

Under eastern skies

My Poison Thorns, the Empire has bled in Therunin while we healed. The Magic of Autumn bound our wounds and now we are ready. The Druj have tortured and slaughtered their way through our lands. We will bring a swift death with our poison thorns. We attack via the Barrens into Eastring

Cadwell Waystone, General of the Isaella's Dance

These are times of great change cousins. Even in death we will finish the work in Therunin, with cold flesh quickened we eradicate the Druj on Imperial soil. This shall mark our rebirth. The dark of winter holds no terror over us. Onwards through the snow.

Alderei the Fair, General of the Iron Helms

Glorious knights of the Golden Sun, we continue our grinding advance through Therunin. We avoid the poisonous lower tarn valley. We continue to defend the Navarr territory from the onslaught of the Druj. Dawn have lost much of late, All stories must end, keep your love and loyalty for them in your hearts. In the name of their glory.

Zoran De Orzel, General of the Golden Sun

Blackthorns, we fight for our homes, our people, our land. Fight for the future and one step closer to destroying the Druj, the the Vallorn. I call the pines and our kin of the Great Forest Orcs. Bring fury to the Druj and burn them to Ashes

Rhisiart Dancewalker, General of the Black Thorns

Along the Lake

Therunin has been invaded by the Druj. They hold East Ashes, giving them control of both shores of the Feverwater, and

following a successful Imperial offensive last season, they fight to hold Eastring. Even if they are driven from the territory, though, their brutal fingerprints will mark the marshy forests for some time to come. The Lower Tarn Valley has been poisoned by Sephal's Cauldron, and it was only through the terrible sacrifice of Imperial heroes, especially those of Dawn, that the orcs of the mallum were prevented from devastating East Ashes and rousing the vallorn.

After their comprehensive defeat at Ashwater, the magicians of the Tainted Basilisk have all but abandoned the territory, retreating back toward the Mallum. Yet before they left, they wove one last tapestry of misery over Therunin with their wicked sorceries.

The twisted ghulai and malicious magicians have twined sickening threads of Spring magic around the marshes and the forests. Their vile curse taints the land itself, causing wounds to fester, making water unsafe to drink unless it is boiled, bloating vermin and leeches and venomous beasts, and even corrupts the trees and plants. Its malignant touch is even worse in the Lower Tarn Valley, where it further strengthens the residue of Sephal's Cauldron.

Woven wooden wards curl around Eastring and East Ashes, drawing power from the Druj's eternal patrons to turn the woodlands themselves against the Empire. Unnatural brambles and thorns coil around the boles of the trees, beasts turn murderously savage, and dark spirits lurk among the roots and branches of the dogwood and marsh cedar. Unnatural fecundity causes familiar trails to become overgrown, or provides living barricades for the Druj to hide behind. The forest itself acts to protect the orcs of the Mallum, to help hide their presence giving ample opportunity for stealth and ambush.

While the Druj rely on wicked magic, their defences are

mirrored in the west by the industry of the Towerjacks. The League army spent the last season preparing defences around Peakedge Song, especially around the hospital. Navarr driven from their steadings, and Great Forest Orcs who cannot make the dangerous trip through the Lower Tarn Valley to the Barrens begin to gather at the sanctuary of Peakedge Stead.

The Towerjacks themselves are gone; leaving Therunin to offer their expertise to the defence of Redoubt. The Northern Eagle march with them but the Varushkans pay a steep price for passing through the Lower Tarn Valley, poisoned by the spillage of Sephal's Cauldron. The blackest arts of the apothecary, and the insidious influence of Spring curses, means some ten score warriors do not leave the valley alive. Yet they do not pause, following their duty south into Urizen. At the same time, the Gryphon's Pride march north from Eastring into the Barrens on a grim mission of their own.

