



# Report 22:01:08

From the Royal Sekretorium to The Queen's Council

# SPOILER ALERT

This document reveals many secrets regarding the game world of Symbaroum and is exclusively written for Game Masters. If you intend to play the game, you are prompted to stop reading here.

**TEAM JÄRRNINGEN HAS** gotten hold of a document where Ralgai of the house Melion presents his views regarding the situation in the world outside Ambria. In truth, we are quite astonished by how bad it looks and cannot help but wonder if Queen Korinthia pays enough attention to the lands beyond Ambria and Davokar. The man behind the report also appears to be much more concerned than his cautious phrasings seem to imply...

In any case, we want to invite you Game Masters to read this report with us. What you choose to do with the information is entirely up to you, but you should be aware of the following:

The Chronicle of the Throne of Thorns will invite the player characters to visit several of the sites mentioned below. This is especially true for The First Realm (including Landfall), Alberetor and the homeland of the Dark Lords, Lyastra.

Additionally, individuals from those places will appear in the adventures of the chronicle - agents representing foreign powers or non-player characters with their own reasons for visiting or living in Ambria.

Even if nothing has yet been decided, the locations which are of less importance for The Throne of Thorns may very well become the topic of stand-alone supplements. In this context, the City States lay closest at hand, as there are plans to use them as the basis for a future adventure chronicle.

## SUGGESTIONS ON IN-GAME USE

How you as a GM choose to use this document is not for us to say. Maybe you are happy to keep Melion's highly subjective and biased report to yourself, as a backdrop when staging future adventures for your gaming group. As an example, you can let the characters meet people who come from (or claim to come from) the regions covered by the report, but who does not necessarily know very much of what is happening back home.

Another option is to actually let the player characters acquire a copy of the report. It could be that the classified document has gotten lost and the characters are tasked with retrieving (but **ABSOLUTELY** not reading!) it - a concept that could surely be developed into a whole series of adventures set in the halls of power. Or they may obtain the report by chance, finding it in the saddlebag of a dead courier or on the writing desk of some nobleman.

Irrespective of which, we hope that this report will give both you and your players a deeper sense of the world where Queen Korinthia, First Father Jeseebegai, the High Chieftain and all the others live and operate. For sure, there are innumerable adventures still left to experience in Ambria and Davokar, but even if the player characters do not immediately ready their equipment and travel to foreign lands, we are pretty sure that the insights spelled out in the report will embellish theirs (and the players') perception of Symbaroum's world.

Year 22 after the Victory, the Month of Ynedar  
Report 22:01:08 from the Royal Sekretorium

Report to the Queen's Council regarding the state of the world; dictated by Ralgai Melion of the Royal Sekretorium, recorded by clerk under the supervision of Colonel Revina Kalfas.

**T**he reports received from our agents during the past month do not offer any revelations; they only confirm that a number of weak but not insignificant threats to our great realm are growing stronger. No one shall claim that the situation in neighboring regions is of such a nature that it should steal focus and resources from the necessary operations being conducted inside the Ambrian domain (Davokar and the plains included). None the less, the Queen should be reminded that the Sekretorium, despite diligent and loyal work, is experiencing some difficulty in fulfilling its duties, given the assets currently at hand.

## The First Realm and Landfall

As has been the case in preceding months, one of three expected reports from The First Realm is missing. Why Lea Garlaka and her agents have such a hard time communicating their findings we do not know, but it may be time to investigate the issue more closely (requires additional resources).

Previous information on life returning to the ash deserts has been reinforced. Near the only pure sweet water spring in The First Realm, the ground appears to absorb some of the moisture. The report is difficult to decipher, written as it is by a shaky hand and clouded mind (why is unknown), but can be interpreted as if healthy sprouts have been found near the spring and that specimens have

been sent with a runner to Yndaros (should arrive in two to three months).

Our efforts to reach Landfall are still fruitless. Nothing has been heard from the three agents who have gone out on the water. Most likely, they perished along the way, if earlier statements from Lea are to be trusted (as a reference: "Judging by how winds, waves and currents behave, it seems like Landfall is reluctant to receive visitors.").

The Queen is once again asked to consider allowing our agents to make contact with the people living along the mainland coast, close to the isle. It is a risk, for sure - clearly demonstrated by the incident with the giant mentioned in the previous report; the tall, pale-yellow, human-like creatures are apparently heavily armed and very skilled as both warriors and mystics. But if we want to learn more about Landfall, the Ice Pillars and the stranded stone ships, these folks may very well be our only source of information.

