Tornado of the Dymwan Cadre in matters of Magic.

Keepers

I did not speak with Captain Scarlett, but she did occasionally chime in to the Oracle meeting with comments along the lines of "why don't you do this [clearly obvious thing]" (which may not have been obvious to most of the others assembled).

Circle Aflame

As he was leaving, the man (a human) from the Circle Aflame handed me two scrolls in my capacity as party leader. He said that one reflected the views of his masters, and another reflected his views. From our brief conversation, it sounded a perhaps slightly oppressive society, maybe one that is ruled by Priests?

The verses are transcribed below.

At sunrise one will see a great Hatred, Noise and light rising towards the Peaks of the Starvale. Sails of Steel and Death come, Anger in their Hearts.

They bring the tainted Weapons to break the order of the Mystics.

Quatrain 375.6 and:

Near the borders of a falling Nation. There will be two scourges which they will never see, Poison in the Knights Well, points to the Five.

Leads to the great immortal secrets.

Quatrain 97.7

These verses were clearly both carefully chosen. Although I appreciate reports should stick to the facts rather than speculate, I would note the following:

To Quatrain 375.6 - During our mission, we encountered the Axe of Law, but it was tainted by the Cult of Hate and Pain, and is now carried by one of the Oracle (Kiara).

To Quatrain 97.7 - The Valley has essentially 'lost' the Oracles from our Nation and is no longer solely responsible for upholding the Will of the Mystics, as well as having reduced significantly in size at the last Time of Reckoning. This might be considered by others to be a 'fall'. Two of

our Sectors have recently been poisoned, and this is believed to be by the Fortress of Pentar ('pent' generally referring to 'five').

Jewelled Pavillion

I spoke with the Jewelled Pavillion after I had made the declaration about the Valley Drow House (see below). The representative from the Jewelled Pavillion said she welcomed my House's stance of opposition towards Shadow and so we had an extended conversation. These are my notes from memory.

The Pavillion I understand come originally from a plane named Hyatt Gallia, where they live within a hostile desert environment. The Knights of the Cold Dawn have also come from this plane, but I believe they did not adapt so well to the desert conditions. There is also a Drow House based there for some while, which I understand to be House Morfeaglin.

Upon Hyatt Gallia I had already understand that they had been issues with the Void, which sound unresolved. The representative confirmed this. Because of these issues, they had been looking for alternative places to live. A Princess of their people had come to Orin Rakatha, just before the Ways had shut upon our plane, preventing anybody from leaving. The Princess was able to establish a sanctuary here during that time, and so the Nation decided to stay put and I believe more have followed since.

The Jewelled Pavillion use djinn and summon Hepaths. They consider themselves Lawful in their own way. They disclaim any damage that a Hepath may do after it has been released from whatever service it has been contracted to do by their people, as it is no longer under their control. She told me that if they are breaking any Laws of Orin Rakatha then they will adjust their ways of living accordingly. They have invited representatives of the Mystics to their Nations to verify that they are living in accordance with the Laws, but presently I do not believe this invitation has been followed up upon. The representative seemed most concerned about the law of Slavery, but listening to the way she described her society, I did not hear anything that suggested they were in obvious violation with the Law as I understood it.

The representative said that the Jewelled Pavillion are curious about the history of Orin Rakatha, and have had an exchange with the Valley Archives for around a moon. Other points of note is that Seers are held in great regard within their society.

Finally, she said that the Jewelled Pavillion would be willing to share information about any Shadowmancers with the Valley (and vice versa), should they become aware of such an existence.

Drow Announcement

I made the following announcement to those still assembled on behalf of my House.

From henceforth, the House shall be known as House Tul'Draka (which means "Blood and Fire"). Blood and Fire are what hold back the Void, Blood and Fire stand against Shadowmancy, and our House - House Tul'Draka - opposes Shadow in all its forms.

We may be recognised by our symbol of a three-flamed fire (colours generally being red on black). Previous symbols may be phased out over the course of the next few moons.

We are the Third Drow House, and all Valley Drow are beholden to the House.

Steel Day

Early in the morning, some of the group noticed some odd effects around the area of the waystation building. For example, skins went down, and people were teleported around. Also that morning, we were visited by a colourful retinue from the Wizards Concillium who were very excited to have arrived so early for Oracle meeting. They seemed perplexed when we said that it had already taken place the day before. They were insistent that they had the day right. It was noted that this waystation may have peculiar properties that could lead to people becoming confused about the passage of time.

