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Titanomachy – GD/Gholgoth [IC; Closed]

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The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

Titanomachy – GD/Gholgoth [IC; Closed]

QUOTE

by **The Macabees** » Mon Nov 03, 2014 7:34 pm

[OOC: All out-of-character commentary should go in the designated thread. That means no tagging, no purely or mostly out of character notes, no nothin' that isn't a well-written and thought-out in-character post. Players who'd like to be involved should go to the OOC thread.]

Seas South of Palenque, Theohuanacu



As the stranded dingy was slowly pushed further southwards, towards the Pennsylvannian [*sic.*] archipelago, the crew of the *Blade of the South* watched from behind a thin veil of fog. The raft was moving by virtue of the current and winds alone; the small engine, not built for long-distance travel, had gone out days before and the fates of the dingy's occupants were left in the hands of the gods. They were Panooly refugees, escaping from the **brutal civil war** that had turned a once-banana republic into a full blown purgatory. But, the pasture isn't always greener on the other side. This particular group of emigrants had left eight-strong, now they were down to a mere five. Very nearly out of water, and with absolutely no food, death was inevitable, and those who succumbed to it were simply thrown overboard into the shark infested waters around them. While the ship stalking them perhaps could have picked them up earlier, they would not have been pirates had they not enjoyed watching their prey suffer. Besides, it's not as if capture by pirates is any better than a slow, painstaking death at sea — for most, the former was a much, much worse fate than the latter.

Captained by Blue-Eyed Nolan, the *Blade of the South* was like your typical pirate ship. The size of a destroyer, she was built with an emphasis on speed. The Golden Throne's occupation of Theohuanacu had pitted the Empire against the pirates that controlled much of the island's southeastern coastline and a six-year, on-and-off conflict ensued. Having just fought the **War of Golden Succession**, the *Kriemada* operated large, heavy fleets designed to fight large battles against similarly sized foes. Rather than stand their ground, and face certain death, the pirates instead opted for the naval equivalent of a Fabian strategy. Placing emphasis on fast, light ships, the Theohuanacu buccaneers conducted hit-and-run raids on their Imperial harassers and otherwise simply avoided patrolling fleets by quickly skirting around them while smuggling their cargoes. These were usually comprised of goods that were banned in the various Dienstadi nations around Theohuanacu, although, given that the Empire regulated almost no market, the pirates gravitated towards the buying-and-selling of slaves. Stealing them from the poorer, war-torn tropical nations, Theohuanacu swashbucklers would then distribute them inter-regionally.

Despite their bad raps, ironically pirates can be the near-epitome of liberal governance.¹ Because piracy — in this case — was voluntary, crew members were free to quit at their own volition, and someone looking for better terms

could easily switch to a superior employer. In a world of excessive armaments production, ships were cheap and start-up costs were low, meaning high profits (adjusted, of course, by a risk factor) invited many brave souls to the "Theohuanacu slave trade." There was always another captain looking for labor, and since pirates tend to stick together when on land it was always easy to find another job. This meant that captains had to evolve in order to attract the highest quality of crew, giving way to the introduction of constitution-bound pirate ships. Rules governed the liberties of each pirate on the ship, including the captain, ensuring that the men respected each other, that they fought with their hearts, and that the booty was equitably distributed. All members could even count on a pension and remarkably generous workers' compensation. These were a respectable set of institutions, and surprisingly sophisticated for a band of thieves and murderers.

The criminal democracy that was the *Blade of the South* finally decided to pounce on its prey. Slaves were of no use to them dead and the buccaneer's taste for the morbid had already cost them three potential products. Picking up speed, the steel ship emerged from the fog and illuminated its fog light directly upon the struggling Panoolies below. Standing upon the deck of the ship, alongside a small team of crew members, Captain Nolan finished giving orders and then approached the port-side rail to survey the stranded dingy. When the ship was close enough, he motioned from the direction of his crew members over to the boat-full of migrants and said, "Okay lads, bring them up. Treat 'em real well. We'll want them healthy for th' markets."

Two men climbed into a lifeboat, while the other crew members helped to lower them into the water. It took them about twenty minutes to gather the survivors and to bring them back to the *Blade of the South*. The pirates offered the new additions to their cargo blankets to keep them warm, as well as food and water — everything a human being stranded in the middle of the ocean may need to survive. Once onto the deck of the ship, they were all taken to their quarters. They'd sleep in a large room, lined with comfortable bunk beds. Some of these were already taken by some thirty other migrants who had too been "rescued" by the *Blade of the South*. They were all treated like refugees who had just endured one of the most miserable experiences of their lives, not like slaves. There was no sense in scaring them now. Instead, the pirates would take them to Palenque — the last remaining Theohuanacu city under pirate governance —, where they would be briefed on their new lives as slaves and then auctioned in a local market. That way they avoided any troubles that could come from attempted escapes and other forms of resistance (even suicide); in Palenque there was no liability, because turn-around was quick (two days, on average).

The voyage back to Palenque took a little over twenty-four hours, with the ship arriving to the port late the following evening. These type of short trips were already typical, given that the political situation in many neighboring countries had deteriorated already for quite some time, but they were becoming even more common with the heightened conflict in Holy Panooly and Indras. More often than not, refugees attempting to escape conflict and oppression at home would get lost traveling across Dienstadi waters, making them easy pickings for pirates looking to sell healthy humans in the lucrative, inter-regional luxury slave market. While not all of those captured met the standards of luxury, the type of persons being picked up by pirates had a higher probability of 'market-worthiness,' since people from poorer areas have experience working labor-intensive jobs (and therefore also tend to be more physically fit). Not all of them were healthy, but that was something their owners would be able to fix to some degree or another. The point is that supply was growing and there was an ever-present opportunity for pirates to act as intermediaries; there were hundreds, if not thousands, of other ships — much like the *Blade of the South* — fiending the Dienstadi seas for fresh meat.

Why the emphasis on luxury? Because Greater Dienstad includes some of the most ardent abolitionist governments, including Lamoni and Lyras, the regional slave market had always been quite limited (and very dangerous). In fact, whatever local slave trade the region could boast of was for the most part eliminated during a joint Stevidian-Macabee operation to clear the seas around Theohuanacu and Adaptes Astrates of pirates — the first of many pirate conflicts incited by the Golden Throne's occupation of Theohuanacu. As a result, whatever trading of slaves there was was inter-regional, forcing the pirates to ship their 'wares' across much longer distances. Because of the higher shipping costs involved, the relative price between luxury and non-luxury slaves from pirate stocks shifts in favor of the former — demand

changes accordingly.² Captured persons who couldn't be sold at a profit, because they did not meet the standards for 'luxury items,' would simply be transported back to a third world country, where they forced to sign a contract forcing them to surrender ten percent of their earnings to their captors for the next twenty years, to pay for the 'travel ticket.' The term 'barbarous' comes to mind, but even it would be too kind to these brand of pirates.

The *Blade of the South* moored deep within the Palenque harbor. Since the pirates had lost control of Tiwanaku and Tlaloc, the two other large harbors along the southeastern coast of the island, during the wars with the Golden Throne, Palenque saw a sudden upsurge in traffic soon after the Macabee occupation of the island. This required an expansion of the harbor, making docking there a much more confusing and time-consuming process, especially because the area hadn't risen proportionally with the increase in the number of inbound and outbound ships. Weaving through a number of compartmentalized areas, some designated for loading, others for unloading, and others simply intended for the purpose of leaving ships there overnight, Captain Nolan's ship slowly made its way to its usual berth. When docked and secured, her human cargo began to be unloaded and shuffled to what the pirates told their captives was an immigration office. There they would be put through a physical, where their value would be determined. Afterwards, the group would be split off and sent to two different holding cells; one for those who made the cut and one for those who did not. Within two or three days those cells would be open again for the next batch of human cattle.

