

In the morning we followed through with our plan to travel on successfully. We met with some of Falk's men who had been cut off from their main forces by the army that had arrived. We determined to press on through to King Michael. Over the battlements we went and encountered the first of the army troops, drawn up in neat lines, their red uniforms clean, the white sashes across them bright in the morning sun, at the far end of the battlements they were with larger more powerful two-handed wands. We charged the hundred yards towards them, only to have our front ranks cut down by their magic missiles fired from these elemental wands. The next rank pressed on into contact, then the ambushers in their green tunics sprung up from the bushes high to one side and poured more fire into us. A messy scrappy fight ensued, for the troops were skilled combatants indeed with their blades. We were victorious nonetheless.

Pressing on we then encountered the Senator with Special Unit 9, after a period of fruitless diplomacy, relations broke down and what began a skirmish turned into a serious fight. We slew some of the weaker members of Special Unit 9, and pressed the Senator hard. In the end he fled with his inner, most powerful cadre, teleporting away.

Finally we managed to reach Stephen Falk, who told us of the dire straights that he and his forces were now in. King Michael had not been the figurehead he had hoped for. His presence had not roused the people as he Stephen had hoped. The government's army was here, the first of them had driven Stephen and his men back to here, and ultimately their numbers would spell his doom. King Michael had withdrawn along with Tar-Cathellion, and wished to speak to us alone. Stephen guided us to him and then left us.

Now we spoke to King Michael and he told us a sorry tale indeed. He told us of how he had been drawn forwards, but that he had been so weakened from his fight with Chaos Hepath General in his "real" time, he was no longer the warrior king and that he could never be that. He had tried to serve as king for the White Retreat, but we were not the people and places of his life. The withdrawal of the Kings Favour made that clear. He was tired of his life, and wished to be set free, free of the burden of kingship.

We were all astonished at this. King Michael told us that we as representatives of all the people on quest to find him had the power to set him free, or keep him. In the end it was a unanimous decision and King Michael was set free.

In his last act he appointed us as a new Royal Fellowship, charged with finding his successor in accordance with the ancient ways. That we should choose three candidates and present them to the High King, that the High King might select from amongst them the one who would best be king (a strange parallel to the way the three were candidates for kingship of the NightFolk).

King Michael set aside his Kingship, and ascended to become one with the spheres. We watched, with tears in our eyes as the music of the spheres rang around us calling him onwards, calling him upwards.

The seer guided us to King Michael's retreat, where we began our discussions to select the three candidates, and how to find the High King. The information that we had obtained earlier along with advice from the Seer led us to conclude that Senator Amadeus was none other than the lineal descendant of the last High King of Murandir, Blaze.

We went to investigate the Telescope and StrayLight, but in the night became entangled in several fights. On the way we espied Senator Amadeus engaged in negotiations with one of the Generals. It was at this point that the Senators intentions became clear. He was not here seeking King Michael; he was here seeking to acquire the Elemental Wands for the Empire legions. He saw legions armed with these wands as an unstoppable force, and bringing such back would be the lever that he would use to propel himself to become Emperor.

The thought of Empire Legions armed with these Elemental Wands was not to be tolerated and so we interfered in the negotiations, slaying the General in a confusing three-sided fight. After the General was dead negotiations with the Senator broke out concerning the choosing of a king. He confirmed that he was indeed a direct lineal descendant of High King Blaze, and was this capable of making such a choice. However he needed us to persuade him to do so - for unless there was advantage to him, why should he help us. We agreed to meet upon the morrow where we would present three candidates, one person speaking for and one speaking against each.

We retreated to Roscoff where after much discussion concerning these matters we took our rest. In the morning we returned, first meeting Stephen Falk. His (and our) dire straights of the day before had become even worse. The main army had arrived and he expected that he would be overrun in the next hour or so. While we were talking to him a delegation from the army approached under a flag of truce. The Colonel and General encouraged Stephen to give himself up and he would be given a quick clean execution, but Stephen refused. He did however

negotiate a space of several hours so that he could make his peace with God, before the army would attack.

Using this time we went towards the assigned meeting spot with Senator Amadeus, along the way we bumped into the Colonel of the special weapons division with his troops. We charged, straight into the soldiers, straight into the weapons fire. But not only soldiers were armed, there was a massive wheeled weapon, larger than a man could carry it fired a massive shot that riddled the front line as we dived to the ground to avoid most of it's shock. A stroke of luck, the massive weapon blew up! On we charged, most of us falling, but then the next wave came on and the priests afterwards, healing those on the floor so we could continue. A massive melee ensued, in which most of the front line was dropped, and with the arrival of the steam golem the rest were driven off back around the corner. Whilst the golem fought with those few still standing the Colonel held an inquest into the reason his weapon had exploded and upon discovering it was incompetence had the unlucky soldier executed by firing squad! Still such things bought enough time for the golem to have been destroyed and then our comrades came round the corner back to save us - which they did. This time without the experimental weapons we defeated our opponents.

Moving into the building we met with the Senator, and there presented our three candidates; Sky, Paullandiss and Duke Hanrow. A complex deal was struck with the Senator. All agreed not to bring back the secrets of these Elemental Wands and Magic Missile shots. In return we would accept ambassadors from the Empire in our towers, and become vassal states to the Empire. We would be self governing on Orin Rakatha, but off-plane would cede to the wishes of the local Empire potentate - this would be a significant coup for the Senator to bring back to the Senate. There was a matter of tribute that we would pay, as part of the client nation status, but we wagered the Senator on that matter, holding an impromptu tourney out in the field. If we won, we would not pay tribute. The Senator set the terms, that the fight would be to the first two deaths, and that after the fight he would choose the King from our candidates. We fought then against the Senator and his remaining troops, who were the toughest of his forces, being as we had whittled away the chaff in our earlier fights. In the end we were triumphant in a close fought contest.

Afterwards Senator Amadeus chose from our candidates Sir Paullandiss - being as how he had led us for several days, it was his quality of leadership that had most impressed him.

At this point our thoughts turned to getting home and using the Telescope - to project ourselves through the StrayLight back to Orin Rakatha. Our deliberations were interrupted by the untimely arrival of the Government troops who were now sweeping away all before them in the fort.

Stephen turned up at this point, being about the last person still alive of his men. Fortunate indeed that he was still alive as no other could operate the Telescope.

We battled our way to the room where the Telescope was. There we put up our last defence, trapped with no way out. Many great deeds of valour and bravery were done in these small rooms, buying time to complete the rituals necessary to reverse the operations of the Telescope. In came steam golem to battle us. In came the almost continual firing of the Elemental Wands, firing Magic Missiles on anyone visible. Fortune favoured us - the troops could not find their special weapons in the darkness. But still the straights we were in were dire indeed, there was no possible way we could defeat these numbers. Magics and power were being spent at a prodigious rate to keep people up, so that they could block for those doing the rituals. Our valour in the end proved to be enough - we bought enough time. The Telescope sprung to life and we hurled ourselves through, to arrive back on Orin Rakatha, just outside the White Retreat.

A few weeks later...We all assembled once more, for a ceremony of great import. For the coronation of King Paullandiss. Before all present King Paullandiss took his throne. Those present publicly swore allegiance to him as King. And as we did so we felt the favour of the King upon us, the favour of the Spheres.

Our Crusade was a success! The King has returned!

For the King!