

*Over the last few years, the dark entity known as Agoth has turned his gaze towards the Kern Valley Alliance, ever since Yana's Hut was drawn to the Void by the presence of the Red Sorcerer Gilrehyan and whilst there an Alliance group unwittingly dismantled an Agothian Soul Garden.*

*Since that time, the former Dymwan Cadre necromancer Otion Wraithchild has become Agoth's vessel upon Orin Rakatha and has opened strategic portals to the Void upon Murandir and Thranduil. Manipulating the shadow-bound plane of Maeglor, he has caused the timing of the conjunction of the Plane of Shadows to merge with the conjunction of the Plane of the Sleepless Dead upon Orin Rakatha, heightening his power. This year at All Hallows he intends to open a portal to the Void at the Aldonar Tombs, in the heart of the lands surrounding the Alliance Towers, and perform a Ritual of Sundering that will strip all life from the area. This effect – to destroy life - will also manifest itself upon Murandir and Thranduil, with devastating results...*

The following group of adventurers were summoned to the Aldonar waystation to begin upon a quest to thwart Wraithchild and Agoth:

Sir Kal, Kevralyn Soulfire, Teppic, Quicksilver, Khortaz, Lancorin Bloodcall, Ezekial Bramble, Aruna, Toshiro, Kalliste, Jack, Tersius, Randolphin, Gravesong and Puke.

## **Fire Day Night – Mission Briefing**

We congregated at the Aldonar Tombs where we were met by Dreadlord Araikas, Steward of Wolfhold and Sir Clavados, Steward of the White Retreat (our two mission sponsors); Sir Arren Hardwicke, Adjutant to Lord Sebastian; and Leaf, Administrator of the Pathfinders' Guild. A member of the Wizard's Concillium also came to speak with Quicksilver.

We were briefed upon the current, sobering situation: Lensal Blackbone, Head of the Reapers Sect, had fallen while fighting Otion Wraithchild; Mothac Storm, Head of the Dark Brethren Sect had taken up his place at the forefront of battle. Galithinal Nomass, Head of the Humacti Sect

had retreated, but Cirith of the Sacred Swords had also fallen in the fight against Agoth. Dreadlord Araikas himself was preparing to fight Otion Wraithchild; the gravity of the situation could not have been more underscored.

We learned that Otion Wraithchild's Vere was of a spiritual nature (and thus could only be damaged by spiritual assaults); reports of the fight indicated that each of his blows would render an opponent motionless and unable to use their weapon.

Our task was to travel to the Hall of Heroes, via the Plane of the Sleepless Dead (PotSD), to seek out knowledge on Otion Wraithchild's personal Soul Garden and how to destroy this and the threat that was Agoth. We were warned that due to the nature of the PotSD, we would be unable to rest, recover or sleep during our time there and thus we may need to use our resources sparingly.

We were also briefed upon the current political situation in the towers. With Rol-aucus (Raucus) returned to Murandir, the Primus was in disarray, with many not turning up for meetings. The whereabouts of both Geran sal Beridan and the Goblin King was unknown. Some troubles and illness affecting the Green School of Magic meant that it was proving hard to locate these individuals. The future name of the Tower is yet to be decided/confirmed.

Dreadlord Araikas had brought with him the original copy of the Necronomicon, a weighty tome of knowledge pertaining to the Spheres and afterlife – including the Hall of Heroes - authored by Lord Cardinaris himself. The Dreadlord said that the numerous original protections upon the pages had been broken and Sir Kal swore an oath to return the book to the Dreadlord's hands.

Dreadlord Araikas gave me permission to speak in his name, and Ezekial Bramble was elevated to High Priest of the Grey Wardens and informed he could speak for the Valley Alliance Tower. Sir Kal was promoted to Captain in the Order of St Michel and authorised to speak on behalf of the White Retreat. We were loaned a cloak of Resurrection by the OSM.

Tersius was made a Sorcerer of the Yellow Guild, and Quicksilver was pledging his service to the Wizards Concillium for a year in return for magical teachings. Sorcerer Randolphin was announced as a Purple Wizard.

On a different note (not related to this mission), Sir Arren informed me that Scholar Vilmeus, Professor of the College of Spatial Correspondence, had been apprehended at some point in the past by the Shadowsfall and not seen since.

As the meeting drew to a close, we heard further bad news in that Mothac Storm had fallen to Agothian forces, and so Dreadlord Araikas strode forth to personally lead Wolfhold's attacks against Otion Wraithchild.

## **Fire Day night – Further Activities**

Sir Clavados had requested that Sir Kal lead this mission. Sir Kal confirmed me as second-in-command, and Teppic as third in the chain.