Burn Them To Ashes

If the Navarr of Therunin are worried about the departure of the three armies, they keep their concerns to themselves and focus on preparing for another Druj onslaught. They are by no means undefended. The Black Thorns, the Iron Helms, and the Golden Sun remain in Eastring to fight the Druj, to drive them across the border and secure Therunin.

The 'Thorns are accompanied by a cohort of elfin knights, summoned from the court of Eleonaris. They relish the opportunity to fight the Druj, for the rulers of the Summer realm have little love for the treacherous orcs of the Mallum. The Iron Helms have their own supernatural allies, albeit of a very different flavour. As perhaps fits the dark nature of the Varushkan army the dead march – shamble – with them. Bound Winter spirits throng around the Iron Helms, wearing the

corpses of human and orc warriors who fell in Therunin and using them to bring fear and death to the Druj. The red river curse that lies over the territory plays havoc with the meat they puppet; while it does not decompose, it still breeds swarms of writhing worms and clouds of biting flies and the stench quickly becomes almost untenable. They still fight, though, eager to taste the flesh of the Mallum orcs.

Along with their magical allies, both armies are accompanied by independent captains, their grim warbands eager to defend Therunin and drive out the Druj. The Thorns and the Helms essay a balanced strategy that weighs the need to drive the Druj out against the need to avoid their traps. The Golden Sun meanwhile employs tactics they honed in the Barrens, consolidating the Imperial hold and rooting out the guerillas, ambushers, and assassins left behind by the retreating orcs of the Mallum.

These three remaining armies are joined by Isaella's Dance, well rested after a season recuperating in Astolat. The newest Navarr army pauses briefly in the Heart of Peytaht before marching east through Hope's Rest and the Bleaks and into Eastring from the north. They bring with them all their thornbound expertise, all their green and red wisdom, their understanding of Spring magic and the power locked inside herbs and potions.

With the 'Dance come the Spears of the Pines – the warriors and hunters of the Great Forest Orcs – called by the general of the Black Thorns to fight alongside their Navarr allies. They do little to hide their contempt for the Iron Helms and the Golden Sun, staying close to the Thorns and the Dance. But they still fight; they may despise the Varushkan and Dawnish armies but they hate the Druj.

For their part, after their defeat during the Autumn Equinox, the

eastern invaders seem to be in retreat, apparently preparing to abandon their forces still in East Ashes to the Empire. The Imperial armies press forward, looking to finish what was begun last season.

Sprung

For the first few weeks, the Druj fall back, through the magical defences they have raised in Eastring, toward the borders of the Mallum. Then suddenly they are not falling back any more. They are on the offensive. The Deadly Blade and the Hidden Widow emerge from the deep forests to assault the flanks of the Imperial force. They are supported by the stealthy poisoners of the Hidden Widow, and the bite of their blades bring painful death or crippling injuries. At the same time, the other Druj armies – Arrow Viper and Flame Beetle, and Hidden Snake, Poison Crane and Red Lizard and White Lion – push back against the Imperial advance. They probe and test, and wherever they find weakness, whenever they locate a company that has become overextended or a supply line that has been left exposed through accident or misadventure, they strike ruthlessly, cruelly, and blood flows in the marshy woods.

The Hunting Scorpion seem to be everywhere; adept skirmishers they move swiftly and surely through the wetlands to harry the Black Thorns and the Iron Helms at every opportunity, raining barbed arrows down out of the gathering dusk, even hiding beneath the water breathing through hollow reeds to launch surprise attacks in the middle of the night against soldiers who thought themselves safe.

And in the forefront of the fighting, the Black Wind. The army of the Barrens, the only surviving army of the orcs that sought to resist both Druj and Empire, to secure their home. Twisted by their loss, driven to terrible acts by their unquenchable hatred of

the Empire. A hatred stoked to a white heat by the actions of the Iron Helms, who executed the elders of their people living in the Barrens. They were given leave to reclaim their sept, to take their people into the Mallum, and while there may have been mercy in that decision the Black Wind show no sign of repaying it. They are utterly ruthless, driven by a burning flame of vengeance, they seek every opportunity to retribute the Iron Helms. Those Imperials who fall into their clutches die badly, slowly, painfully. Their remains are used to taunt their living comrades, mounted on spikes and poles, nailed to trees, left lying where they can be found. Their hatred knows no bounds, and they pass up no opportunity to engage the Varushkan army that is the focus of their wrath.