While his cargo was off to get 'processed,' Blue-Eyed Nolan sent his men home — whether that was with a family or, more likely, with a prostitute. He didn't have time for such things; instead, he took a taxi over to 'Obsidian Snake,' a tavern located about fifteen minutes from the port. While Palenque was more-or-less a modern city, Obsidian Snake was as 'golden age' as a place of its kind could get. Flanked on both sides by buildings flaunting colonial Guffingfordi architecture, a mixture of the Pantocratorian and Knoctian artistic influence, the bar was far more modest. Its plain, brick red walls were decorated only by wooden window frames, a large door, and a wooden platform that extended out from the tavern's second floor to provide guests with a balcony on which to stand on and harass those passing on below. Inside the tavern was even more plain, with various round, wooden tables scattered about, along with dozens of drunk pirates acting like fools. In one corner, however, stood out a man who was unlike all the others. His skin color was not as dark as the those of the men around him — he had clearly not lived in Palenque very long — and his garb was foreign. Although Nolan had never met him before, he knew that was the person he was looking for.

Ignoring the drunken stupor around him, Captain Nolan walked up to the man's table and sat down on the other side. "No need t' worry, mate. Ye might be knowin' me as Blue-Eyed Nolan. Ye partners 'n I have spoken befo"

The other man took a swig from a mug full with beer, locally brewed and prepared to local taste. Pursing his lips, the Scandinvan replied, "You call this beer? My servants can make a better brew than this garbage."

Nolan bellowed a deep laugh and said, "Don't worry, ye gunna get used to it before I sail out." Pausing for a second, he continued, "I told ye who I be, so reciprocate."

"I am Hammond ap Garest am granst aot Garest," responded the man. Noticing that the pirate was giving a rather puzzled look back, the Scandinvan quickly condensed his introduction to give his guest — probably an illiterate — an easier time processing the name, "Lord Hammond to you, Captain Nolan, since I see that our conversations are going to be rather...informal." After drinking a little bit more of that horrid drink these thieving and murdering mongrels called beer, he went on, "It's already late, so let's go straight to business, shall we?"

"A scurvy dog wit' *grenadines*" — the local currency standard around which local private currencies based their value — "on his mind. Me kind 'o fellow." A large-breasted waitress wearing little in the name of clothing came up to their table and Blue-Eyed turned his attention to her, ordering a mug of *jinharem*, a popular distilled alcohol that had been produced by the Theohuanacu pirates for many long centuries now. He took some additional time to heckle her and then finally turned back to Lord Hammond. "Believe it or not, despite your elegant garb and your sophisticated façade, you and I be very much alike. 'N I

be not as stupid as ye think." He paused again and decided to go in a different direction, "So, be tellin' me Scandinvan—"

"Valgardian," corrected Hammond. "You confuse me with a commoner."

"No harm intended, mate. Pirates like me aren't always th' most worldly, so I implore you to 'xcuse the occasional ignorance." The woman returned with Nolan's drink and he passed her a few *grenadines*, along with a full-hand pat to the rear to send her on her way. "Anyways, be tellin' me...Valgardian..., what be yer proposition."

Hammond unveiled a folded map, taking it out from his back pocket, and opened it on the table. It showed the regions of Greater Dienstad and Gholgoth, as well as a number of other regions relevant to the inter-regional slave trade. There were a number of arrows going in various directions, but there was a clear pattern. "Look here," said the Valgardian lord, pointing to the map, "this is you and this is your network of clientele." He used his right index finger to scroll across a number of countries, all importers of Dienstadi luxury slaves. "That is a large market and, right now, you are the masters of it. The problem we, the Glorious Empire, have with this is that there are a variety of intermediaries that help you distribute your product throughout the world. That is a job we'd be very interested in taking control of. We know, as you and other captains have communicated to us, that you're unhappy with your current political agreement with the Golden Throne. We are prepared to back you, with funding and armaments, in your endeavors to reclaim the power you lost. In return, you will contract distribution to Scandinvan slavers exclusively."

Blue-Eyed Nolan thought about it for a second. "That's a tall order, me bucko. I transport slaves, but I don't control th' market. Still, it's an enticing offer."

As aforementioned, before the arrival of the Golden Throne, much of the southeastern coastline of Theohuanacu was in pirate hands. The three major pirate cities consisted of: Tlaloc, Tiwanaku, and Palenque. By the end of the initial occupation of the island, the pirates lost Tlaloc after a prolonged siege of the city. An agreement was signed, subjecting the pirates to an annual tributary tax; in return, the Theohuanacu buccaneers were allowed all forms of self-government. After this treaty was broken by then-governor [Aparicio de Soto](#), a subsequent war resulted in the further loss of Tiwanaku. Now the pirates were mostly constrained to Palenque, a city they were mostly safe in, because the Empire couldn't be bothered with subduing it — the costs were simply too high, and the benefits too insignificant. But, Imperial apathy had surrendered the initiative to the pirates, and offering criminals the first move is most certainly a bad decision. Thus, Lord Hammond's offer was indubitably succulent. While the pirates had lost all hope of defeating the Empire in a land war, at least when they were at full strength, under the right conditions perhaps a pirate rebellion could succeed, especially when supported by a major Gothic power.

"Let me know by Friday." A short deadline to give to such a pitch, but the sail back the Scandinvans would be a long one and Lord Hammond could afford to leave no later.

Pensive, the captain tapped his fingers on the wooden table. "I will present th' offer to th' council tomorrow. Then I will let ye be knowin' o' their decision. I trust I will see ye in th' markets tomorrow." He was referring to the slave auctions. I have some fine booty for sale. Prime material for slaves these be."

"Show me, don't tell me," joked the Valgardian. "But, yes, you and I will cross paths tomorrow and I will make sure to peruse your wares. If I may ask, where do your particular specimens originate from?"

"Holy Panooly," responded Nolan. "We captured some big, strong, and tall coloreds struggling in th' seas. They'd be perfect for hard work. And th' lasses be young and pretty; I can think o' more than one thing they'd be good for. I'm sure yer thinkin' th' same thing, ye dog." He let out another deep, rumbling laugh. Hammond gave him a disgusted face and Nolan laughed again. "Ye're not in yer manor, ye're in Palenque now, th' 'ungovernable city.' Expect th' crassness."

The Valgardian gave an indifferent chuckle, looked down at his still mostly full mug, and set it down on the table. "I think I've had enough of this city for

today. Maybe I can continue to accclimate tomorrow."

"Sweet dreams, cupcake." With that, the Scandinvan left and the captain could focus on mattered the most, persuading the waitress to sleep with him that night (something many other drunkards were most likely attempting today). Quickly guzzling down his *jinharem* and then quickly drinking the beer Hammond had left behind — free beer being free beer —, Nolan called her over again. She scurried to his corner of the pub and he proceeded to do his thing, until he got his way with her. Of course, perhaps his coin was more persuasive than his charm; in this city, no service was free. He took her back to his land quarters, a stylish apartment just six or seven blocks from the Obsidian Snake. His place wasn't too shabby, considering he had made himself some impressive revenue during his time as a captain of a pirate ship. In the morning, she'd be gone and he'd get ready for the auctions, where his 'wares' would be sold to the highest bidder. Dressing himself in robes traditional to slavers — a ceremonial garb for the most part —, he made sure to grab a whip before heading out the door. Slaves always needed...motivation...when following orders.

