

Time Jump 2013-14 Part One:

Table of Contents

Shadowlands Aftermath

Vampire Power Struggles

A New High Queen

The Blackspire Uprising

Return of the Wild

Slayers from the West

Rastkuru Unweavers

Oracles Darkness

28 years have passed. Year is 15,996.

Shadowlands Aftermath: (background info) It is now well documented that a major war took place in an attempt to not just defeat, but fundamentally destroy the island nation of Sorikonion and that this war was driven by agents of the alternate dimension known as the Shadowlands, a terrifying and evil realm filled with demon/oni and contaminated by a corrupting infection. Over past seventy five years, first vampires, and then Shadowlands agents infiltrated the island of Pacifist Masters and planted Morganti weapons inside of seemingly innocent boxes of silver pieces. These were in fact traps, set to explode when the masters used any Chi based abilities around them, causing a momentary rift between the sacred spiritual realm of each shrine and releasing terrible Morganti spirits into these shrines, beings which of their nature destroy spirits. For years, the Masters and heroes worked to thwart the vampires, and their agents. In the end, however, they were unsuccessful and found their island slipping into the Shadowlands, and the ancient spirits of their ancestors and the powerful life spirits they had taken an oath to protect since prehistory were dying. It appears that the spirits themselves were sacrificing themselves to try and close or neutralize the Morganti spirits and the "holes in the world" they were causing. It is an infamous year, in which countless heroes were lost, and commenced with the release of all of the sacred life spirits from this world, so that they could not be misused by the Shadowlands and its dark forces. This release, required the Sorikonion Martial Masters to sacrifice their connection to the spirits of their ancestors and in so doing unforged all passively warded items across the known world! The gateway to the





Shadowlands was blocked by thousands of spirits upon this release, and the immediate threat of the invasion was thwarted, but at a tremendous cost.

In the years that followed, Sorikonia attempted to rebuild a culture and society whose core principle was now gone. It proved to be a daunting task, and one most suspect will take them hundreds of

years to recover from and even then they will never again possess the power and art they were once the masters of. It has been a tremendously humbling experience, and for some it has been useful, as the masters seem joined and committed to each other in a way they have not been since the beginning of the wars. This bodes well for the nation, though recently they have reported increasing attacks by the Grim who for a long time after the battle left the island alone. The Dark City of Serpention lost half its fighting forces when the Sorikonias sealed the Shadowlands portals, trapping them in the alternate dimension, and this left the Dark City weak and vulnerable. Armies lead by Cashi Shinjin of the Bull Clan were aided in advancing on the city in the years that followed and great victories were won, including the destruction of at least four of Walls Carakwaith (Wraithlord, Toby Oakenshade, Serpent, and Sara). The city of Icashi has kept a watch on the vampires these many years as has Estorock Keep, and it has kept many safe until recently, allowing Sorikonia time to pull itself together. It appears Sorikonia now has little the vampires want, and thus is perhaps a blessing to the tortured island which seeks solace and peace.

Vampire Power Struggles: Over the past 28 years the Dark City has been in a great deal of inner turmoil. Failing in their plan with the Shadowlands, loosing half their forces, and loosing their assault in the north on the Priestesses of the Elder Goddess. There appears to have been a breakdown of the usually efficient chain of command and for years the Dark City has seen infighting, counter moves, vampires sabotaging each other to climb the ladder of favor, and a general disregard for overall goals and agendas.

It appears that the loss of so many Carakwaith has caused instability in the vampire order and many see this as an opportunity for a real attack on the city which has



been far more chaotic and haphazard in its assaults lately, even attacking some of its own living troops at times which has caused a great deal of political unrest and rebellions.

This would be very good news indeed were it not for the mounting evidence that Temnor, the age old enemy of Dsesnor is now being run by vampires as well, and that they have succeeded in summoning a Litch of great power to assist them in their domination of the region. This Litch is believed to be non other that Rhysic, an ancient arch mage of Stormwatcher Tower, believed to be dead, who, during the second age, tried to take the throne from Dsesnor. He was thwarted in this, when Sorikonia who had remained neutral up to this point, gave Dsesnor Li Tesashi, the legendary Di Katana, to



help win the war. Furious at this, Rhysic turned on Sorikonia and invaded to seek revenge. We was eventually stopped, with the aid of Dsesnor, but it is now believed that he was not killed but rather turned into a Litch and has been sleeping for the hundreds of years. Temnor is now asserting its independence from the Free Republics and operates under its own set of spell law and governance, abiding by none of the Free Republics rules. Undead are becoming increasingly more common in the region and while most outside the region feel the situation is obviously degrading to an undead government, those within the region are apparently taught that the Free Republics is trying to control everyone, and that the only way to

stay free is to fight their every move. This has made for a very tiring and stagnated past few decades, with little growth for anyone, and mostly losses all around, as more and more resources have been poured into military use and fortifications across Roekron, and culminates in the recent Generals Rebellion which has stripped the Free Republics of almost all of its military control, a very dangerous situation for the future.