Had the Empire been more reckless in Therunin, had they charged into the fray seeking to drive the Druj out with force, things might have gone very badly indeed. As it is, the more balanced approach allows the armies to avoid the trap before the jaws close around their legs. But it soon becomes apparent that the Druj outnumber the Empire by a significant margin.

The Druj are not reckless however, and for a short time that provides a spark of hope that the Empire might still prevail. Their assaults are cautious, measured, cunning. They rely on their dark sorcery to eat away at those they injure, to do their butchers' work for them. A cowards strategy, but one that works.

Whenever they face strong resistance they draw back... only to attack again from a different direction or in a different place. The pressure is constant, the threat of attack never goes away, and the fear and stress it places on the armies of the Empire begins to grow.

The Razor Snare

Then the Druj strategy changes. One cold wet morning, the forest falls entirely silent. The drums the Druj use to communicate over distances are stilled, and the birds and beasts of the forest fall silent. For hours, Therunin itself seems to be holding its breath.

The moment cannot last. With a thunderous crash the drums return, a relentless rhythm that strikes fear into the heart. The Spring magic ward the Druj have placed over Eastring pulses and changes; no longer impeding and protecting the Druj but constricting and trapping the soldiers of the Empire. The trees and animals become actively malign.

Even with the warning, the armies bog down. Roads and tracks are swallowed in the undergrowth; marshwaters rise to swallow and drown. Insects and predators turn savage... and while the mosquitos and flies and wasps are annoying there are other insects in Therunin. The Druj have already shown some facility with herding the massive chitinous creatures of the marshes, but here it is the power of Spring that fills them and turns them to violence.

While the Imperials are busy dealing with this deadly shift, the Druj attack. They stop retreating, stop probing, stop manoeuvring, and go for the kill with the vengeful Black at the forefront of the attack. The grinding advance of the Golden Sun has secured the rear, but the Empire's flanks are still exposed. Imperial positions are enveloped, attacked from all directions at once. Watchposts fall silent, patrols vanish without a trace, messengers are intercepted and silenced forever.

The armies of the Empire stand, but the Druj keep coming. Brutal, cruel, relentless. Soldiers are struck down by venomous blade and lethal bowshot, wicked spear and malignant spell.

Poison is everywhere, weakening, bringing swift death, even paralysing and leaving proud knights to the cruel ministrations of the Druj or the cold embrace of Kaela.

Now We Are Ready

It's clear that if something is not done, the Imperial presence in Therunin will end with a massacre. The magic that frustrates their efforts to fall back from the Druj, to answer their relentless attack, is drawn from the Spring realm and Isaella's Dance are well versed in the lore of healing and venom. Even as the war drums thunder, the magicians of the 'Dance consult, work swift divinations, and begin to unravel the nature of the wards that make the Imperial forces easy prey for the orcs of the Mallum. It is not that dissimilar to the Wooden Fastness that Ira Harrah taught their ancestors to weave, but where that ward deals with protection and evasion, this one is built to snap shut around the enemies of the Druj.

The commanders meet and reach an agreement. If nothing is done, the Empire's armies in Therunin will be torn to pieces, crucified on poisoned thorns, strangled by creeping roots, smashed by flailing branches, devoured by the beasts of the marshy woods made feral by the enchantment that drips and flows through the water, the ground, the wind itself. There is a way to break free, but there will be a price, paid in blood. A sacrifice.