After some further visitors, we established that three Nation representatives - a Xenos Enchanter, the Wizards Concillium Ambassador, and the Halmadonians - were missing. I also spoke with a Sorcerer from the Red School about the vote within the Red School of Magic concerning who was to be elected as Guildleader. The system was a multi-round affair as there was more than one candidate standing.

For various reasons, I was obliged to remain at the waystation while the rest of the party, led by Teppic, went to look for the missing members of other Nations. They were successful in locating them.

They also discovered that the 'bomb' set-up was not the Fortress of Pentar, as had been previously speculated. It transpired that it was in fact Calex Wraithspawn who wished us to suspect the Fortress of Pentar, by the appearance of Hepaths and so forth.

The following information was kindly provided by Sorcerer Michael:

The time was spent entirely upon Tel'aran'rhiod and during that time we encountered a number of continuing visions of the story which explained that a shadowed figure had convinced a hepatohistorian to plant the bombs in the waystation using nomads and wearing colours similar to the fortress to deliberately implicate them. Also the link between the places was accidental and not planned.

We learned at the end that the shadowed figure was Calex Wraithspawn and his plan was to kill all present at the meeting and destroy the new waystation.

The three individuals we had to rescue were all under the dream that we were a threat of some sort when we arrived and had to have the fragments with them destroyed before we could calm them.

The first was the Labyrinth representative, an enchanter whose name I do not know. Once we had calmed him he seemed confused due to (we believe) some disruption in his connection to the hive mind. However he was able to reconnect and apparently awaken himself. The second was the Heights' representative who believed us to be evil casters of some sort. Once he was calmed, Ligner was able to utilise his ring of the Storyteller to forcefully awaken him.

The final one was Ambassador Markham of the Wizards Concillium. He was still somewhat unhappy with us even once he was calmed and believed we had not performed well in taken as long as we had to rescue him. I awoke him as well, so we believe we rescued all the people from the meeting who were trapped.

The visions we witnessed will be summarised below: 1- Nomads being congratulated on planting the devices by a figure in green and silver (although not actual Pentar colours) who then ordered their destruction by his accompanying hepatohistorian

2- A shadowed figure in black discussing whether the devices had been planted with the figure from the previous vision. The shadowed figure stated all the devices had to go off at the same time to achieve the desired effect. The dark figure then seemed to sense that they were being observed and we fought the figure in green once more (he escaped at the end of each vision)

3- Once more the figure in green and the figure in black talking. This time the figure in green was explaining that one of the devices had been triggered early and this led to an unexpected side-effect of linking to the "place of dreams" (I believe that was the term he used) and so the shadowed figure was annoyed then instructed him to attack the waystation with his strongest hepaths.

4- We saw a vision of Calex addressing cultists of hate and pain. He was driving them to attack the waystation once its defenses had been weakened by the hepaths. He then sensed someone watching in exactly the same way the shadowed figure had before and drove his cultists to attack us before simply leaving.

In the evening, we were informed we would be receiving a number of esteemed Sorcerers from within the Alliance who wished to discuss the Call for Unity and potential creation of a Sorcerers' Council which was recently put out within the Valley Nation.

One of the first to arrive for the meeting was Sorceress Ksndra of the Red School, and I was the first to be able to congratulate her on her new position of Guildleader of the Red School of Magic, which she will be moving to Darkhome.

Lord Giles arrived shortly afterwards.

Unfortunately we were then assailed by Calex Wraithspawn and a variety of his minions, including the Shadowmancer and Axe-wielding Cultist we had met on the previous day. After a hard fight, we were finally able to drive Calex off. **A Council of Magic**□

A number of Guildleaders and Sorcerers arrived so that we had the following representation:

Lord Khandis Greyspider - Sector Lord of Darkhome

Black School - The Darkbringer (Guildleader) Green School - Shaemus (Guildleader) Grey

School - Lord Giles (Guildleader)

White School - Sorcerer Michael (Acting Guildleader)

Blue School - Zephyr (Guildleader)

Red School - Ksndra (Guildleader)

Yellow School - Count Talen Michelli

Brown School - Myrtle

Also present was Malcolm Middleton of the Yellow School of Magic.