The two avatars of Death, Chorien and Anubis, came to speak with us in their immortal form. They reminded us of our mission and highlighted the importance of striking against Agoth itself, not just Otion Wraithchild. They had opened a portal to one of the Realms on the Plane of the Sleepless Dead, close to the Realm of Battle, and said that this was gaining in strength as time passed: by dawn it should be fully-formed. Our travel was to be activated via a scroll that the Chorien would send to Randolphin.

As the evening passed on, I was called out into the darkness to meet with a powerful Servant of the Spider Queen who declared me a High Priestess of Lloth.

More welcome news was received that Dreadlord Araikas had defeated Wraithchild, causing the latter to temporarily retreat to the Void – although we knew he would return in a matter of hours.

## **Steel Day Morning – Departing Orin Rakatha**

The news took a turn for the worse as day broke; while Dreadlord Araikas had defeated Otion Wraithchild a further two times, it transpired that the Tower Leader of the Catacombs of Agoth (Tiresias) and rushed in and plane-shifted the Dreadlord and his retinue to Maeglor. The Dreadlord had managed to send us a message saying that he was returning, but it would take some time. Lady Mortifera was taking up the fight for Wolfhold in the mean time.



When Randolphin received the scroll from the Chorien, we moved quickly to the portal, where we also found Otion Wraithchild himself. Our remit was to fight a defensive action to allow us to pass through the portal. During a brief stand-off, he tried taunting us, but was so blatantly lying that I took heart he was this rattled. I also pointed out to Wraithchild that he was the one who had lost the Black King in the Immortal Game, while others still retained their Black pieces. He managed to paralyse and fatally injure a number of our group, but we made our way through the portal as planned.

On the other side of the gateway we were greeted by different types of more usual undead, including a mummy. We dispatched most of these foul creatures and were then greeted by one Lord Cardinaris (who I viewed as Kelnozz Hatch'nett): he had "intercepted" us as we were travelling on to the Plane of the Sleepless Dead.

The situation was not hostile: Wolfhold had an alliance with the Dymwan and apparently he had come at Puke's request for assistance. Lord Cardinaris also sought the defeat of Agoth and was thus minded to be most helpful. He offered us the use of his personal lodge to travel the realms of the Sleepless Dead; this building was protected from scrying, could move where we

did, and would provide us with a place to rest and recover our energies.

He had with him the Realm Lord of Disease and Decay, the Realm Lord of Pain, and Lord Mian. The first two were Lords of two Realms we may need to pass through in order to access the Realm of Battle, and thus gaining their support would ease our passage. It transpired that they themselves had been suffering Agothian attacks and wanted their realms cleared of Agothian forces. In particular there was a Vere in the Realm of Disease and Decay. Undertaking this task appeared to be of mutual benefit, and the Realm Lord of Pain requested to speak with someone with mastery over potion making (Ezekial).

Lord Cardinaris/Kelnozz Hatch'nett (he is one and the same) also pointed out that to travel to the Hall of Heroes, those who had not been there before would lose spirit strength as we must die to enter this place. He suggested we bargain with the various Realm Lords to prevent this from happening. These people then made personal bargains; apparently somebody valued their own life (and that of the other individual who was unwillingly sacrificed in their place) as little as one Gest, still, each to their own.

Lord Cardinaris also tried to tempt Randolphin to pass over the Necronomicon in return for the Staff of Doom, which the Yellow Sorcerer had the sense to refuse.

The Realm Lords took their leave of us, and we passed onto the first Realm: that of Disease and Decay.

## **Steel Day – Realm of Disease and Decay**

As we made our way to the Realm, we fought our way past a number of elemental-like creatures whose blows were tainted with disease.

Further, we came across two guardians to the entrance to the Realm who we presumed were in the service of the Realm Lord. They gave some of us various limbs as a token of our passage;

other people were required to donate some of their own.

We fought a reasonably large Agothian group that included an “Agothian Soul Scribe”: a new type of undead that was carrying a scroll. All forms of offence against this creature were futile but it left us once Ezekial put out his hand in a vaguely friendly manner to take the scroll. The contents of this letter indicated that a Vere wanted the defeat of the Leprous One so that the Unclean One would ascend in power; the Vere then intended to claim the Unclean One’s power to bolster his own strength.



We heard shouts further up the path and found the Leprous One under attack by a large number of Agothians. We defeated these and “restored” the Leprous One by giving him a number of limbs from the initial guardians. It turned out he required a few more to become whole again, so Kalliste bravely donated her tongue and Teppic, one of his eyes.

During our time in the Realm, we were plagued by a disease that grew in strength, the longer we stayed on the Plane. We could suppress it using a ‘Remove Disease’ of the corresponding strength however this did not stop it from returning at a greater strength as time drew on. Assisting the Leprous One appeared to cause the effects of our diseases to wane in level, for a time.

