

Many years ago, in my previous incarnation, I was involved in several missions against the Dymwan. During these times, I, along with several other Heroes, discovered the history of these people and I feel that now it may prove productive to relate this to the other adventurers of the Valley Alliance. Sadly, such information seems not to have been effectively disseminated over the years. If you can bear with me and read through this history, you will discover the true cause of the Dymwan's current strength.

As far as I am aware, all the information contained within this document is correct; others may tell you differently, but most of the details herein were discovered first-hand from original Aldonar texts and conversations with the Aldonar people. Where possible, I will present the evidence at my disposal. Thus, I ask you to heed my tale.

The Aldonar are an ancient race, who originated on a plane other than Orin Rakatha. They are not, as they may appear, human; they have a life span of approximately two hundred years. The Aldonar race was divided into two main factions, which in turn were sub-divided into four Families each:

### The Elementalist

1. The Family of All Elements. This was a house of Purple Wizards, led by the High King Thandamond (later became 'the Ghoul of Doom').
2. The Family of the Searing Flame. This house used the element of Fire and was led by High Prince Sun-Samond (later became 'the Skeleton of Doom').
3. The Family of Night and Day. This house specialised in white, grey and black magic. It was led by Lord Balman-Balnar (later became 'the Zombie of Doom').
4. The Family of Ancient Lore. This house used the four elements of old, specifically fire, air, earth and water. The ruling father was Lord Valendar. (Prince Erelan-Black was, incidentally, one of the loyal sons of this House).

### The Necromancers

1. The Family of the Dead. This family raised undead using all and any means at their disposal.
2. The Family of the Screaming Soul. They were primarily Nacromancers. Nacromancy is the art of embodying undead into living people. Lord Caradanis was of this family, as was his son Dymwan.
3. The Family of the Tomb. This family studied the art of Nigromancy. Nigromancy is the use of alchemical means to raise undead (such undead are typically 'unranked').
4. The Family of Old. This family raised undead using the evil sphere (the evil sphere and the necromantic sphere were once closely linked).

Interestingly enough, it was Lord Caradanis himself who brought about the exodus from the Aldonar Homeworld to the plane of Orin Rakatha. Eager to gain in power and influence, he undertook a ritual of cosmic power, with the aim of embodying the whole of the Plane of the Sleepless Dead into himself. He was unsuccessful, and this event is now referred to as 'the Great Catastrophe'. Here I shall present a copy of scrolls written in the Aldonar script, translated by Lord Mordred and Yagi-San, many years ago:

*'The Aldonar who had come to see this spectacle, mainly necromancers, though of course there were some curious elementalists among them, had no choice but to flee from the great concentration that was developing before their eyes. Whether any of those closest to the experiment survived and what became of the great necromancer Lord Caradanis himself is now uncertain. There seems little doubt that a huge number were sucked helplessly into the vortex, between the two ancient planes and that others were immediately possessed by the spirits of the undead. A large part of the city in the region of the temple was flattened and as the decay and corruption spread outward Aldonar fled to their homes or used whatever means were at their disposal to escape the Catastrophe. That so much of our race and culture has survived to this day, and thrived quickly in this strange new land can only be a tribute to the strength of our leaders and the pure.'*

This Catastrophe caused the Aldonar home-plane to merge with the Plane of the Sleepless Dead and the Aldonar people were left with no other option but to abandon their home; they fled

to Orin Rakatha where they were awarded two Towers. Unsurprisingly, after the Catastrophe, somewhat of a wedge was driven between the elemental and necromantic factions of the Aldonar. Many among the elementalists directly blamed the necromancers for the fate of their plane and thus the two factions each took one Tower. The truth behind this is illustrated by another scroll, written by the elementalist Aldonar, translated by my old friend, Spark:

*'...decreed that all those still loyal to my teachings and command should reject the laws of the necromancer which defy in all ways the principle of the Ral. It is only the secret whisperings of the stirrers of souls who cannot wield true power that turn the Aldonar minds aside from the pursuit of elemental discipline and perfection. Corruption is an easy road to tread, but not true dedication to the principles of our ancient race. Let no Aldonar...'*

The Elementalists named their tower 'The Aldonar Tower', and this is the tower in which the Valley Alliance now dwells. Meanwhile, a young necromancer named Dymwan (son of Caradanis) managed to convince the necromancers that the family of Dead (the first family) was responsible for the Catastrophe and through political manipulation, rose to lead the necromancers; he named his Tower, arrogantly, as 'the Tombs of Dymwan'. He disbanded the other necromantic families, and incorporated all necromantic Aldonar under his banner. (NOTE: For clarity, all future references to 'Aldonar' mean the elementalists and 'Dymwan' the necromancers, although strictly speaking they are members of the same race).

During the years that followed, those of the Aldonar tower were quite active upon Orin Rakatha, and although they had abandoned necromancy, they still had strong links to the evil sphere. Naturally, they were singled out as enemies by the Halmadonians and the newly formed Tower of the Sun, who warred with them at every opportunity. The Tombs of Dymwan, however, were content to 'hide' within their tower, rather than risk their status in joining a War.

Eventually, there came a great battle between the Aldonar Tower, and the aforementioned forces which followed the Good Sphere; the Aldonar suffered a convincing defeat and, in the knowledge that they could not hope to hold their Tower at the next Time of Reckoning, begged the Dymwan for aid. This is when Dymwan, as cunning and manipulative as ever, hatched his diabolical plan to ensure the return of his father, centuries later.