All those who wear the marks of the thorn and the brand, who have sworn their oaths to serve their family, and the Empire, come together in one place, falling back from the front lines. Then they push north, through the thorns and writhing brambles infused with the malice of the Druj. The Druj realise what they are doing almost immediately, sensing that they have identified a weakness in the trap, and move their forces to intercept, to

stop Isaella's Dance leading the other Imperial armies to freedom.

They don't falter, not for one moment. Amidst withering arrow fire they tear through the hedges and walls of thorns – and through the Deadly Blade and the Hidden Widow, the armies of assassins and saboteurs that seek to bar their passage, to push them back into the killing ground.

Swift messengers give the signal, and the other armies follow close in their footsteps – the Black Thorns, the Iron Helms, the Golden Suns. The other Imperial armies fight to defend the 'Dance's flanks but there is only so much they can do.

Like a spear thrust, the 'Dance slices a path through the woods of Eastring. When one of their warriors falls - pierced with arrows, impaled on a spear, frothing their life-blood from their lips as Druj poisons take hold - another steps up to take their place. They weave through the ranks of the Druj, leaving only corpses in their wake. The Druj try to flank the 'Dance, but the other armies, especially the Golden Sun, ensure that those orcs that try to do so soon regret their decision. The Black Thorns and the Iron Helms hold the flanks, but it is the 'Dance in the vanguard that must absorb the force of the Druj assault.

It seems like days pass, but in truth it is only hours. The sun turns its face away, hiding behind thick clouds. It begins to rain. Hard, heavy drops writhing with the cursed power of pestilence and infection. There is no clear demarcation from the edge of the ward, nothing to mark the borders of the killing ground. Yet there is a subtle change in the air, as the rain falls. A shift in the atmosphere. The Druj arrows peter out, the vicious slaughter falls silent.

The Dawnish send up a great cheer, echoed by the Varushkans, believing that victory has been claimed. The Black Thorns are silent, and their silence spreads quickly to the Helms. The

triumph of the Golden Sun falters, drops away. Perhaps a third of all the soldiers who began the day in the heart of Therunin are... gone. Dead, maimed, lost to the hungry forest and the blades of the Druj. Perhaps two thousand of the Black Thorns are dead. A thousand Golden Suns dimmed, as many Iron Helms missing in the rain and the gathering twilight.

Yet it is not these losses – this horrible butcher's bill – that makes the Black Thorns weep, the other armies bow their head and count the cost too high. The army named for that Navarr who knew all about prices and consequences... there at the forefront... fighting to save as many of their fellows as they could... are gone.

The dance is ended.

Desperation

There is little time to grieve. At least the Gift of Kaela will offer escape to those who have fallen into the hands of the Druj; cold comfort to those whose friends have fallen. The Druj have not gone, have not abandoned their attempt to slaughter the armies in Therunin. There is just enough time to regroup, to gather as many surviving soldiers as possible. The armies cannot afford to stay here, in the woods of Therunin. They are still outnumbered, weakened by the loss of so many lives. It is astonishing that fear and panic do not rip through their spirits the way the weapons of the Druj have ripped through their strength.

There is barely time for a quick meeting among the commanders of the armies, to weigh their options. They cannot return to the killing field of the south; they dare not press east toward the Mallum; to the west lie the poisoned valleys of the Lower Tarn Valley where the Druj will have the advantage and

where the sickening taint that lies there will be all the worse under the Rivers of Blood. They cannot stay where they are, outnumbered and overwhelmed. They must press north into the Bleaks, and trust that the Druj will not dare follow them or – if they do – that they will be overextended.

The horns are blown, the orders given. The armies push north toward the Barrens. There are shambolic routs and ordered retreats and this is neither, this march northward. Discipline holds, but it is fraying in the face of the terrible losses, the growing awareness of how huge the force arrayed against them is, the pestilential curse, the awful threat of slow torment and death at the hands of the Black Wind, the ragged edges of the Druj wards, and the pounding of the drums.