After half the party meditated or cast, the Unclean One arrived with another large group of Agothians, evidently unaware that they sought to use him for their own purposes. He dismembered a number of limbs and there was a fierce fight before he and the Agothians were dispatched.

Once everyone was healed up, we traversed further and encountered the last great trouble-maker in the Realm, a Vere of Agoth, accompanied by some Agothian Sorcerers (not undead) and more of those disease-ridden elemental creatures. A firm fight ensued, with many people repeatedly succumbing to fatal diseases (mainly due to the elemental beings). Unfortunately Teppic himself fell to one of those and was not assisted in time to save him. The Vere was of a physical nature, and so, after a good many weapons were landed on this creature (in return for stunned and broken limbs, shattered shields and blows of exceptional strength) it finally exploded with a wave of energy that permanently drained the health of everyone in a close vicinity.

We resurrected Teppic who understandably seemed disgruntled about his death, and Aruna desperately called upon the Chorien to transport us to the next Realm. We were aware we had but minutes before half the group would all succumb to a fatal disease.

### **Steel Day – Realm of Pain**

The Chorien reached us just in time: Aruna's calls to him had been "muffled" in some way by the Agothians. We were deposited in the Realm of Pain where almost all our number immediately keeled over in agony. I wasted a Remove Pain potion before someone pointed out that Ezekial had a potion recipe that would prevent the natural effects of the Realm from assailing us whilst we were there. He made this and we each consumed it.

We were aware that three "anchors" of the Realm had been corrupted in some way by Agothian forces, and so we set forth to restore these.

Not far away we came across one such anchor, a black-faced creature with no mouth, writhing in torment upon the floor, its arms bound with some sort of barbed wire. Close by were some psionic Agothian creatures, which we defeated but not before a swarm of wasps had launched an attack on all present. The more Agothian creatures were defeated, the more the anchor entity seemed to recover and he spoke with me, indicating that he felt his power siphoned off from the land.

We found a gravestone and buried box which seemed to contain this power; the gravestone was irrelevant but opening the box and withdrawing an amulet seemed to break the effects of whatever ritual the Agothians had cast. The amulet granted protections against psionics: we determined that this had been an assault of 'mental pain'.

Next was another guardian of the realm, this time staked to the ground through each of its limbs. We fought Agothian creatures of a physical nature, and recovered a similar skull-box that contained an amulet that warded against broken bones.

We came across the last anchor; this time we cast a "remove pain" invocation upon both the barbs on its upper arms. We inferred that the final anchor was bound by emotional pain, although we were unsure how this would manifest itself. Not much later, most of the party started behaving oddly, particularly Khortaz; others seemed to become grumpy and down-hearted, whereas Lancorin and I could not help but find it all quite entertaining (not deliberately I am sure). Again a large number of Agothian minions attacked us, this time causing the party to become paranoid, lose their faculties and so on, making the fight much harder than expected.

Almost as soon as we had defeated these, another wave of powerful Agothians burst onto the scene accompanied by some of their foul special undead, these ones in particular trying hard to kill me, as I was shouting instructions on how to destroy their undead.

## **Steel Day – Lord Cardinaris's Lodge**





## **Steel Day – Arrival in the Realm of Battle**

The Chorien transported us to the next Realm: that of Battle, the only place whereby we might tread upon the Path of Heroes and enter the Hall of Heroes. We were immediately met by one Sir Ballentyne, who seemed to be a knight of a goodly nature, who was most deferential to “Lord Puke” and brought him upto date on activities within the Realm, and what had happened before.

Tersius started to feel a strong urge to head in a particular direction, as he had ‘within him’ a seed from Erf’s original tree on this Realm, that had once anchored a Valley party so that they might return from the Hall of Heroes before. The pull he felt was to draw him towards that tree.

As we stepped further into the realm we were met by local denizens who, unexpectedly, wanted a fight. We cleared them out of our way, and fought two waves of corrupted nature spirits who cast numerous slow and slip spells upon our front line.

Once these were out of the way, we found Erf’s tree, which was being ‘suffocated’ by two Agothian Soul Taint undead who had latched onto it. Teppic’s suggestion that we should chop down the tree was met with anger by its spirit and he possibly regretted his remark. We were able to remove the Soul Taint creatures with huge magical bolts, receiving in return some large magical missiles.

The tree had been cleansed of the taint and Jack and a tree-spirit or guardian informed us that

we could plant the seed here. Tersius released the seed and Jack guided us in a ritual that would help the seed grow into a new tree that would act as a beacon for our return back to the lands of the living.