A New High Queen: Kuni Kendrai stepped down as the High Queen on her seventy fifth birthday (eighteen years ago), retiring to Mithil Ulienen with the Dragon Clan of Dsesnor. Her granddaughter Kuni Tayshen Sinthrea, then age 23 assumed the throne, and has attempted to steer the Free Republics towards a more unified purpose. Sinthrea, while technically a Samurai, and a skilled one at that, is often mistaken for a mage, as she rarely if ever wears armor, even in combat, and is known for a mysterious and enigmatic style of speech usually reserved for Arch Mages and dragons. She is said to have the gift of foresight, an ability to plan far in advance, for even though in the past eighteen years many things have fallen apart for the Free Republics, it's core principles and culture has grown in strength. Economically, it has been a disaster, as the government poured resources into seemingly useless recovery projects for Sorikonion and even sent aid to Blackspire at certain periods, resulting in a major economic collapse that saw the entire population reduced to a tenth of their previous wealth! The tremendous military budget and magic item rebuilding projects were absorbing so many resources that the markets had reached a very tenuous pitch in which loans had been growing steadily. Suddenly, one of the major backers of these loans pulled all their money and this started a chain reaction. Initially assumed to be vampires, the actual mystery backer turned out to be a foreign investor from distant lands to the south, now confirmed to be a Wizards Trade Order spy. While this succeeded in revealing the Orders continued interest in thwarting Roekrons plans for peace, and the far reaching power of their spells, it did little to staunch the now chaotic markets, and



currently the production and sales have not recovered. The Dwarves who had been struggling to run their business without slave wages, threatened to return to old practices if they could not make ends meet. Embarcarious Petrofloutous, the Arch-Mage of Pinicle School and Master of Magic for the Free Republics met with Queen Thresa Svod and assured the Dwarven empire that they would regret breaking the treaties guaranteeing all people in the Free Republics a fair wage, and while Thresa agreed, the consequent stalling of the production and closure of numerous mines across the region contributed to the economic collapse. What follows is a series of historical choices to maintain the philosophical principles of the Free Republics regardless of the economic hardships this might cause the more wealthy individuals. Many magic items were traded away, lands sold, and projects abandoned to feed the people of the Free Republics and many would say this has actually brought them all closer and made them stronger as a people.

One element everyone agrees is an alarming one was the Generals Rebellion in Dsesnor which spread across the Free Republics recently. Without sufficient pay and resources, many of the Generals leading the armies of the Free Republics rebelled, stating they would be unable to do their jobs without the many magic items and custom items they were use to using. In an often quoted conflict between The High Queen Sinthrea and General Crane Whitneng, two years ago, the queen remarked, “An army requires no gold, no precious toys of war, if they are doing their job correctly.”

Furious, Whitneng retorted, “I suppose if one is divinely protected you do just fine to battle in not but a Kimono, but we are mere mortals!” Jeering at Sinthrea’s lack of

protection or armor.

Coldly, Sinthrea replied, “No amount of magic items will compensate for a lack of skill or intellect. It is not the strength of arms which will win the day Whitneng, but knowing how to pick your battles, and when to avoid the conflict all together.” Whether it was the Queens intent to start a rebellion or not, the Generals



Rebellion has left the Free Republics with no standing army, as all of the various military factions refused to work for no pay, and have returned to their respective homelands in search of work for local governments. Tremendously exposed, many believe this lack of any real military to be the reason for the recent attacks by the Dark City and Dagdeoth.

