

Upon this day I have decided to commit what I have learned to paper. Soon we of the Sacred Swords of Humact will once again journey to the plane of sleepless dead on this occasion to rescue our Sword Brother Woolf who willingly gave his soul for the lives of his people. We have journeyed there many times and upon all occasions have faced great peril and feared for our safe return- yet each time we do so willingly for this is the bond of brothers.

However, as our Crusading days pass we must all face up to our mortality which is why I write this now for this knowledge must not be lost. This is the gift of knowledge our ancestors gave us, and allows us to live as mortal men yet continue to grow as a people and live free, happy, loving and satisfying lives. Mark me now, and hear my words- where any practice the Amarinthine arts they will snuff out the light of mortality as sure as night follows day.

Our many journeys to the dark and foul places upon our quest have shown us that light can endure in the darkest of places and that even in the light the dark can fester. The darkness must be destroyed by the light so men can live in peace.

One reason for this at least is the inevitable corruption that occurs when a mortal mind tries to survive beyond a mortal lifespan. Our experiences with the Otomi people of Chichem prove this conclusively and we hope to have given those people the chance of living in the light. A mortal mind is limited and guarded by a mortal lifetime- what happens to a mind when the body can no longer love or feel pleasure or pain? Further, what happens to the mind when it has experienced centuries of tragedies and bloodshed, stress and mania? It ceases to be human.

All mortal men should know- face your death with joy and live your life with brotherhood, for to do otherwise is a sure road to ruin. All mortal men are born to die, it is how nature intended and any other path is a perversion. At the end of our lives we will be reunited with the life sphere or Humact or whatsoever you choose to call it.

The ways I have understood Humact to be are many and diverse. My first understanding was that he was a hero who slew undead, but then I learned that he was an immortal at a time of

immortals but that he understood the inevitable corruption that came with immortality. Thus he forged the first sword and in slaying one of the other immortals he created death. And with the same stroke he created mortal life. During our work with the Otomi we were granted a vision of the Humacti- a people whose peaceful light filled land was destroyed by the creep of Necromancy. They fought and died to defend their land and their people but failed to stop the Potsd from finally taking it over.

I believe that the four original Sacred Swords of Humact whom I met some seven years ago tell the same tale. But I also believe that all who stand in the light and live and love as mortal men and strive to destroy the dark are Sacred Swords. Their legacy is us, and it is our intent to continue the eternal struggle and leave a legacy of those who will continue the struggle after we have rejoined our Lord and master in the halls of Humact.

So this is my legacy to you, the details of all our exploits in the darkness so that should you continue the struggle you will have Humact's light to guide you. First, let me speak of the Plane of the Sleepless dead and of the realms and their lords.

Before you journey to this inhospitable place you need to know the following things;

- All persons must be protected by the good sphere against wandering spirits who seek to find a host
  - A long durational protection against undead is the best for this as the duration should exceed the length of the mission and a protection from undead cannot be removed by evil invocation
    - Invoking and casting ritual or above Good sphere invocations should be minimised as it draws the wandering spirits- hence the need to have long durational invocations so as to avoid recasting
      - All power users must be careful not to overcast as this will allow the wandering spirits open access
        - The caster of the durational invocations must be well preserved as if he were to die then all his protections would fail and the whole group could be lost
          - To this end, a second and third priest should cast protections and each of these priests should in turn be covered by at least two protective invocations
            - As the PotSD is their home some Humacti invocations do not work such as discern and repel
              - A Humacti should discern undead by their appearance and by their effect, power damage tends to work well although when fighting skeletons caution is advised

The PotSD mirrors Orin Rakatha and we believe many other if not all prime material planes - the undead who know its routes and portals are able to move with ease and cross to our plane- especially around All Hale's eve when the two planes conjunct, this is a great advantage to the forces of unlife (see notes on the Dymwan war) and should be put to a stop as soon as possible. The plane is divided into a number of realms each different in character and ruled by a different lord. Running through the middle of the plane is an area known as the dark pass inhabited by the gold masked Niggromancers one of whom is know as Arnal Narlac (see later).