## The Dark Realm

Progress has also been slow within darkened Lyastra. Opal Storms are still raging black around many of its ruined towns and shrines, and the one covering old Bright Haven has even increased in both force and range.

However, we have finally received a message from our agent traveling in the far southeast; a win even if her report oozes darkness. She has come across life, or rather unlife - three villages whose undead populations appear to be trying to rebuild their shattered existence. They plow furrows in lifeless dirt, herd invisible livestock on fields full of withered cadavers, set traps and dig pitfalls that never capture anything besides lost, undead humans. In other words, the Queen can rest assured that the fallen folk of the once so radiant Lyastra, our enemies, are suffering as they so rightfully deserve!

According to a recent conversation with Sister Losadra of The Whip of Prios, the black cloaks have had some success

in the hunt for the three Disciples who are assumed to linger on. She would not speak clearly. Our interpretation is that the Dusk Hunters searching for Disciple Joab have sighted their prey, but that it fled into the opal storm covering Black Haaras. The Queen is advised to task the Grand Master to double his efforts when it comes to finding a method to calm the storms, or at least make them passable. Maybe the Arch Witch can be of help in this context?

## Alberetor

From the motherland there are reports of conflicts around Oracle's Rock. All other land on the estate of Grand Duchess Alevia Brigo has finally grown dark and her sons have ordered all followers of Oreago to leave. However, as has been mentioned before, the oracle cult continues to grow. Despite ruthless initiation rites that kill at least four out of five hopefuls, Oreago is deemed to have a thousand, maybe as many as two thousand devotees - comprising the most capable of all who for some reason have opted to remain south of the Titans. If the Duchess persists in refusing to leave Castle Brigo, the Queen should consider appealing to her sons, or sending troops in defense of the noble blood.

The spread of The Grey Death shows no signs of slowing. In fact, quite the opposite appears to be happening. Aside from the example mentioned above, the disease has spread all the way to the eastern mountains where well-springs now flow with icy black-water and the ground is drained of nutrients. Many scholars have come to oppose the theories that associate the dissemination with the movements of the undead hordes; to be sure, there is a correlation between the two, but since The Grey Death also lays waste to areas which are totally free from roaming dragouls, it is becoming more and more likely that the hordes are moving in search of unaffected lands, where there is live prey to hunt and devour.

Finally it should be said that the inflow to the camp sites south of the mountains continues to decrease. The motherland is now all but emptied of living souls and only a fraction of those determined to stay will have time to change their minds before meeting their deaths. Those waiting for safe passage over the Titans can still be counted in tens of thousands, divided amongst a dozen camps, and their condition is declining - mentally as well as physically.

## Freetown

The most alarming report of the month comes from our legate in Freetown. Master Deledo has not met with Prince Galarman II or any of his Councilors since more than six months past, but his agents have blackmailed their way to a series of classified documents.

Provided that the documents are genuine, it appears as if Freetown is in a very bad situation. Despite generous promises of monetary compensation, not one single human woman has registered as being pregnant during the past quarter, and only two births have resulted in living offspring - in both cases gravely deformed baby boys.

Another document accounts for the movements and growth of the Mastodon. According to Freetown's ranger squads, the abomination is coming south, as slowly and relentlessly as it increases in size. The latest calculations indicate that it will become visible from the town wall towers within four years, maybe even sooner than that.

The third ring wall be completed in a couple of months; from the already finished towers the life-preserving hymns of the Harmony Masters echo in a (probably futile) attempt to cleanse the west wind of contagions. But wall or no wall: the only analysis that should seem reasonable to the Queen is that Prince Galarman's city is in tremendous peril. All sources indicate that the isolationism and protectionism will worsen, and that our once so lustrous trade partner will wither as the fear continues to spread through the populace.

## The Realm of The Order

The rapid development seen in the Realm of the Order after the establishment of a Theologian Office continues. One can certainly say that these runaways and deserters, who once left the Queen's land in reaction to the righteous elevation of Prios, have achieved unjust success under the unifying rule of the Theologist. But there are several signs suggesting that this is a misconception; that they instead are digging their own graves.

According to our agents, The Grand Purification is now finished - all wild areas in the region have been cultivated and all lands blessed, purified from darkness in the name of the Young Gods. On the other hand, the same reports say that the realm is continuously plagued by emerging abominations that, according to the local priests, are made manifest by the evil expelled from earth and water. Regardless of how they try to explain the occurrences, these vile beasts are never allowed to wreak havoc for long before one of the squadrons of The Executioner slays them or, in most cases, drives them bleeding and scarred south into the wasteland of the Mastodon.