"There's nothin' like th' smell o' sweat, blood, and piss in th' morning."

1. This paragraph is based on Leeson, P., [The Invisible Hook](#) (Princeton University Press, 2011).

2. This is known as the [Allen-Alchian Theorem](#).

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Wed Jan 20, 2016 11:21 am, edited 4 times in total.

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by [The Macabees](#) » Sun Nov 09, 2014 11:14 am



Palenque, Theohuanacu

Captain Blue-Eyed Nolan presents Lord Hammonds offer to the Council...

Palenque's Council chamber was small; nothing like that of great nations. It was such by design. Before the existing chamber was built, they had tried to go with one that admitted members of the public — that is, those who were not Council members or the person bringing the claim to the Council —, but they quickly found out that open meetings simply didn't work in the 'ungovernable city.' Too many times pirates brought their *jinharem* and whores to the chambers, and too many times did a fight break out. What's interesting about pirate brawls is how violent they get, especially since they never seem to leave behind their swords and firearms. After the first few dozen dead, the Council decided to close the old chamber building and simply build a new one. This time around, those allowed to be present was constrained to the twenty Council members and the presenting party, as well as a few guards. That way, if anyone decided to get rowdy, the guards could shoot the offending party in the face and business could carry on as usual. As it turned out, this also allowed much more work to get done in the same amount of time; without so many shootouts, the Council could actually...make decisions.

Like most things pirate, the chamber building represented both the opulence of pirate society and its debilitating lack of management. Like most other buildings in the city, its architecture reflected the many, many years of Guffingfordi influence over Theohuanacu. A long colonnade of corinthian columns supported a tall façade, the monotony of which was broken by a series of beautifully-designed ironwork balconies and accompanying windows. The columns and windows were flamboyantly decorated with intricate design work, wrapping around each feature of the wall much like a frame. These decorations grew only more intense as one looked further up; finally, one could see two square towers completely covered in detailed geometric decorations. The building was separated from the cobblestone street by a rectangular artificial pond, with a stone pathway leading to a bridge over said pond and to the front doors of the Palenque Council Chambers — the path and the pond were lined with tall, green palm trees which swayed gently back-and-forth in

the wind. Despite its magnificence, chaos had taken its toll — parts of the exterior walls had deteriorated due to the lack of care and one could see the bullet holes of rounds gone astray during street-side gunfights.

The chamber room benefited from more regular upkeep. Its vaulted ceiling, supported by four buttresses, was decorated with a number of panels. These had been painted hundreds of years ago and were taken from the palaces of the cities the Theohuanacu pirates had once ransacked. Some depicted battle scenes, albeit battles the pirates had never fought, and others exquisitely interpreted religious motifs. Compartmentalizing the panels were Baroque strips of gold, a material which too came from the treasures of enslaved nations — particularly from the once wealthy peoples of Holy Panooly. One could sit at the ceiling for hours and still feel that she hadn't enough time to internalize the undeniable beauty of what was truly a work of architectural art. The four walls around a long, crescent-shaped table were made of a dark wood, imported from some far away land. The table was of the same color and wood as the walls, and on one side of it were twenty handcrafted chairs. It was a testament to the political and economic power the pirates once held. A power that had gradually waned over the centuries, and one that they had for the most part forever lost.

Well, perhaps in this case 'forever' had an expiration date, because Captain Blue-Eyed Nolan was about to present the Council with an invaluable opportunity to regain influence. Dressed in the finest captain's coat he owned, predominately red with gold buttons and lining, he stood before the twenty council members who looked none too pleased with his presence. Each of those men had a history twice as long as Nolan's; they were amongst the greatest sea raiders alive. Although their days of mayhem were, for the most part, behind them, their name and presence carried with it a respect that few others could equal. Booking an opportunity to present Lord Hammond's offer hadn't been easy, especially since it was imperative that it take place the day after Nolan had spoken to the Scandinvan lord. Although the captain had tried to take the conventional route by urging the gravity of his request to make a presence, this was to no avail. Luckily, there was no problem in Palenque that could not be solved with the right amount of *grenadines* (although one can be sure that the pirate thought twice before spending his hard-earned coin on the 'public good'), and just like that Nolan found himself nervously standing before the Council.

In the middle, between his peers, sat Boatswain Dewl. He gained his fame prior to the confrontations with the Golden Throne, in particular for his conquest of the Thacu Islands. Although the islands were not in pirate control for very long, the tens of thousands of indigenous peoples enslaved earned the then-commodore millions upon millions of *grenadines*. For the addition of those lands he also gained an immense and widespread authority, which he used to break into the Palenque political arena. While not highly ranked at first, the wars with the Golden Throne inevitably raised the 'rate of turnover' of pirate leaders, as Macabee aircraft incessantly pounded the city (often aiming for government buildings and the homes of known men of high rank) during the year-long sieges that characterized the Theohuanacu pirate wars. As such, it did not take long for Dewl to finally find an open seat at the Council and for two years now he held on tightly. With a penetrating, hostile stare, he 'welcomed' Nolan to the chamber, "Me, me, what have we here. Me eyes see, but I still have trouble believin'. I must admit Captain, yer ballocks swing low."

"What troubles do ye want to get us into now, Nolan?" asked another member of the Council, Keyes Blackwood. He took a swig from his black jack, a sizable booze-carrying jug made of leather, and added, "Why should we listen to this fool? It's been seven months since we've last seen him and we've never been better!"

The other Council members began to grumble as well and insults, with Blue-Eyed Nolan as their target, were flung across the room. Hanging his head down, partially in shame, the captain weathered the storm the best he could. His back began to itch and finally it erupted in pain, in memory of his less-than-illustrious past. Seven months ago, he had come to the Council asking for funds to purchase a fleet to sail alongside his own *Blade of the South*. They granted his request and his expedition set sail to the Tir archipelago, purportedly to commandeer cargo vessels transporting oil from Tir to the rest of Greater Dienstad. Instead, he took a small uninhabited island on the edge of the archipelago, and declared the end of his allegiance to the Council. While this was usually something they wouldn't concern themselves with, in this

instance the amount of money they had awarded Nolan was considerable — enough to justify the funding a second fleet, led by renowned Commodore Lauristen Reeves. Nolan, who thought that the pirates would fail to respond to his blatant disrespect, was quickly abandoned by his allies and he had no choice other than to surrender. It was a significant blunder on the captain's part; one that surely cost him the opportunity to rise above his fellow swashbucklers.

Much to Blue-Eyed's consternation, Reeves also happened to be a member of the Council. The Commodore let loose a roaring laugh, and then took a swipe of his own. "Ye could have been a commodore like me, boy. Instead ye're no better than a bloody bilge rat." Looking at Blackwood, Reeves boomed, "Pass me th' grog, matey!"

"Arrr," retorted the other man, before he somewhat reluctantly passed along his black jack.