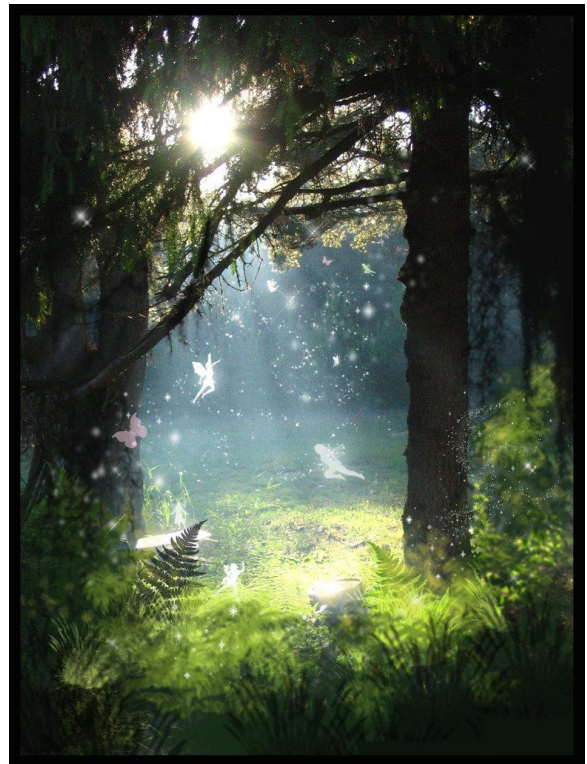
The Blackspire Uprising: As many suspected years ago, Blackspire has been slowly infiltrated by vampires from the Grim. They were exposed as having a large influence on agitating the group to attack the Priestess of the Elder Goddess in Randwin years ago, and those close to the politics of Blackspire discovered that the two leading factions, the Shamans and the Hunters, were not getting along. Apparently, the Shamans were of more use to the vampires, being innately skilled with magic and familiar with necromancy, and the Hunters were merely fleshy soldiers easily made into better undead troops. This was not well received by the Hunters who agreed to go along with the vampire influence as they had no means to defeat them. But shortly after the defeat of the Blackspire army at Randwin, things began to fall apart for the Blackspire troops who saw all their dead allies turned into an undead army and it became clear that the attack on Randwin was not an attempt to defeat the Priestess but rather an attempt to wipe out the Hunters and bolster the Shamans undead armies. This caused a major civil war in Blackspire and the Hunters would have surely been destroyed were it not for a few Shamans who recognized that they were being used as well, to destroy their own culture and leave them ready for a new vampire overlord. In a strange twist, the Shamans rooted out the vampires spies and turned their attention to the Grim to the East in a war that lasted for the next

seventeen years. During this period, first Kendrai, and then Sinthrea sent aid to Blackspire in the form of Uruaki Samurai Clans willing to help, food and magical healing items, and Paladins trained in



removing Charms. This is partially what caused such a depletion of the resources of Roekron, and what agitated the Generals to their Rebellion in the end. In the last five year the war has slowed down, and Blackspire appears to have survived though their clans are decimated, and their shamans almost completely wiped out. Many speculate that the Grim will make their move soon to stake a claim to the region now that the area is so depleted.

Return of the Wild: The last twenty eight years have seen a resurgence of the wild magic of the fae. Slow at first, the fairies across Roekron and distant lands as well appeared to begin to recover from a what was known as the “Dimming of the Fae” a loss of their powers and erratic behavior. However, there have been odd shifts in the structure and manners of these mysterious creatures which has caused some trouble across the region. As their magic seemed to return, so did their need to touch and explore every part of the world, much to the irritation of many travelers, cities, and farms which previously had little trouble with fae antics. Completely abandoning their old homes and glades, the fae appear to have become nomadic, traveling in loose swarms or packs, sometimes disguised as animals, and will take up residence anywhere they please for as long as they please. They seem overly fond of playing jokes on mortals and tormenting them at every chance they get, and also appear to be developing a fondness for



city life, something previously only seen in the Nymph varieties of fairy. Most scholars are not sure what to make of this, and are choosing to view it as a good.

Slayers from the West: Shortly after the coronation of Sinthrea as the new high queen, a previously unknown group of assassins began to be reported, first in Pinicle and then all across Roekron. Little is know of the culture of these strange people who appear to be human, but in the few encounters with them have called themselves the Hoatyalie Roime. Their arrival was met with intense hostility of many of the local dragons, including some

of the main Elder Dragons who were still seen in and around the cities at various dragon shines. It became clear in the coming year that this small group of humans, totaling twelve, had successfully killed three of the Elder Dragons of Roekron already, the Platinum Dragon (who recovered), a Mithril Dragon (and possibly its mate), and most alarmingly, a rather famous Steel Dragon known to frequent Pinicle (this one Morganti).