It would be easy for the Empire's finest to give in to panic, but their courage holds. In no small part this is due to the example of the Iron Helms. The Varushkans are no stranger to the fear that seeks to take root in the desperate soldiers. Many of them have faced it before, in the dark under the trees of their homeland. The Druj wield fear as a weapon, but so do the 'Helms.

Yet even their grim humour, their granite-hard morale, falters a little at the force arrayed against them. Near the edge of Therunin, near the ill-marked border with the Barrens, a huge force of Druj waits. At their forefront, the sable banners of the Black Wind flutter, adorned with cloven shields, broken weapons, scraps of armour, torn shreds of standard and surcoats and cloaks, flyblown bodyparts, all clearly taken from the soldiers who have died in Therunin. The gift of Kaela denies them the bodies of so many of their enemies, but does nothing to stop them taunting the surviving Imperials with proof of their wickedness.

The Black Wind are scattered through the trees, along with the

assassins and stealthy skirmishes of the Deadly Blade and the Hidden Widow. More Druj lurk in the trees to the east and west, uncertain numbers of warriors ready to fall on the armies as they try to press north.

Then the drums fall silent again. A messenger – a sneering Druj wearing a torn cloak clearly taken from one of the fallen commanders of Isaella's Dance – approaches the Imperial lines. In an arrogant voice they announce that the Black Wind are minded to be merciful. If the Navarr and the Dawnish lay down their weapons and allow themselves to be taken, they will not be slaughtered. Rather they will be carried east, into servitude, as slaves of the Mallum, servants of the Druj, to work off the crimes of the Empire in the fields and the mines.

For the Varushkans, though, for the soldiers who butchered their elders, the folk of their sept left in the Barrens, there will be no quarter given. Each one will die scre-

The messenger's voice stops suddenly. They clutch at the arrow protruding from their throat with numb fingers. Drowning on their own blood they fall backward into the marsh, dead. It's not clear who loosed the arrow to silence the stream of hatred, but there are few who would criticize it.

The drums begin to beat again, the shouts and cries and screaming instruments drift through the trees. The Empire has given its answer, and the offer will not be made again.

It does not look good. Despite the sacrifice of Isaella's Dance, it is all too apparent that without a miracle, the Imperial presence in Therunin will end with a massacre. Onwards Through the Snow

The Golden Sun, the Black Thorns, the Iron Helms. They gather close together, prepare their lines. The most heavily armoured face outward, forming a wall of steel and mithril against the

Druj. Archers and spear fighters strike over or through the wall as the Imperial force presses toward the border.

The knights of glory roar their fury. The Golden Sun raise their voices in a single hymn to glory, to the strength of the Empire. The Black Thorns and the orcs of the Great Forest join their voices in a savage lament for the dead. The Iron Helms... the Iron Helms and the dead warriors that fight beside them remain silent, weighing the odds, considering their options.

The shambling dead that fight alongside the Varushkans do not fear death, know that if their flesh fails they will simply find a new puppet and keep fighting. The mortal soldiers are not insensible as they are, but perhaps that gives them greater strength. They know what is at risk here. These are the elder children of Mother Varushka, of the land of monsters, of the haunted hills and forests darker than anything that the Druj know. They know that sometimes one must choose the lesser of two evils, that the road is rarely easy. Sometimes there are no good choices, and yet one must still choose. It is possible to do everything right, and still lose. The true, final test of the spirit is how one faces the darkness, especially when there may be nobody left to speak of it.

Their magicians reach out to the dark powers of the north, to the connection they have to the creatures that every Varushkan knows to fear. Since they were reformed, the Iron Helms have fought beneath the shadow of crows' wings, and with a great cry the birds take to the air. They soar above the trees, and the houndmasters and schlaeta of the Iron Helms break their silence, sound their horns, and march.

