

SHINE A LIGHT

Following the emergence of the great beast and end to the season's campaigning, the heroes of the Empire depart to Anvil. As Imperial troops withdrew from the shores of the lake in Kroll, a strange sensation is felt across the area close to the Palace of the Sleepers. Shadows darkened and appeared larger; the now placid waters began to reflect light in some strange manner; the skies at night seemed a little dimmer; and sounds felt somewhat quieter than they should. These sensations were widely experienced by the Imperial soldiers holding position in the region; things do not feel as they should, as if someone was behind you in a room, yet to have made themselves known.

Imperial magicians are quick to investigate the phenomena and it soon becomes clear that a powerful Night magic is at work. The Druj are trying to use Night magic to spirit away the contents of the Palace, the people and the books to a place or places unknown. They must have the aid of an eternal for such a thing - it is similar to something Sadogua has done for the Empire before now. Could the Brother of Wizards have a hand in this?

Fortunately the enchantment will take time to work its magic and until it is complete, the Palace remains vulnerable. In the open field nearby, and in the woods surrounding it, are a series of five white granite pillars. Eerie, silent, cool to the touch; they are evidently magical, and potentially so. Each one is bound in webs of Night magic, acting as anchors for the enchantment that is attempting to move the contents of the Palace far from the Empire.

Imperial heroes have an opportunity to visit the Palace Expanse on the Sunday of the solstice, to try and counter the Druj's magic before it can succeed. However, they will also have to contend with a powerful barbarian force that is amassing to secure the area and prevent just such an intervention.

OBJECTIVE: PREVENT THE ESCAPE OF THE SLEEPERS

- **Thwart the attempt to spirit away the contents of the Palace of the Sleepers**
- **Use Piercing Light of Revelation Magnitude 30 to break the Night enchantments on each of the five pillars**
- **When the Empire take the palace they will recover two unique Druj rituals for each pillar that is pierced**

The Palace of the Sleepers has been the target of a powerful magical ritual, using the obfuscating powers of the Night Realm. Imperial magicians who have examined it believe it is a similar magic to Secrets for the Shadow Courier but on a massive scale. The Druj are attempting to use Night magic to spirit away the contents of the Palace - the magicians and their books.

Prognosticators believe that the Palace of the Sleepers has been enchanted through a night eternal's boon. Sadogua has used similar magics in the past to help with the Lyceum and the Hall of Knowledge. The magical effect is tied to the five pillars in the area, each one is clearly part of the boon that is being employed here. If the boons were disrupted, then the strands of shadow that are set to spirit away the magicians and their valuable texts would unravel, making it impossible for them to flee.

This will require Imperial forces to seek out the five pillars - where they can cast Piercing Light of Revelation at magnitude 30 to break the magic that is set to move the contents of the Palace of Sleepers. The more pillars that are pierced the better, but each one will weaken the boon, allowing fewer magicians to escape with their texts and scrolls.

When the Empire take the Palace, they can ransack it for Druj rituals. Most will be duplicates of Imperial rituals and largely useless, but the Druj definitely have some unique rituals. For each pillar that is pierced, the Empire can expect to recover two unique rituals from the Palace when it is captured. If none of them are pierced, or the battle is not taken, then the Druj will slip away with their magical lore intact.

OBJECTIVE: KILL HET TRAKAA

- **Slay the local leader of the Banded Snakes**
- **If Het Trakaa dies, infighting will restrict the Hidden Snake army to balanced attack or solid defence this season**

Het Trakaa is an infamous orc who came to the attention of the Empire when the Sarangrave was first scouted out several years ago. He is one of the leaders of the Banded Snake sept, who ruled over the settlement of Turan and the surrounds. The Empire's advance has seen Trakaa pull the bulk of the elite arkad fighters under his command back into Kroll. In doing so, he has had to abandon the populace he had terrorised to their fates.

Slaying the ruler of Turan will create a chance for other warleaders to stake their claim atop the highest ranks of the Banded Snakes' hierarchy. The Hidden Snake army - which is controlled by the sept will be in disarray for a season until new leadership is established. As a result they will only be able to take balanced attack or solid defence orders this season.

BATTLEFIELD OPPORTUNITY: THE KROLLTHORNED

- **A coven of human ritualists is supporting the orcs in battle with their rituals**
- **Eliminating them quickly will deny the Druj their magical support**

Witnessed before in Therunin operating alongside the orc armies that slaughtered Isaella's Dance and the Iron Helms, the Krollthorned have joined the Druj in the defence of the area, believed to be their base of operations. Known to be servants of the ghulai at the Palace of the Sleepers and there is still a great deal unknown about them.

The Krollthorned are a force of human ritualists and mages skilled in calling on the winter realm in battle. With numbers to undertake potent castings, they were seen to focus on performing individual castings on their Druj masters when engaged. The coven will be continually supplied with mana and resources for their rituals, so eliminating them quickly will deny the Druj important battlefield support. Engaging them on the field of battle is of primary concern, but it also offers a chance for skilled strategists to learn more about them and the threat they pose to the Empire.

BATTLEFIELD THREAT: TORTURED SOULS

- **Destroy the monsters created by the Druj**
- **Priests will need support to exorcise these powerful creatures**

Traaka can draw on scores of Tortured Souls when he marches to war. Retreating from the Turan Flats, the tyrannical het has brought with him dozens of these broken and spiteful creatures. Evidently viewing the control of the Palace of the Sleepers as a pivotal moment in the campaign, Traaka has committed these monsters to help turn the tide in favour of the Druj.

Tortured Souls are born from a combination of the Druj's apothecary skills and mystic rituals that break an individual's will and turn them into a monster full of wrath and malice towards any they face. They are fearsome foes, often still clad in the garb of their former Imperial lives, they are capable of inflicting a grievous curse with blows from their weapons. Whilst it is possible to put down and execute their physical forms, their spiritual presence can quickly return. Exorcists will need to ascertain the strength of the aura that lies on each creature using insight ceremonies, before mustering sufficient power of will, and liao, to dismiss the souls of these tortured beings.

BATTLEFIELD ENVIRONMENT: MIASMA OF DESPAIR

- **The entire battlefield is affected by an oppressive Druj miasma**
- **The miasma weakens anyone exposed to it who does not have the ability to overcome it**

Currently, the entire battlefield, and all of the Palace Expanse, is under the effect of the Druj miasma, a pall of a potent fear that blankets the lands the Druj claim dominion over. Any hero entering the area will need to protect themselves from the clawing dread or succumb to a weakening terror that creeps into their mind.

The primary effect of the miasma is that it weakens anyone exposed to it who does not have the ability to overcome it. The easiest method to overcome the miasma is to receive an anointing, but particularly heroic individuals, or those in possession of certain enchantments or magic items may also be able to counteract the effect. In particular, those of the changeling lineage are able to fight the effects of the miasma, but at the expense of becoming extremely angry - which can cause problems all its own.