Immediately after his surrender, Nolan was stripped of his captain's coat and his ship was impounded. As punishment, he was assigned a mission that if completed would earn him back what he had lost. Of course, if he failed there was no outcome other than a brutal, painful death. That was because the task he was given was none other than bring the Council the head of the commanding officer of an Imperial battlecruiser. A straightforward assault on such a ship was, of course, impossible. First, the Council would have never publicly backed him, meaning it would be the Empire against a title-less pirate with no ship. Second, ...he had no ship. He thus left Palenque by foot, heading east to Tiwanaku. There he took a train to Tlaloc, which had been converted into an Imperial naval base. After many, many weeks of investigation, he found a suitable target: *Komandánt Lieser Barak*, commander of the *KS707 Saturnin*, an *Ingerier class battlecruiser*. The mid-aged Macabee *Kriermada* officer lived off-base, making it easy for Nolan to sneak into his victim's house in the middle of a cold southern Theohuanacu night. As the man's children slept, the pirate captain slay Barak's wife where she lay before taking his sword to the *kommandánt's* head and slicing it right off the neck.

Nolan shivered. He could still feel the sharp, carbon steel blade saw through Barak's cervical vertebrae. Killing was a pirate's business, but in the captain's case no murder he had conducted before had felt so personal, or so brutal. Bringing the severed head of Barak back to Palenque, Nolan expected to shed the immense shame of his defection. Although his title as captain was restored and his prized ship returned to him, his dishonor remained with him. Socially ostracized and lonely, Blue-Eyed Nolan banished himself from the city. Purchasing a crew with the little money had left, the *Blade of the South* set sail on the high seas, looking for innocents to enslave. If pride was no longer something Nolan could fight for, *grenadines* would have to do. If one was to live a bitter life, one might as well fill his pockets with gold in the process. But, all the glittering jewels in the world could not assuage a man who had lost standing amongst his peers, which is why he typically did not spend more than a few days in the city. Returning before the Council was not easy for him, as anyone could plainly see, but perhaps Lord Hammond's offer represented another chance for Captain Nolan to redeem himself.

Raising his hands in the air, his elbows slightly buckled, he began to plead his case. "I readily admit me great disservice to Palenque, but th' fact that I stand before ye here to withstand this humiliation should speak to th' import o' me words."

"Go on then, speak smartly," responded Dewl. Blackwood scoffed and some others laughed under their breath, but the leading member of the Council paid them no heed. All those able to attain a presence before the Council had the right to speak their peace, regardless of who they were or what they represented. This had been the law of the Council for hundreds of years, and Dewl was not about to abandon custom on account of the opinions of his brethren.

Nolan nodded and went on, "Members of the Council of Palenque, I bear news from the Glorious Empire of Scandinavans. Just last night, I spoke to a Lord Hammond ap Garest am granst aot Garest—"

"Who in the bloody fuck be that, boy?" interrupted Blackwood.

"Lord Hammond, sir, that be who he is." Before the Council members could

intervene further, Nolan quickly went on, "He offers his people's help in our woes with th' Golden Throne. *Grenadines* and arms, to be exact."

"Belay there, ye nothin' but a fool! Our woes against th' Empire? Be ye mad? For almost ten years we have been warring with them and all for not! And now ye want us to war against them again? Be gone scallywag!" Reeves did not seem to take Lord Hammond's offer well, although perhaps it had more to do with the fact that the Valgardian had used one of the most dishonorable pirates in Palenque as an intermediary. Of course, only a dishonorable pirate looking to regain standing would likely speak to a man looking to incite a war against the Second Empire of the Golden Throne. Whatever the case was, so far Nolan's overtures were failing to sway the Council.

Dewl rose his right hand to silence his peers, unveiling the scars and wounds of battles past. "Let him be speakin'!" he bellowed. For some reason the lead member seemed intent in allowing Nolan to continue selling Hammond's offer. Maybe he saw something in it that others failed to appreciate.

Timidly, Nolan delivered the pitch's crown, "What better opportunity to regain what be ours? A land that was taken from us by imperialist scurvy dogs. We may have lost against th' Empire before, but then we did not have th' support o' another great nation. This be an opportunity that may never present itself again."

"Yer point bein' what, lad?" questioned Dewl.

"We be a dying breed. Our profits be dwindling, our crews be shrinking, and if we continue to do nothin' we will most certainly lose it all."

Dewl pondered Nolan's words for a second, while the other Council members sat in silence. Then Boatswain Dewl addressed the one major doubt that remained, "And what might those lubbers want in return?"

"For us to sell our human wares directly to them and no one else," returned the *Blade of the South's* captain.

"Fair 'nough, I 'spose." Dewl went back to pondering. The other Council members discussed between themselves, and the now ignored Nolan patiently awaited their decision. When the lead member was done thinking he'd turn to either side to speak to someone else and then he'd go back to introspection, and that cycle went on two or three times. The Scandinavian proposal was tempting, but after a number of failed wars, the decision to once again disobey the agreement the Palenque pirates had signed with the Imperial Governor of Theohuanacu was not an easy one to make. The city had barely survived the last conflict — although, to be fair, it had never been close to falling to the Imperial besiegers — and a renewed duel with the Empire could cost the virtual autonomy of what remained of the pirate menace in the southern Dienstadi seas. But, pirates were known for their love of gambling, especially when the stakes were high, and so Dewl finally nodded at Nolan and said, "Against me better judgment, I send ye to alert our brothers in Tiwanaku o' th' Council's call to arms. Be tellin' them that th' rebellion be nigh! Now, be tellin' this Lord Hammond o' our decision as soon as ye can, because ye set sail tonight."

"I be thankin' ye, commodore," said Nolan as he gently bowed.

Before the captain could turn his back, Reeves launched some menacing last words, "Captain, ye run us aground again and yer sentence shall be yer life."

After leaving the Council chamber building, Nolan headed southwest towards the main markets area. These were the Palenque auctioning grounds for Dienstadi slaves and they were usually quite busy. Indeed, as he walked each successive block, the throng of people cluttering the sidewalks thickened. Most of these were actually not there to buy slaves. To attract visitors of all kinds, the markets also tended to include various types of attractions, such as merry-go-rounds for children and even roller coasters with tracks that twisted and turned over the selling grounds below. Other vendors sold food and others other kinds of goods, such as jewelry, knives and swords, firearms, animals, and almost anything the mind could imagine. Not only was there a variety of things to buy, but these wares came from across Greater Dienstad. Foreigners who came to buy slaves brought with them goods from their own countries, as far away as Gholgoth and Nova. It was a full blown market spread across

hundreds of acres, with thousands of sellers lining the streets of harbor-side Palenque. If it weren't for the stale stench of slaves, one might even venture to label the markets of Palenque as pleasurable.

But Nolan wasn't there to buy goods, whether slaves or otherwise; rather, he was looking for Lord Hammond. He found the Valgardian perusing some solid stock, a small group of tan slaves originating from southern Safehaven or the Tirian isles. "Ahoy! Have ye found our product handsome?"

Hammond nodded, "Yes, they're quite exquisite specimens." He slapped one man in the glutes, testing his muscles there. "Strong and healthy, and I suspect with some practical knowledge?"

"Aye," responded Nolan. "Th' indigenous around Tir and Safehaven be known for their work in th' seaborne oil fields. They have used machinery before and other equipment should come more-or-less natural to them." Pointing to another group of slaves, Nolan followed up, "Those over there be even more versatile. We captured them last night, as they were heading west from Holy Panooly. Th' Panoolies be special; they've worked in mines for most o' their lives, or have otherwise survived from th' factory work they do. Highly intelligent, aye. Less educated than th' Tirians, but oftentimes more intelligent by virtue o' th' kind o' machinery they work with."

"I'll have to keep that in mind," said the Scandinavian.

"Ye seem to be in a better mood today, matey," noted the captain. "Maybe ye had some fun with a Palenque beauty last night?"

That seemed to offend the Valgardian, who quickly changed the subject to what was most pertinent, "Tell me, pirate, how did your meeting with the Council go?"