There
assassination
skills
extended far
beyond
dragon
slaying, as
they were
reported to be
dropping
vampires with



equal ease, accounting for at least another five Carakwaith and at least one attempt on Wall. Several demons which had cropped up in Blackspire also reportedly were assassinated by these odd humans who seem to have no lack of skill at disposing of terrifying opponents. The presence of these strange humans, while initially a cause for excitement due to the scarcity of encountering anyone from across the Western Sea was doused by the realization of their murderous intent and the potential threat they posed. Dragon began to mass in very large numbers in defense of their kin and relations between humans and dragons became deadly, forcing the high queen to intercede, quickly branding the group outlaws and murderers and the Silver Service was assigned to their arrest. Over the past twenty years ten died either fighting the Silver Service or attempting to kill various dragons, vampires, and demons, across the land (which they did with surprising skill!). It has been discovered by studying the bodies of the slain that they are indeed human and possess no innate skill in dealing with dragons, vampires, or demons, all of their abilities apparently being learned or associated with magic items that are closely guarded state secrets. Two still remain at large, and as their names have never

been learned they are simply known as Violet (named for his odd eye color) and Saber (for the weapon he most often is seen using).

Rastkuru Unweavers: Over the last twenty eight years, Embarcarius Petrofloutous revealed a new order of mages from Pinicle, tasked with harrying and unmaking the Rastkuru. This group was initially to be made up of mages from Astengrad, but they refused the offer from the High Queen to supply the school with the necessary mages and training, saying the task was below them and better suited to those with less to do. Relations between the High Queen and Astengrad have become strained since this confrontation and many speak of open rebellion against the independent school who appears to be taking a hands off approach to assisting with any of the ruling issue of the day. Regardless of their lack of interest, these new order of mages are being called the Unweavers, and apparently are trained in a special style of Elder Sorcery known as Rune Weaving.

They wander across the lands making a study of tracking, recording, and countering the actions of the Rastkuru. They are usually met with a great deal of relief by most mages, as the



presence of one in the area usually guarantees safe spell casting just as the “safe zones” did for Elder Sorcerers in the past. It has been discovered over the years that they are not just countering the Rastkuru’s effects but are slowly “unmaking” it piece by piece, and the more they learn about it the more they are able to take it apart. Already, the Rastkuru is much less wide spread, and unlike in the past when it was more random and unpredictable, it now appears to be more localized for long periods of time (days), and targets specific spells only during that period. While this is a cause for some celebration, it has also been a new source of concern as new, very odd accounts of those who fumble

their spells being “taken over” by the Rastkuru and used to fight the Unweavers became more and more common. It became clear that the Rastkuru was learning from these attempts to thwart it and evolving to survive in the new environment, something that has given many Elder Sorcerers pause.

Oracles Darkness: During first few years after the Shadowlands War, the Priestesses of the Elder Goddess performed a ritual in Randwin that was felt across the lands, though it appeared to have little to no noticeable effect. The spell, originated by Anne Ironbranch, High Priestess of the Elder Goddess, is now understood to have been a healing spell which “strengthened the tethers of the world.” While many were unaware that the world tethers needed strengthening (or that the world had tethers at all...), the effect of the spell was noted by many who had noticed an increase in supernatural activity, haunt behavior, demons entering the world, and a host of other troubling issues. The spell appeared to shift something and over the past twenty-eight years these occurrences have become more and more rare, returning to a more normal level. Why these two event are related is a question for mystics and prophets. But Anne was heard to grumble about children and time and the lack of appreciation for those who came before, and mostly that many things needed shoring up, for “the world, she is old, and has had to carry us all for far too long, and is in deep pain...”

Until recently things seemed to be going well for most of Roekron in relation to the spell of the Elder Goddess Priestess and the “strengthening of the tethers.” But six years ago, Oracles began to fail across Roekron with very troubling results. At first, the Oracles were just dark or confused, but then they became dangerous. Numerous Nature Mages reported coming out of their rituals with both eyes hacked, and shortly after it was discovered that many could never be healed of these wounds. Some chose to continue to Oracle, given their permanent blindness but most shy away from the spell now, and others like it, fearing what has happened to the world that their attempts at understanding are so thwarted. The problem seems to originate with the



nature of the connection to the divine plane, as this effect has been noted in every pantheon, across every faith and even with those without any religion. As time has passed, and mages continue to test the waters, some have been cursed, others killed outright, and there is now a blanket ban on the use of the spell, for the mages own protection. When asked about the situation, Anne shook her head and said the Temple was researching the issue. Many mages from different schools met to debate the issue, and have not agreed on a cause, some citing the Rastkuru as having evolved to a new form, others pointing to the decimation of Sorikonion as relating to this spirit connection, and still others finding conspiracy theories more apt, blaming the Wizard Trade Order as out to get the Free Republic yet again. While many of these may be true, most are fond of quoting Electra Bosium on the subject, as one of the oldest living mages in Roekron outside of Astengrad who said famously, “the Eye of the World is weeping and Fate is blind.... Never liked the spell much anyway.”



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