Dymwan, rather than offering military aid or space within his Tower, instead convinced the elementalists that the best option was to place the remainder of their race inside Tombs. In these Tombs, the Aldonar would be preserved by the use of alchemical ingredients; Dymwan

'promised' to awaken the Aldonar, later, when the forces of Good were no longer so predominant. A demi-plane was especially constructed, to house the Tombs of the Aldonar Royalty, while the rest of the Aldonar were embalmed in the many hundreds of barrows that still, to this day, surround the Valley Alliance Tower. Thus, when the Halmadonians arrived to finally destroy the Aldonar, they found what they thought to be a mass grave and returned home, believing their work to be concluded.

Dymwan received a vision from the evil sphere, in which he foresaw his father's future return. He knew that these Aldonar bodies would be needed, if the prophecy were to be fulfilled; he prepared also, as he knew would be necessary, a staff that was capable of absorbing all the ancient power that the Aldonar Lords possessed. The Staff of Doom. The Dymwan set about slowly entering the Tombs of the Aldonar and corrupting the bodies of those within so that undead could possess them. This was a slow process, since many of the Tombs had powerful elemental guardians, yet nonetheless the Dymwan were successful in most cases (in fact, several of the Tombs' defences proved impenetrable and the Dymwan sent to corrupt the bodies within often gave up but reported their missions as successful rather than face their master's wrath). The Staff of Doom was placed within the Tomb of Balman-Balnar, whose body had been corrupted with the spirit of a Zombie Lord. There it would wait, until Caradanis returned.

Centuries passed. The story now moves to Morendir, the plane on which the Village was once based. A somewhat naive necromancer, named Cranium, began to perform research into the art of necromancy and, unwittingly, became possessed by the spirit of Caradanis which had been wandering the Plane of the Sleepless dead for countless years. Inside this body, Caradanis rose to great heights within the Dark Brotherhood and patiently bided his time until he could fulfil his ambition to return to his people. When the Empire came, and it was decided to flee to another plane, Caradanis subtly manipulated events to ensure that the Valley people 'chose' Orin Rakatha.

Shortly after our arrival on Orin Rakatha, 'Cranium Doomwraith' announced that he would be leaving the Valley peoples. He organised a 'competition', the winner of which would be elevated to become the new leader of Wolfhold's necromancer Sect; taking his fabled 'amulet of necromancy', in fact an item of minor necromantic significance, he placed it in the Tomb of Balman-Balnar. Whoever first found the amulet would be victorious! Many rose to this bait and it was Lord Mian who was successful in finally obtaining this amulet; sadly, in the process, he unwittingly triggered the 'Zombie of Doom' and set the ancient prophecy in motion. What follows is an excerpt from a scroll which was translated by Chanin Hawksword, foretelling the events of seven years ago:

*'...is awake and holds the staff, then the Zombie Lord will account his work done and will assume his place in the new born army. The skeleton will then awake his own Princes to serve by his side, before the next passing takes place...'*

The process described in this scroll is that which actually occurred. Specifically, Lord Caradanis needed the power of the major elemental families if he were to repeat his attempt to embody the Plane of Sleepless Dead into himself with any likelihood of success. Thus the 'Zombie of Doom', the corrupted Lord Balman-Balnar of the third family, charged the staff with his family's power and passed it on to the 'Skeleton of Doom'. The 'Skeleton of Doom', the corrupted High Lord Sun-Samond, likewise charged the staff with his family's power. and so on, to the 'Ghoul of Doom' and, finally, Lord Caradanis himself. It is now clear why Caradanis chose to adopt the surname 'Doomwraith' after taking possession of Cranium's body.

Without recounting any more details that would cloud this issue, I can tell you that I was among a group of Valley Heroes who attempted to wrest the Staff of Doom from Lord Caradanis' control. Sadly, although many gave their lives, we failed to keep the Staff from him. Although, to this day, I believe that we were not in a position, during our final battle with Caradanis, to be victorious, I cannot help but feel that some of us should have shown more courage. Although I shall omit the names of others often blamed for such, I am quite willing to accept my part of the blame; I was afraid and sought to preserve my own life rather than give it to serve the greater Good.

So, with heavy heart, I return to this story of woe. Lord Caradanis was evidently successful in embodying at least part of the Plane of Sleepless Dead into himself, since he is now, I believe, an Undead Avatar (previously, he was merely an 'Undead Source'). From what I have managed to glean from conversations with my Humacti allies, Lord Caradanis is, effectively, an embodiment of the necromantic sphere who walks upon our world. This is the Prophecy of Sothsaris, an Aldonar Seer:

*The scrape of nails,  
The click of bone,  
The creak of wood on ancient stone,  
A light returned to long dead eyes,  
I hear the ancient race arise.*

*In silent halls of pillared stone,  
In caverns deep beneath the loam,  
The ancient race of Kings has slept,*

*For ages long and time unkept.*

*The Aldonar shall breathe again.*

*A mighty host,  
The purple robe,  
The burning, searing, flaming globe,  
Night and darkness, light and cold,  
The four great elements of old.*

*The cry of battle heard no more,  
The stilling of the slashing claw,  
In silent slumber all now sleep,  
And dream, while ages watch they keep.*

*The Aldonar shall live again.*

*The limbs they stir,  
The flesh is cold,  
The ancient armour rusted, old,  
From darkest times these nobles come,  
To war once more beneath the sun.*

*They walk the Earth in bodies new,  
They rise to fight an ancient feud,  
The dust which rises from their tomb,  
Is driven forth by timeless doom.*

*The Aldonar shall rule again.*

*The Spheres themselves shall pity take,  
On those who hear the dead awake.*

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