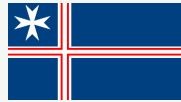
"Me be sailin' out to Tiwanaku t'night. We 'xpect yer 'funds and arms' soon, Valgardian. Th' drums o' war beat again in southern Theohuanacu." Nolan caught one of the slaves peering at Hammond and he used his sheathed sword to hit the man on the side of the head. "Look fore scurvy!"

The other man seemed not to notice, carrying on with his inspection of the men and women arrayed to either side of him. After some time, Hammond turned to Nolan and said, "We'll speak again. I will return by air next time, with a fleet of aircraft carrying what we promised your Council. I hope that this is the beginning of a fruitful relationship, Blue Eyed Nolan." He outstretched his right arm to place the palm of his hand on the pirate's left shoulder. "I have placed orders at your shop; I suppose your men will take care of bringing them to my ship by tonight."

"Aye, I'll make sure o' it. Until th' next full moon, matey." With that, Nolan left to allow Hammond to continue doing whatever he was at the market to do. The captain had other things to do, like begin preparing his trip to Tiwanaku. There he'd speak with what remained of the Council, which continued to plot their return to power, despite the fact that Tiwanaku was now under direct Imperial authority. With Scandanvan support, the Tiwanaku pirates would rise against their unwanted masters, crushing the local garrison and fortifying the city against an Imperial assault — at least, that was the plan. But, even with foreign material and monetary support, the pirates did not stand a chance against the tens of millions of Macabee soldiers on the island. They'd need a diversion, and that is where the Scandinavian States would come in again. What Lord Hammond didn't know was that there was an additional price to the gaining of a monopoly on the distribution of Dienstadi slaves. The Theohuanacu pirates would make sure that their support was public knowledge, because if there was one thing that the Golden Throne disliked more than upstart pirates it was non-Dienstadi intervention in the region. The news would undoubtedly spark a war between the two empires, and that would provide the distraction the pirates needed to succeed in their plans to retake the southern Theohuanacu coastline.

First, however, came persuading the Tiwanaku to join their Palenque brothers...

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Wed Nov 12, 2014 2:20 pm, edited 1 time in total.



The Scandinavians
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

by **The Scandinavians** » Tue Nov 11, 2014 1:12 am



"Even the strongest of men must be made to bend to the designs of the Almighty." (Unknown Source)

"The darkness of humanity they often say derives from the inability of individuals to overcome the weakness within. In the modern world the corruption that exists within people is often left to thrive. This inevitably leads to the inability of entire societies to remain stable as they upon themselves in a cannibalistic orgy of self-destruction. The Scandinavian Empire, seeing this played out in innumerable civilizations has always sought to deny its people the capability to wallow in their own filth. Through grim years of regimentation and the existence of a powerful network the vices of Scandinavian culture are driven to the wayside. Something which ensures the continuity of the blessed order of Erid.

However, those whose are newly brought into the light of the Empire are carriers of the taints of the outside realms. These people must be constantly watched lest they corrupt those around them. The fate of such people within the Empire is usually slavery. For that is the only state in which they would be incapable of threatening the glory and stability of Scandinavians. The process of becoming slaves is complicated matter. As there are many processes which must be employed to break the wills of slaves and to ensure that all corruption is purged from them before they are taken into the bosom of the Empire." (Myself, Vismer Thread)

People must be sorted and their value determined. With the distance from the Scandinavian homeland each individual taken in had to offer a decent return least the cost of transportation negate any profit to be had in the slave trade. Combined with the innate risk in operating so far from home in a region noted for its aggressive stance towards slavery made any slaving venture inherently much more risky than they were elsewhere. Therefore forcing the Scandinavian slavers dealing with the Palenque Council moved out of the normative realm of pursuing lower quality bulk merchandise when dealing with pirates. This shift in the traditional paradigm in turn demanded that harsher filtering methods be employed. It demanded overseers who could navigate the circumstances without causing undo trouble with the regional power and the pirates who governed themselves in a fashion nearly alien to normal Scandinavian ways of thinking.

The manner in which the pirates handled themselves was fundamentally different from how normally the chain of command worked within the Glorious Empire. Usually, a lord would command the immediate respect of their inferiors. Those beneath would follow without hesitation. Those in charge would lead with a prayer in their hearts, words of power issuing from their lips, and victory in their minds. These pirates however only respected those who could bring them wealth. They did not hold true to any people out of a sense of duty. They merely followed their passions. Such people would normally be considered little better than rabid animals worthy of only immediate extermination. However, the eternal demand for slaves within the Scandinavian Empire had changed things.

Over the last few generations, there had been a drying up of the supply of foreign slaves besides from a few trading partners of the Scandinavian Empire. Whilst supplies were sufficient to meet the desire numbers of low skilled slaves, there were not enough niche and skilled slaves to be had. This was born mostly from the fact that domestic production of slaves had always focused on preventing them from acquiring potentially dangerous knowledge of skills. Foreign slaves had always been considered ideal in this regard as they were much more noticeable and thus rigidly control. The incapability of nearly all Scandinavian languages to speak anything save the thrall tongues ensured that a language barrier would prevent foreign slaves from communicating to them. Additionally, the culture that even Scandinavian slaves adhered to made them mistrust all outlanders as heathens seeking to damn their immortal souls through some vile form of temptation.

The laws of the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians outright allowed all subjects of the Empire to freely capture and trade in slaves so long as they did

not originate in allied or were unlawfully enslaved citizens of Gothic states. Thus allowing many of the noble houses to quite liberally engage in slaving wherever they wanted. Though there was always an effort to limit their activities so as to prevent outright war from breaking out. These sort of restrictions were sometimes ignored by the more powerful houses as they perceived the profit to be attained from more aggressive strategies would be well worth the risk involved. After all, the Scandinavian Empire was one of the great powers of the world. Peace would always be the outcome of any dispute least a prolonged occur due to the Scandinavian unwillingness to extradite any of its people to a hostile foreign power and in anyway admit that their ways were flawed. One of the prominent slaving houses of the Empire was Garest. Nearly all their revenue was derived from the the slave trade and most of that from the illicit or grey markets.

In order to meet the requirements brought by operating outside of normal procedures a certain nuanced touch was required. Something which a great many slavers lacked within the Scandinavian Empire. Therefore it had been decided that it would best to send over a few individuals, such as Lord Hammond ap Garest am granst aot Garest, who would be better able to manage the delicate nature of the enterprise. After all, they could not simply be expected to bludgeon their way in as they did in other locations. Instead they would have to first gain the confidence and respect of these offal least they take their business to someone else.

Lord Hammond was one such person. A resourceful and clever man capable of adapting to novel environments. Something which had been made apparent during his youth. Being born the member of a junior branch of his house Hammond had never been destined to achieve any sort of notable power in the Empire. He was instead trained to be a businessman and diplomat of sorts at the Imperial Academy, one of the most prestigious schools which was reserved only for the nobility. As result, he had been effectively raised to serve as an agent of the existing mercantile interests of his house.

There however was a hidden motivation for the decision to expand the Scandinavian slave trade into Dienstad. Within the Scandinavian Empire there existed factions which had begun to chafe underneath the decades of relative peace that the Empire had enjoyed. These people had organized themselves as the Sons of Erid. A radical group which espoused Valgardian dominion and the revival of Scandinavian imperial aspirations on a grand scale. However, the Sons of Erid fully understood that they would not be able to achieve their objectives through internal machinations. The Scandinavian people would need a tangible foreign threat to rally against and reawaken their suppressed desires of imperial glory.