The Theologist and her Magistrates are yet to finish the law book Dictations of the Young Gods, but some of its content is already in force. The strong position of The Earthmother is evident - perversion and overindulgence are named as the most serious transgressions a human can be guilty of; that is, to willingly deviate from or to make exaggerated use of The Natural Order. In other words, from what we have been able to determine, the Theologist exalts nature above humankind and prevents all ambitions to fully utilize Prios' gifts. And then they are surprised by the emergence of abominations!?

We must follow the development carefully. Our hopes that the Realm of the Order can become an ally in the fight against the clans and the Iron Pact may prove misdirected.

## The City States

Since we have lost contact with our second established agent cell, and with the three new ones yet to develop their information networks, there is not much more than rumors to go on regarding the situation in the City States. There are no indications that the war front has moved, either north or south, but we have heard that the hunt for changelings has intensified in the border states Dern, Koral and Regol. We are working to confirm that a method for revealing changelings already in the cradle has been discovered.

A rumor, picked up in Freetown, says that yet another city state has left the Union of Cities and that it is likely the recently mentioned Koral - the state that up until now has been responsible for the Union's central line along the front. If this is true, and if Koral also has initiated contact with Princess Mon-So Aion and a number of already independent city states (as indicated by earlier reports), the consequences could be devastating.

Remember that this information is uncorroborated and highly uncertain, but should the Union of Cities fall, it would likely mean an end to the war. A new treaty, championed by Koral's power hungry chancellor Aldamal, would turn the focus from west to east, and is one of the most threatening scenarios we can imagine at present. Plans for disposing of the Chancellor must be drawn up and executed forthwith.

Another report, the veracity of which is much debated among the priests in the Realm of the Order, could mean that The Eternal War will continue. It speaks of a newly founded academy in Rofeld, the city state south of Koral. This may of course be a lie fabricated by the Theologist for propaganda purposes, but the assertion that a new mystical tradition based on the field of alchemy has been developed must be taken seriously - not because (as the priests claim) it is dedicated to "the perversion of the Natural State," but because fire tubes and missile batteries demonstrate what type of destructive powers the alchemists of the city states can unleash.

## Conclusion

We can conclude that the information gained over the last month is uncertain and to a large extent worrying, if not outright alarming. The Queen is and will forever be the light in this world, along with Prios who loves our Nightbane as highly as He Himself is loved.

Should the Sekretorium dare to articulate an assumption, it would say that the threats from outside our borders are modest but in many cases growing more severe. The Queen is advised to be on her guard against visitors from abroad, especially those encountered in Vndaros: those who move among the refugees recruiting workers to Freetown; the emissaries of the Theologist who, invited or not, visit the Cathedral of Martyrs and the convent school; the ambassadors sent to the capital's court and trading houses from the city states. To be sure, there are dangers in Davokar and our neighboring lands, but the Queen is encouraged to direct some attention to what happens inside Ambria's borders and also set aside resources for the Royal Sekretorium to establish a new department dedicated to uncovering any and all threats from within. If the efforts of the Twilight Friars are not assumed to be enough on that front, that is.

Last but not least, we want to repeat the wish for increased funds in order to outfit an expedition to the Archipelago. It has become all the more evident that something has happened to the previously barren isles. The latest rumors say that the Theologist has arranged a near disastrous expedition there, and that the lone returnee confirmed the accuracy of some of the accounts previously left by seamen and explorers. Indeed, he was said to be "beside himself" or even "seriously disturbed," but he claimed to have walked through dense forests full of life; moreover, life of a kind never before seen - creatures he called "Bear Spiders," "Flying Mist-cats," "The She-worm" and "The Termite Youngsters." Also, according to the report, he stated, in one and the same sentence, that a) the archipelago is uninhabited, and b) there are Elven warbands on the isles.

The returnee roared all this outside the chapel of The Executioner and behaved in a manner that corresponds with all others who have set foot on the isles in later years. However, again, the Sekretorium humbly asks if we can afford not to investigate this further. The question becomes even more serious if seen in the light of report 21:06:12, "The Fluctuating Stability of Existence in the Silt of The Black Pitch Mire."

Your Humble Servant

Halgar Melion



# Ambria's surroundings

Year 22 after the Victory