The birds lead the way, a cloud of feathers in the gloaming, swooping down like hunting hawks to tear at the eyes of the orc warriors. The hounds and their handlers howl, meeting the savagery of the Druj with equal bloodlust. Axes hew through

enemies, collapse trees, smash makeshift barricades, cut through traplines.

Varushka sets the pace, but their fire spreads quickly to the Golden Sun and the Black Thorns. Some Druj are cowards – the kind of bully that instinctively fall back in the face of challenge. Sadly, the Druj are as afraid of their own masters as they are of the Iron Helms, and know that the Buruk Tepel will not hesitate to make an example of them if they show too much cowardice. So when they fall back, they quickly regroup and return in force.

The Imperial troops pay a terrible price, and the lion's share is paid by the Iron Helms. Heavy as their armour is, doughty as they are, keen as their axes strike they are at the forefront and they face the full malice of the Druj. Yet the army is also bound around with Winter magic, a host of winter spirits fights beside them, and as they slog through mud and blood, forging a path for their allies to follow, selling their lives as dearly as they can. They are cut to pieces.

Then, one by one, the fallen Varushkans begin to rise again. Not only those who fall in this final desperate push to escape Therunin, but emerging through the sleet from the south come many more dead schlaeta, cabalists, hounds, and soldiers.

Perhaps it is the spirits summoned with Winter magic, perhaps it is something else but when one of the Iron Helms is slain, by spear or blade, they rise again. Their eyes burn with cold darkness, and they fight with a terrible fervour that gives even the Druj pause. They fight with unnatural vitality, and do not stop until they are literally dismembered or decapitated by the orcs. The soldiers and their hounds refuse the embrace of death for one final chance to hurl themselves at their foes.

It is a horror and a wonder, and it creates a chance. An opening to a future where the armies of the Empire survive this killing

zone. The Druj begin to retreat, horrified by the abominations that fall upon them. Where weapons fail, the dead Varushkans use their bare hands and unnatural strength to rip their enemies limb from limb, pausing only to gorge themselves on the remains before leaping to the next kill. Even the Black Wind falter in the face of this dark miracle, this terrible Winter magic.

There are survivors who claim that there were other things, worse things, in the woods with them that night fighting the Druj, Ghoulish horrors in archaic armour not entirely Varushkan in style. Massive birds, with razor talons and too-clever eyes. Warriors with the aspect of wolf or rat or bat, neither human nor orc but some dreadful echo of beast and person. The woods are dark, as night falls, and terror roars through them as the armies clash, and it is hard to tell what is real and what is waking nightmare.

In the end, the Black Wind sound the retreat, falling back. The Imperial armies make it across the borders, into the forests of the Barrens, following by coincidence that same path the Gryphon's Pride took several months earlier.

Some Druj pursue, of course, but only a few hundred. Those Imperial soldiers who are last out, those bringing up the rear, and the scouts of the Black Thorns speak of how the Druj they have left behind are still fighting, even though the armies have crossed into the Bleaks. The dead Varushkans, and their beasts, continue to assail the orcs of the Mallum, making it impossible for them to pursue without leaving themselves vulnerable to an attack from beyond.

The rain falls more heavily in the Bleaks, but the water is clean and fresh. This is the best way to know that the armies have escaped Therunin... but not everyone has made it to the Barrens.

The Highest Price

Like Isaella's Dance, the Iron Helms have paid the ultimate price. No more than a few hundred Varushkans escape the Barrens with the Golden Sun and the Black Thorns. Over the next few weeks, a similar number of Navarr escape Therunin, many of them horribly injured or suffering the kind of spiritual wounds that mean they will never fight again.

The loss of life has been catastrophic. Twelve and a half thousand soldiers have been lost. Isaella's Dance, and the Iron Helms, have ceased to exist – although there is some evidence the Varushkans at least are continuing to fight in Therunin, albeit in an unrecognisable state. The Druj have surely paid a heavy price for fighting the Empire this season, but as always with the orcs of the Mallum it's hard to say exactly how many have been killed. Surely they must have lost thousands; the Iron Helms and the Black Wind fought a pitched battle and one does not walk away from a fight with furious Varushkans.