After years of political posturing and planning one of their seemingly infinite plots had finally begun to bare fruit through one of their agents in the employ of house Garest. They had persuaded house Garest into thinking that they would be able to avoid any direct conflict with Dienstad powers. In turn they called upon various allied houses and business affiliates to join them in venture in Dienstad. That their slaving operations would merely take advantage of a local conflict and that Golden Throne would not consider it worthwhile to pursue war against the Glorious Empire. However, the Sons of Erid were no fools. They completely understood any intercession would be considered a direct challenge by the Macabees and that war would be the most probable outcome. The Sons of Erid had simply taken advantage of the greed of house Garest and feed them false intelligence which they took at face value. Thereby setting the place for the restoration of the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians onto the international stage.

Last edited by [The Scandinavians](#) on Tue Nov 11, 2014 1:51 am, edited 1 time in total.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure





The Macabees
Senator

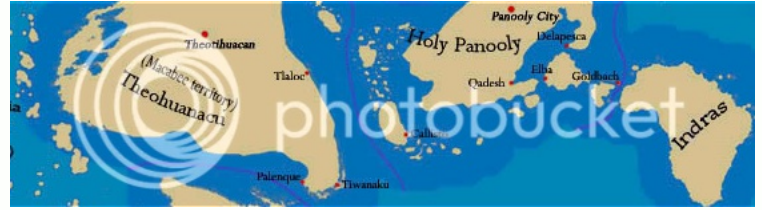
Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

by **The Macabees** » Mon Nov 17, 2014 6:51 pm



Tiwanaku, Theohuanacu

Blue-Eyed Nolan speaks to the Council of Tiwanaku...



Captain Nolan's *Blade of the South* entered Tiwanaku harbor early morning, concealed under a dark, eerie fog proper of a corrupt metropolis. A tall, screaming lighthouse, which emerged from a hill already hundreds of yards above the sea, swept its light gently across the seascape. Having stood over that harbor for over six hundred years, the lighthouse was now purely decorative, modern naval technology having made it obsolete. As the ship slowly made its way through the port, the rest of the city began to reveal itself. Like so many cities in this area of the region, the harbor facilities revealed how ancient Tiwanaku was. The harbor walls must have stood for two millennia now, having withstood the cannonballs of hundreds of wars. They extended from the cliff on which the lighthouse was poised all the way across the harbor, until meeting another set of cliffs to the east. Tall, imposing, and impenetrable: these are the three traits that the walls' architect must have aimed for the most. Behind them lay Tiwanaku sprawling in every direction north of the sea, her buildings modernizing the further away from the coast one looked. 4.7 million persons large now, Tiwanaku had always been an important political and mercantile center. It was always a pirate city too, especially when under the oppression of an occupier.

While the pirates had lost control of the city during their wars with the Golden Throne, actually not too long ago, there remained a strong "underground" buccaneer presence. Because they were prohibited from owning ships or serving on merchant crews, per the most recent treaty with the Second Empire, these pirates were left to fester. With nothing else to do, while licking their wounds they plotted their return to power. Of course, the presence of twelve Imperial divisions of *regulares* and an entire *kriergroup* was something of a deterrent to a full fledged rebellion. For the time being, then, the Tiwanaku pirates were restricted to drunken street brawls, varying degrees of vandalism, and numerous midnight meetings revolving around grand ideas and little momentum for actual action. If things continued to go the way they were, within a decade or two the pirate menace in the city would most likely dissipate on its own. Income levels in the southern Theohuanacu port-metropolis were rising, demographics were rapidly changing, and the nature of Tiwanaku was shifting — pirate influence was rapidly waning. However, with the right backing and a sufficiently strong push, a cornered dog can become a dangerous beast.

That "sufficiently strong push" is exactly what Captain Blue-Eyed Nolan intended to be. As the *Blade of the South* continued to creep through the cold, black harbor waters, it turned towards a small docking station, marked by two jetties extending out from a platform covered with heavy, stationery machinery to unload cargo ships. From behind the murky fog cried a rough voice, "Who be going there?"

"Aye, it be me, Blue-Eyed Nolan," yelled back the captain.

The ship slowly approached the dock, its death-black hull blending into the darkness that was the space within the jetties. Apart from the sound of the ship moving through calm waters, Tiwanaku's port was characterized by an eerie silence. No other vessels were coming or going, and there were no dock workers to be heard. For these reasons and more, Nolan's crew stood attentive at their battle stations — the only thing reasonable men could do in these kinds of situations. While it was unlikely that their ruse had been discovered by the authorities, facing the unknown was always a harrowing experience and it was best to tackle such things rifle in hand, so to speak. It turned out that the tension was all for not, because as soon as the *Blade of the South* docked, the man who had welcomed them earlier revealed himself. He was a shaggy old man — in his 60s, most probably —, the deep grooves patterning his skin

betraying his experience, and he walked with a limp. As he got closer, one could see the metal prosthetic emerging from under a torn pant leg. Attached to a thin leather belt hung a thin, long sword on his left side. One could distinguish him as a pirate from a mile away; and not just any pirate, either.

Arms outstretched, Nolan exclaimed, "Can it really be th' man, th' legend, Samuel "Th' Butcher" Luggs?"

"Aye, that be me, matey. I've been expecting ye."

Before Nolan had left Palenque, the Council had sent a carrier pigeon to Tiwanaku with a note warning of his impending arrival. Luggs represented the welcoming committee. A one man welcoming committee; oh, to what depths Luggs had fallen. Before Nolan stood who was once the most feared pirates sailing Dienstadi seas. Twenty thousand slaves had passed through his cargo holds, eighty-seven merchant ships he had captured (seventy of them Imperial), eleven Imperial warships he had sunk, and seventy-three mutinous crew members he forced to walk the plank. He was no ordinary marauder, he was "The Butcher." This man, not five years earlier, had been sole "councilman" of Tiwanaku, although perhaps "dictator" was a more accurate title. He was not as good of a decision-maker as he was a murderer, however. His decision to cooperate with the Macabees cost him his success, because the Golden Throne doesn't cooperate with traitors. After terms of the city's surrender were agreed to, the Imperial Government replaced him with a re-established council of twelve. They left Luggs' fate to his own people, the worst kind of punishment.

Nolan gave him a look up and down. "It looks like I be not as bad off as I thought I was."

Being thrown to the dogs never turned out well. But, one could still gauge the amount of pain by the type of dog you were being thrown at. One might prefer, for instance, poodles to pit bulls. Much like how any reasonable man would prefer literal dogs to the type of dogs that lived in Tiwanaku. Luggs endured the worse of the two. At the mercy of twelve men who had once conspired to usurp him, his was stripped of authority and rank. He was, of course, allowed to remain within the buccaneer caste system. The alternative would have been letting him off much too easy. Instead, he was demoted to a cabin boy for one of the councilmen, Marsden Mabbott. Not just any cabin boy, mind you. The position was actually quite prestigious, if you were any pirate other than Luggs. Many young swashbucklers competed for the job, because it was an opportunity to get mentored by a captain. Luggs was everything but mentored; he was the ship jester, and the humor was all at his expense. Whatever dirty job there was to do, he would have to do it. These kinds of jobs included welcoming Nolan, another traitor pirate, and bringing him to the Council of Tiwanaku...