First up for discussion concerned the leadership of the Aether Town Sector, for which Lord Khandis was present to speak on behalf of the Council of Lords. Quicksilver had publicly put himself forward to become the new Lord of Aether Town, a position which has been vacant now for a number of moons, since Lightfoot Flame's permanent death at the hands of the Shadowsfall at the last Time of Reckoning. Lord Khandis asked Quicksilver a question regarding some past actions in his use of the Rogue Seekers. The answer would require a degree of humility and courage, given its public nature. Quicksilver talked to actions a decade or more ago, where he had originally sought to use the Rogue Seekers for the benefit of the Valley but had sadly strayed to using them for more personal intentions. Quicksilver was able to recognise and acknowledge the wrong in these historical actions, and expressed regret for how he had behaved in this matter in the past. Lord Khandis found Quicksilver duly contrite, and hence appointed him to the position of Acting Sector Lord of Aether Town for the next six moons.

I announced Ksndra's new position within the Red School, and Quicksilver appointed Sorcerer Michael as Acting Guildleader of the White School.

We then moved forward to other business, principally concerning discussions as to whether we wish to create some form of council that could work together across all the Schools of Magic.

The consensus was that this would be a valuable idea, although we were not so easily able to settle upon a name. The group's current name is "Council of Magic", but further sensible suggestions will be received. In terms of structure, Shaemus wisely pointed out that having large numbers of people at a meeting is unlikely to lead to anything being agreed. Therefore, we agreed to limit the gatherings as follows:

Each Magic guildleader - or person acting in their stead - to speak on behalf of their School. That person should represent the views of their School at the meeting, rather than their personal views. Should matters be put to a vote, there would be one vote per School. A seat for the Lord of Aether Town to contribute to discussions, and to hear what the Schools have to say. Not a voting position.

Someone to be elected as leader for the Council.

Someone to act as meeting facilitator (an administrative position only).

Lord Giles was the only candidate standing to become Leader of the Council of Magic, so no vote was required on this occasion. I will be acting as meeting facilitator for the time being. If anyone has agenda items for the Council of Magic, please send them my way.

With fundamentals out of the way, discussions moved onto matters that people felt were relevant and of interest to them at this time. The predominant focus of the discussions therefore, and unsurprisingly, was the Wizards Concillium. Particularly as they have expressed a desire to become the sole teachers of Magic upon Orin Rakatha, which - if it were to be permanently the case - would drastically affect the functions of the Magic guilds.

A number of concerns were voiced about the Chancellor of the Wizards Concillium (for example, his swift rise to power and the methods he has employed to get there) and his potential plans. Shaemus helpfully informed us that he was the one who taught Chancellor Marius and his ilk how to put people in the Concillium prison that had previously held a number of Valley members. Shaemus described it as "a vanish bubble". For those who are unfamiliar, Shaemus used to be the Dean of the Green College of the Concillium.

Discussions also covered the question of teaching scrolls, which the Valley have been seeking to re-acquire, and how to protect such valuable items against those capable of enforcing a teleportation, as we know that those in the Concillium are capable of doing to people within their own Nation.

As Malcolm Middleton was present, we asked him if with hindsight he regretted his actions with regards to passing the Valley's teaching scrolls on to the Concillium. Malcolm admitted that he did regret it.

Sylar, the Seer, expressed concerns at one point around how conversations around the Concillium could be perceived, as some clearly felt emotionally on the issue and others were expressing their concerns on the matter. My read of the discussions was that it was around acknowledging the scale of the Concillium's potential ambitions, understanding any potential risks to the Valley because of these, and suggesting what we may wish to do in order to mitigate some of these risks.

Other points of discussion were around the purpose of the meeting of this group of people, with Sorcerer Michael in particular leading in expressing a desire that we focus on how we might develop our own Magical capabilities and work together. I believe such topics were uncontentious and everyone seemed to feel that the sharing of information was also valuable. As the evening wore on, people needed to depart. Conversations moved to other matters. It transpires that Darkhome has been under prolonged and heavy attack from the Fortress of Pentar for a long while. Some members of our group had observed an unusual level of fatigue,

particularly when sitting down or casting spells. As some of these individuals were quite disparate, the connection was not initially obvious. We came to learn that two Sectors had recently suffered poisoning (Aether Town and Darkhome) which is attributed to the Fortress of Pentar. It is anticipated that side effects may become stronger as time draws on. The Hospital is understood not to have any present way of dealing with this. I believe it must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

By my hand,
Kevralyn Soulfire Matriarch of House Tul'Draka