It is not a harmonious place and divisions may be exploited between the realm lords. In my experience it is very difficult if not impossible to kill a realm lord in their own realm. In my knowledge so far there is-

- The realm of bones - ruled by The Chiromancer
- The realm of Battle
- The realm of disease and decay whose Lord we were unable to slay recently at all hales eve- whose realm lies en route to the realm of Battle
- Cardinaris, aka Cranium Doomwraith, who has taken the body of Kelnozz Hatchnett soul Shriever of the Mor Silvani, Dymwan tower leader, is now also a realm Lord

In Doomwraith's Necronomicon he explains the connection between Necromancers, the Dymwan and the Potsd.

Cardinaris is the oldest existing undead that we are aware of, and has discovered a way of stopping his spirit from reaching the life realm that has allowed him to exist for hundreds of years possibly more. He has also recently moved into the body of Kelnozz Hatchnett and has control of the Mor Silvani and their arboreal constructs. We know that the Mor Silvani have moved en masse to Orin Rakatha and believe that Cardinaris has used Kelnozz expertise to corrupt the groves and produce more constructs.

As a creature capable of existing for hundreds of years Cardinaris has had the chance to accumulate knowledge, powers, experience and treasures that no mortal man could. He has more in common with immortals than with mortal men, yet unlike immortals he is not a worshipped as an aspect although the term avatar would be more suited.

He is in fact but a man crazed with power and ambition and deranged by hundreds of years of

fighting against nature, time and the realm of life itself. He is a most dangerous opponent who has not been stopped in his rise to power for hundreds of years. Doomwraith's powers are typical of Nigromancy one of the three branches of the Amarinthine arts and the most destructive

- Nigromancy- or the binding of spirits by ritual and alchemical means is the most advanced form of the Amarinthine arts

- Primarily used by sentient mortals to extend their lifespans
- At its highest levels Nigromancy may allow a mortal to avoid death completely
- Powerful Niggromancers may be hundreds of years old or more and will have accumulated powers commensurate with that- i.e. the equivalent of five or more heroes of our valley

- Liches, skeletal Lords and other such powerful sentient undead are usually created by Nigromancy- Kalen-mar-Fen's journals revealed the Niggromantic processes he went through to bind his spirit away from the life sphere

- A Niggromantically created undead may have rituals, objects or other means that have bound them, that will need to be discovered and removed before said creature can be laid to rest

- In other words, in many cases, it is necessary to discern the means of creation before destruction- there is a restricted invocation that can perform this function

- As the highest of the arts a necromancer must learn all the simpler procedures before becoming a Niggromancer

Nacromancy is the middle step and involves the embodying of undead spirits into the necromancers own body.

Some of the easiest of Nacromancy invocations are useable as Necromancy and although weaker than usual they seem powerful to the inexperienced Necromancer and he starts to embody these spirits regularly allowing his body in time to be used as a vessel by those more powerful than him.

This is usually the point that the Necromancer begins the loss of mortality and will start to be shunned by his fellow man.

- Nacromancy is used to bind undead spirits into a mortal body
- A powerful Nacromancer may bind up to 9 undead within his body
- A necromancer learns to bind more and more powerful spirits within his body
- The spirits must be dismissed or destroyed before the mortal can be slain

Necromancy is the simplest of the Amarithine arts. Many Necromancers are in fact simply vessels that more powerful and ancient undead spirits use to act as hosts or lackeys. This is certainly the way that Doomwraith and the other Realm lords view Necromancers.

Back in the valley days Doomwraith, one of BlackWolf's early companions, was a relatively minor Necromancer messing with dark forces he didn't understand. This was when he was taken over by the ancient evil Niggromancer we know as Cardinaris, an ancient Aldonar of long powerful standing. (See notes on the Aldonar, we believe that Cardinaris form had been destroyed when by an experiment going wrong he embodied the PotSD into himself and doomed the Aldonar homeplane.

Using his Niggromantic powers he avoided the life sphere and awaited a suitable body before returning to mortal affairs- Doomwraith was this body and thus Cardinaris most recent campaign against mortal men was begun- in the heart of our valley.

Take note any of you who read this who wishes to walk the dark path of Necromancy- your body and soul will cease to be your own. You will be used by ancient and foul things and discarded as an unwanted toy as soon as a better or more convenient host is required.

Do not mistake Necromancy for power for it is not your power but theirs. In truth it is the opposite, Necromancers have no agency how they live and die and the way they live their days will be controlled by their immortal masters who care nothing for the lives and loves of men and merely see men as an obstacle to a world of darkness.