...Or what was left of them, anyways. Luggs' double-edged peace with the Empire was short lived. The Council buckled to popular pressure and renewed the city's war with the Golden Throne, bringing yet another bloody, many-year siege that ultimately ended in its unconditional surrender. From suburb to suburb the pirates resisted, but they simply could not withstand the incessant Imperial pressure for long. The hundreds of thousands of *regulares* Fedor unleashed on the misbehaving city-state was just the beginning of the pirate government's problem. Because Tiwanaku was a successful mercantile center, most business was actually quite legitimate, and sheer majority of the city's population had no personal affiliation with piracy at all (unlike Palenque). After years of street-to-street fighting, the loyalty of these demographic sectors was hard to maintain and the Council was eventually "betrayed" by their own citizens. After surrendering, the Empire executed three of the twelve councilmen, forcing the others into hiding. There they remained until the day Nolan set foot on the city, bringing with him a plan that would imply the Council's resurgence.

Luggs glared back at Nolan and retorted, "I committed me crimes for me people, ye committed yours for yourself."

"Don't get flustered with me, cabin boy. Remember, ye be speakin' to a captain." Nolan was only half serious, but he was the kind of bloke that liked to get under another man's fingernails.

"Arr," the older man waved the facetious dispute away. "Follow me, *captain*."

Ye have business t' attend to befo' the moon settles."

Mounting a small vehicle that looked similar to a golf cart, Luggs drove them both to a parking lot outside of the harbor facilities. He left the vehicle in a designated area, where there were others of similar kind already parked, and then Luggs directed the captain of the *Blade of the South* to an older model four-door sedan. It was a black *Tango et Cartagena*, a Macabee-brand of vehicle that had become progressively more popular in Theohuanacu after the automaker "outsourced" their factory work to the territory. With Luggs in the driver's seat and Nolan in the front passenger's seat, the two set off through the city to wherever the Council was hiding. Because much of the pirate population still lived near the harbor, the Council had decided to relocate to the suburbs — where the authorities would bother to look less; Nolan could tell because older, historic buildings soon gave way to the sea of tall apartment blocks that characterized the dozens of suburban neighborhoods that had been popping up since the 1960s. Before Nolan could soak in too many details about where they were, Luggs suddenly pulled the car to the side, parking it halfway on top of a sidewalk.

Opening a small compartment in the center console, Luggs brandished some sort of dark violet blindfold and handed it over to the other man. "Put this on, matey."

"Ye jack tars don't trust me?" Blue-Eyed was only mildly surprised. After all, you'd expect a persecuted group to take some preventative security measures.

"The Butcher" allowed himself to smirk. "Last time we trusted ye, boy, ye stabbed yer city in th' back." He prodded Nolan to hurry up, "C'mon, lad, the sun is a risin' and there is no time to waste. Th' Council be awaiting yer presence." Luggs paused to think about that a little, "A traitor like ye, presenting to th' Council o' Tiwanaku. How times have changed. Th' urgency o' a desperate era, I s'pose."

The captain put the blind fold on and Luggs continued down the road towards the meeting place, taking a left turn here and a right turn there. He must have taken some additional turns, just to throw the blind folded party off, because it all seemed just a tad bit excessive to Nolan. It wasn't just the number of turns, either; Luggs seemed to be turning violently, as if purposefully instigating that sickening rumbling in Blue-Eyed's a-bit-too-sensitive-for-a-pirate stomach. After about another fifteen minutes, the car pulled to a stop again, although this time the cabin boy turned off the engine. They must have been at their destination, because Luggs was quick to issue the other buccaneer orders, "Leave the blind fold on, matey. Take it off and I'll put me blade through ye."

"Pretending ye be a real pirate, cabin boy?" was Nolan's snide response.

"I be more o' a pirate than ye will ever be, scurvy dog traitor." Luggs opened his door, stepped out, closed the door, and then walked around behind the *Tango et Cartagena* to open the passenger's side door. He helped Nolan out, allowing him to stumble over his feet a few times. Nolan soon felt the arms of another man on his other side, as the two now escorted him through wherever they had parked and into some sort of building. Blindfolded, but not deaf, Blue-Eyed could hear quite a bit of noise around him. He listened to the voices of countless men, all of them arguing about something, although it seemed as if about nothing in particular. Disorganization and chaos: the true mark of a pirate lair. The three men stopped in the middle of that crowd and then Luggs took off Nolan's blind fold to reveal what looked like a pit full of rabid dogs — that referring to pirates, of course —, with seven men seated above them. The pit, with a floor made of actual sand, was surrounded by a seven foot tall palisade. Around that was technically most likely supposed to be seating, but the room had apparently been customized to be used as a meeting hall by the Council of Tiwanaku.

As soon as he had time to orient himself, Nolan heard a baritone howl, "SILENCE, YE HAMMOCK HOGGIN, ONE-EYED BOW-LEGGED FREEBOOTERS!"

The crowd fell silent and there was not one eye that hadn't turned up to look at Nathaniel "Cross-Eyed Killer" Vernon, the most feared pirate in Tiwanaku. Well, most feared within his circle, given that his identity was secret to all except those who served on a known pirate captain's crew. Before being banished from his position of power by the Macabees, Vernon was a brutal

ruler, with a vicious tendency to enforce his will by means of force. He really was cross-eyed, and one would think that would preclude most men from tasting the sweet elixir of authority. Not him, though. "Cross-Eyed Killer" was a motivated scallywag and used a talent innate to him, that of murder, to his advantage. Neither did he climb the corporate ladder fairly. Indeed, ask "King of Jacks" Larsson or "Millionaire" Evans whether their slayings were "fair," butchered in their sleep as they were. Evans, by the way, hadn't earned that sobriquet by virtue of his riches either. The number referred the amount of tons he had sunk as a captain. He earned that name only weeks before being murdered, when he ran against Vernon for councilman decades ago (at the time, the "Crossed-Eyed Killer" was a first time candidate, and he won).

Cross-eyed, and really mean looking, Vernon turned his attention to Nolan. The other men in the crowd quickly swiveled their heads towards him as well, and Blue-Eyed suddenly felt somewhat claustrophobic. The head councilman — it should be mentioned that the Empire managed to kill only three former councilmen, the fourth was murdered by Vernon — directed his voice accordingly. Sophisticated, he boomed, "Ye come to Tiwanaku, sent by our brothers in Palenque, to deliver what I hear is an important message. How important can it really be, though? For ye are merely a traitor—" he looked menacingly at Luggs — "and I have never met a traitor with very much of importance to say."

Knowing better, Nolan took the man's joke only half-seriously, "Then ye have never had th' pleasure o' meeting me."

"An eloquent fool is a fool nonetheless," Vernon roared back.

But, Blue-Eyed Nolan was a dart thrower himself. "Aye, then ye might soon find yerself agreein' with a fool."

"Arr," growled back the head councilman. "Spit it out soon then, ye pox faced scurvy dog!" He was obviously losing quite a bit of patience.

Nolan nodded and then cleared your throat. "Thank ye 'Cross Eyed,' I thought—"

"CROSS-EYED KILLER!" shouted Vernon. "CROSS-EYED KILLER! If ye error twice me slice yer throat with a blunt sabre!" His face was colored a pure red, like that of the blood of his victims.