None of Eleonaris' knights leave Therunin; they fought and died alongside the Golden Sun. None of the walking dead leave Therunin – at least for the moment. The Spears of the Pines have been decimated, the orcs of the Great Forest suffering hundreds of casualties alongside their Navarr friends and allies.

The time for mourning, for recrimination, is in the future. For now the Golden Sun and the Black Thorns need to let the rest of the Empire know what has happened: both the unspeakably catastrophic loss, and the awe-inspiring courage of those who sacrificed everything to save their fellows.

Game Information

Therunin

- The Black Wind carried out a Merciless Onslaught in Therunin this season
- Isaella's Dance and the Iron Helms have disbanded
- Therunin remains uncontrolled

The Black Wind engaged in a merciless onslaught in Therunin this season. Two Imperial armies – Isaella's Dance and the Iron Helms took sufficient casualties to cause them to disband.

While there are some survivors, these armies no longer exist.

The Druj have recaptured Eastring, and still control East Ashes. With the vallorn in control of Greenheart and Sweetglades, and the Navarr still in possession of Peakedge Song and the Upper and Lower Tarn Valley, no faction has majority control so the territory remains uncontrolled.

The temporary defences built by the Towerjacks before the Autumn Equinox are still in place, but their effectiveness is reduced. They act as a 500 strength fortification until the start of the Spring Equinox when they will have decayed to the point they no longer provide a bonus during the military campaign.

One possible piece of good news is that there has been no sign of the Tainted Basilisk in Therunin since the Autumn Equinox which means that the Druj will not be able to perform large-scale rituals in the territory such as Rivers Run Red or the creation of magical fortifications.

Participation

- Anyone whose military unit fought in Therunin this season

has suffered grievous wounds

- The retreat has seen numerous spontaneous spiritual auras manifest among those involved

Any general of one of the armies here, and anyone who fought alongside their warband in Therunin this season (that is, players whose military unit was assigned to one of the armies here or is a general of one of the armies, and whose roleplaying involves them being personally present) has received a lingering wound. This will be included in your pack, and either represents a serious injury sustained in the battle, or the consequence of fighting under the effect of Rivers Run Red. If your roleplaying does not involve fighting with your military unit this downtime, then you can hand the traumatic wound back in to GOD. Without treatment, some of these wounds might eventually become life-threatening, so seeking out a physick may be a top priority.

You may also choose to begin the event terminal if you wish to use the epic battle in Therunin as a reason to retire your character (remember that there is no way to save a character who is terminal).

During the terrible escape from the Druj trap, a number of spontaneous auras have manifested. Some of these auras will have been manifested by surviving characters, others will be on momentos taken from fallen comrades. You can request a spontaneous aura for your character, but the nature of the roleplaying effect it creates will depend on the motivation that created it. Any character whose military unit supported an army in Therunin can email e-mail plot@profounddecisions.co.uk and pick one of the motivations given here that is most applicable to your character, which will influence the ribbon created. You should also state whether you would like the aura to have manifested on a piece

of armour or a shield (and which type), or on a piece of jewellery.

For those in Therunin we will create ribbons for those motivated by:

- A willingness to lay down one's life when fighting beside ones comrades
- A commitment to do whatever it takes to protect the innocent from the Druj
- The desire to end the threat of the orcs of the Mallum once and for all
- A drive to stay alive no matter the odds

You can pick whichever one of these four motivations most strongly motivated your character to receive the relevant aura. If you were driven by different motivations, then you won't receive an aura on this occasion.

Black Miracles (Battle Opportunity)

The events surrounding the sacrifice of Isaella's Dance and the Iron helms might present opportunities for the Empire. Though the armies have been driven out of Therunin, the prognosticators have identified a major conjunction to the eastern region that may present a chance to take advantage of them.