Look at the destruction wrought on the Plane of unshed tears by Nehrahn the decayer, and to the Aldonar home plane by the Necromantic families of Cardinaris and Prince Dymwan. Utter destruction for all mortal men is what they desire, and that includes you- aspirant evil acolyte.

Further, do not think that even should you rise to power you will be safe. What of Doomwraith now Cardinaris who has left his body? He lies broken and dead, a mortal body used to reap destruction on mortal men, his spirit eternally damned by its perversion and yet to be embraced by the cleansing light of the life sphere. His family and kin cursed for ever to be whispered of in

the dark places by mortal men continuing the struggle against their own darkest urges. Don't do it, make another choice, be a man live and die as a man, free and able to do as you will. I will not quarrel your choice right or wrong , moral or not but remain a man, a mortal, able to live and breathe as your fellow men, do not allow yourself to become a thing to be used by dark forces that have no care for any of us.

That is what we at the Sword have sworn; we go willingly to the life sphere with our hearts and eyes open, rejoined with the spirits of all mortal men, and those who will not join us there are our enemies hence our hatred and distrust of those who will not lives as we all should.

I will also tell you of those we have met and dealt with during our Crusade. I will begin with the Otomi people with whom we have had many dealings. In the evolution of the Otomi people we can clearly see the relationship between belief, power and the spheres. A peaceful people who had merely learned a little of the good sphere, the Otomi were beset by undead immortals. Knowing nothing of Humact they were unprepared to defend themselves and became enslaved to their unfeeling immortal masters. During our first foray on their behalf we discovered that a similar process had taken place within the Humacti people, though their need and desire to stay the dark invasion fuelled their ability to access the powers of Humact and they began to learn of him. Thus their studies of the good sphere ceased and Humact was once again worshipped by mortal men in need of his eternal light.

This relationship between need, belief, power, the aspects and the spheres is also reflected in the later history of the Otomi, whom under the tyranny of the immortals, began to learn the dark powers of the bloodthirsty, and the dark arts prospered. Upon our second visit with the Otomi we discovered the inevitable decay of immortality and it became clear that Necromancy is the first step on the road to eternal damnation. The Otomi tried to create an incorruptible immortal undead emperor and even though the combined knowledge of hundreds of years of the dark arts was applied, the Emperor still became corrupted. A mortal mind cannot survive beyond a mortal body. Corruption is inherent to this process- all immortal undead will inevitable cease to be human and lose the loves and passions that define humanity. As such they are inhuman and eventually will care nothing for the lives of men- they are an abomination and must be destroyed if humanity is to flourish.

Finally, to the Dymwan themselves, I will not write of their History or the Dymwan war for these things are available in the archives but I will speak of Cardinaris and the current situation.

It seems to me that our alliance first met this Necromancer when he possessed the body of a foolish and evil priest back on Murandir. It seems he may have started working against us immediately and is implicated in the village's eventual defeat and may have influenced our choice of Orin Rakatha as destination. Later when our tower structure was in place it is clear that he corrupted the Wolfhold Necromancer Mian to ensure the valleys failure in stopping his ascension to become the Wraith of Doom as spoken of in the Aldonar prophesies.

Since then the war was lost by the Dymwan but Cardinaris power continued to grow, becoming an avatar and an undead source before possessing the body of Kelnozz Hatchnett and recruiting the Mor Silvani into his service. He has also become a realm Lord of the Plane of Sleepless dead. It is clear that he is still very active and sees us as enemies. He has been corrupting the groves, and the Icarthian points of power to grow arboreal undead and in an attempt to corrupt the natural balance of Orin Rakatha as he previously did on his home plane, Aldonar, resulting in the great cataclysm. His activities on Orin Rakatha could have the same result.

As with many other powerful, immortal and sentient undead it is no simple matter to return him to the life sphere- he has learned through eons to cheat the life sphere. In Doomwraith's case we know he is able to survive the death of his body and that he is able to move bodies-to lay him to rest will require this process to be understood and reversed. Common methods by which this may be done are storing the life force in an object or ritual, transference of life force from host body at point of death, storage of life forces in a place inaccessible to the power of the life sphere etc. Generally the more powerful an abomination is the longer it will have existed and the more tricks it will have learned to cheat the life sphere itself.

Whilst some of what I have relayed to you is based on our experiences alone, most I know to be true.

May Humact's light banish the darkness and illuminate the path for men,

*Cirith Lightbringer,*

Master Seeker, High Priest of Humact

Leader of the Sacred Swords of Humact