

A GREATER DARKNESS

The heroic efforts of the Imperial Orcs and the Navarr has seen four hundred Great Forest Orcs freed from the torments of the Druj from the Sacred Grove in Deathsgate. They have endured the trials of that tainted land, evaded Druj patrols, slipped past watchtowers and overcome patrols. Despite all this, the carefully planned rescue is about to be undone. Time has grown short, far too short, and only days before the Autumn Equinox it has become clear that a retreating Druj army is pulling back right into the path of the Great Forest Orcs trying to flee Ulnak...

The Druj are being pushed back by the advancing Thule forces in the territory. The barbarians are making haste to put distance between themselves and the Thule; eager to avoid any engagement. It is a hurried retreat, but for the most part orderly and free of panic. The Druj will be utterly unforgiving with anyone they encounter. When they cross paths with the fleeing Great Forest Orcs, they will fall on them like blood hounds on their prey.

There is a conjunction on the Saturday of the Autumn Equinox that will enable the heroes of Anvil to reach the Reeth Plain in Grimfen Mire.

OBJECTIVE: DELAY THE DRUJ

- **The Amber Scorpion will soon cut off the Great Forest Orcs and slaughter them**
- **Delaying the Druj for an hour will buy time for the Great Forest Orcs to escape to safety**

There are two ancient menhirs that stand on the open ground at Reeth Plain, right in the path that the Druj must take to flee the Thule. If the Empire were to send heroes to Ulnak, then this location represents a strategic place to hold ground and focus the barbarians' attention. Any appreciable delay will slow the the retreat of the Druj forces, letting the Great Forest Orcs slip by before the Amber Scorpion sept realise they were even in the area.

Imperial forces will need to take the field and secure the ground in the area surrounding the two menhirs. Once there they can prepare for battle and then await the arrival of the Druj forces. The Empire will need to hold the field against the barbarian until midday. Once the Amber Scorpions are aware of the Imperial presence they will focus on engaging the Empire and bring more of their numbers to bear. They will try to push the Empire off the field, so that their army can continue to withdraw from the advancing Thule.

A single hour is all the time the Great Forest Orcs need to slip across the distant reaches of Reeth Plain and make good their escape out of Ulnak. The Field Marshal should aim to withdraw from the menhirs after this time and have their forces return to Anvil in good order.

OPPORTUNITY: FREE THE LOST RESEARCHER

- **Jovana Stradh von Temeschwar a surviving member of the Silent Bell is held by the Druj**
- **The mage is detained and subject to a powerful experimental poison**

The daughter of a prominent miller of the famous Vargat Bianch flour, Jovana eschewed the family business to dedicate her life to hunting down the Empire's enemys. An adept mage and ardent member of the Silent Bell, she leapt at the opportunity to find out more about the Druj's use of fear. While her fellow bells devoted their time to studying the miasma pillars and their creation, Jovana got a lead on something different - an eternal "ally" of some kind that even the Druj were reluctant to employ - an eternal possibly unknown to the Empire. Sadly Jovana was captured and nothing more was heard - she was assumed dead - one of the many bells who died to locate vital information.

Fortunately it appears that the magician has somehow survived. If Stradh can be rescued and recovers from her injuries, then she may have some fresh insights into this eternal of fear that the Druj ghulai are truck with. At the very least her return will help to strengthen the ranks of the Silent Bell, which are grievously depleted at this time.

OPPORTUNITY: SEIZE THE TEPEL'S NIGHTMARE

- **The Amber Scorpions posses a nightmare secured in a “dream tether”**
- **If recovered and passed to the Map to the City Below to give to Sung**
- **Sung will then enable the Empire to access the nightmare**

Zylath Bilequill, a Druj loremaster or ghulai of sorts, is moving with the Amber Scorpions. Heralds of Sung have contacted the Empire to let them know that Zylath Bilequill possess a rare “Dream Tether”. This is apparently a memory or a dream, or in this case a nightmare, trapped in a physical object known as the tether. Exactly how the Druj created the tether is unclear, but Night magic has the ability to manipulate and even steal memories, so it is theoretically possible. The nightmare contained in the tether must be important for the Druj to have gone to the effort of securing and preserving it in a physical form.

According to the Night Singer, the nightmare pertains to the mystery of Deathsgate and the fortress of Cassad Ūln in the Forest of Ulnak. If the Empire can located Zylath and seize the tether from him it can be passed to Leaguer responsible for the Map to the City Below. The title holder can then send it to the Everflowing River who will enable a small group of citizens to experience the nightmare, should they wish to. If the Druj thought the nightmare was useful, then any information it holds could yield valuable knowledge of what lies beyond the foreboding mountain range.

ENVIRONMENT: MIASMA OF DESPAIR

- **The entire battlefield is affected by an oppressive Druj miasma**
- **The miasma causes WEAKNESS unless you have a way to overcome it**

The entire area at Reeth Plain, is under the effect of the Druj miasma, a pall of potent fear that blankets the lands the Druj claim dominion over. Anyone 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, only by becoming extremely angry - which can cause problems all its own.