The *Blade of the South's* captain shot his arms up in the air and apologized, "Me apologies, head councilman, I will watch me tongue." He continued, "Ye brothers of Palenque, as ye call them, are plannin' to war against the Empire." There was now quite a bit of whispering around him, as the others gossiped about what they had just heard. Nolan made sure to speak over them, "We have the support of another great empire, the Scandinavians of Gholgoth." The whispers ceased as suddenly as they had come, for this news had left them dumbstruck. "I come to ye, wise head councilman of Tiwanaku, offerin' ye an opportunity of a scallywag's lifetime. To take back yer city, while Gholgoth and Greater Dienstad kill each other in th' seas. When the dust settles, and th' two great empires are left to lick their deep wounds, we will plunder those seas. In other words, matey, I offer ye the opportunity to return yer people where they deserve to be — as feared buccaneers, kings of the Dienstadi seas." Nolan could see the gleam forming in Vernon's crossed eyes. "Head councilman now, king of the pirates in the morrow. That seems like the proper title for a man such of yerself."

"Ye make an interesting proposition, traitor." Nolan's good pitch couldn't end Vernon's disdain for men of his kind. "I be sure the Council of Palenque never agreed to those exact terms."

"Ye speak as truly as Truth herself, head councilman." Blue-Eyed smiled. "Would ye want them to know?"

Vernon supposed the captain was right. But, his interrogation was not yet over. "What about the Scandinavians? How much of ye plan are they aware of?"

"They be aware of enough to motivate them to give us arms and *grenadines* to fight our war. The right question, however, is not what do the Scandinavians know, it be what do those Macabee landlubbers know. The answer to that question be nothin', but for them to wage war with Gholgoth would require them knowin'." He looked at Luggs, with what seemed like a guilty face. "I

have an idea."

"Go on," said Vernon, this time somewhat more gently — as gentle as a fundamentally severe man could be, at least.

"Samuel Luggs," he placed his right hand on Luggs' left shoulder, shaking it a bit. "Samuel Luggs surrendered Tiwanaku to the Macabees once before, why would he not surrender it again? Send him to North Point, to warn those landlubbers that we be plannin' a rebellion. We do that the day befo' we rise up, so we catch their armies unprepared as they march through the city streets."

Luggs shot him back an ugly look, but all that came out of his mouth was stammering. Aware that his defense was severely lacking, his expression to one of terror as he looked around him. These fools were actually agreeing with Nolan! He turned to his captain, councilman Mabbott. To his horror, Mabbot nodded in agreement, waving his arm at Luggs as if ushering him away. "Yes, yes, let that lily-livered do something useful fer once!" It did not take Luggs long to realize that he was to be a traitor to his people...for a second time. The cost of betraying Tiwanaku the first time was what seemed like eternal humiliation. What would be the price of being a two-time betrayer? The thought of a life worse than the one he was currently living seemed like an inferior option to death. With sorrow in his eyes, he briefly inundated himself with the pity of what his life had become. Once a great captain, then a mighty ruler, today and a cabin boy,...and tomorrow what? Without much warning, Luggs pushed Nolan and took the captain's pistol from its holster. As barrel met scalp, the old cabin boy put a bullet in his own head.

That shut the crowd up again, and Vernon asked, "What now?"

With a deep sigh, Nolan said, "I be a traitor too. / will travel to North Point and / will betray me people once again." Volunteering himself was one of those spur-of-the-moment decisions that feel right, but usually end with unintended consequences. No matter, with Luggs dead, Nolan knew he was his most logical successor. Especially when standing in the presence of a cross-eyed man who hated traitors more than he hated Macabees. Maybe volunteering himself would spare him some of the harsher consequences of his second-time punishment. Maybe it would redeem him.

"So be it," responded the head councilman. "Go back, then, to Palenque and tell yer Council that Tiwanaku shall rise with her."

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Mon Nov 17, 2014 7:56 pm, edited 1 time in total.

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The Scandinavians
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalizt

by [The Scandinavians](#) » Mon Dec 08, 2014 2:14 am



"Aranst ters yaato renda ven driksa." "Bravery is born when will conquers doubt." (Erid, The First Emperor)

"My lords of the Council, we have for too long tolerated the growing idleness of our society. We have seen our warriors grow complacent. Witnessed our people grow insular. Accepted that we have no longer have a need to expand our realm and that our current holdings will suffice," said the Lord Garest to the assembly of his five hundred peers who represented the five hundred more prominent houses in the Empire.

Taking a breath Lord Garest than continued, " We have ignored the growing decadence of the world outside. We have failed to act to stop the spread of apostasy, heresy, sodomy, blasphemy, and weakness outside our own realm. The world has distanced itself from the teachings of the Almighty. Most of humanity now embraces damning faiths and preaches denial of the path to heaven."

Bringing his hand inwards he stated, " Whilst our blood, untainted since we descend from those without the taint of sin, guides us to always the faith theirs does not inherently bond to the will of the divine. Innately, this makes them prone to ultimately turn away from the true teachings of the Almighty

God. So long as they remain free they shall always full back towards depravity. No matter how many times we correct them through the word they shall always end up misconstruing it and perverting it to suit whatever agenda they are pursuing. This always occur due to their inability to properly understand the necessity of constant spiritual vigilance."

Taking a breath he then continued," We have forgotten the obligations given to us by God. It is our duty, as those unhindered by the corruption of original sin, to bring all the world into our dominion and shepard creation to God's will. I fully acknowledge that the price needed to attain such a goal will be immeasurable in blood spent and generations of our people bound to the road. However, by failing to accept the stewardship over mankind that God has granted unto shall damnation unto us. For failing to minister the faith to the heathen is the core tenant of all true Christians."

"We have already given the infidel the chance to peacefully convert to the true faith. Now we must accept that only by the sword can this world be redeemed. Failure to take it shall see this world inevitably damned to the devices of the great traitor. Any who would deny this truth are heretics unworthy of being accepted amongst our blessed number my brothers. We must now forsake our idleness and once more carry the torch of the faithful forward and purify this world like our ancestors have on countless occasions before," Lord Garest finally finished. Content that he had at least made his message clear to the assembled lords. There was also an ulterior motive to it. The speech had served as masked command to his subordinates to begin the movement of weapons to the pirates of Tiwanaku.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinvans. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

by **The Macabees** » Thu Jan 15, 2015 10:11 pm



North Point, Theohuanacu

Blue-Eyed Nolan warns the Imperial Governor of the impending rebellion...

The trip to North Point, capital of the Imperial Territory of Theohuanacu, was made by train. Nolan's long trip was made a bit more comfortable by his carriage's opulence, which he shared only with himself. Along one wall stretched a beautiful painting of a nude Merceyé, goddess of fertility, accompanied by figures analogous to cherubs, behind them a stunning forest scenery. The other walls were made of a dark handcrafted wood and the floors carpeted with a soft, elegantly patterned textile. Two hundred years ago, such extravagance would have been reserved for the aristocracy and, if fortunate, only the most wealthy of the bourgeoisie. Even this day in age, a pretty penny the fare cost for sure. The Council of Tiwanaku most certainly did not assume responsibilities for Nolan's finances during the trip, but this did not hold him back from traveling in the very definition of comfort. The pirate captain figured that if he was to commit treason twice, he would do it in luxury. Neither could he shake off the feeling that this was something akin to a 'last meal' for him.

Perhaps it was the man ordered to travel along him that unnerved Blue-Eyed Nolan. Ragnak of the Isles. A bastard, he had no true surname. A scar ran perpendicular to his eye, like a shallow canyon carved by an angry river of steel. Broad shouldered and armed with strong, war-weathered arms, Ragnak's glaring eyes manifested an eternal anger. Born on the Thacu Islands, halfway between Theohuanacu and Holy Panooly, this pirate had seen more than his fair share of combat. Forty-six years and over four hundred wasted men later, he stood above all others as the most ferocious warrior and he had molded himself into an unstoppable killer. Now the Council of his city had tasked him with the monitoring of Blue-Eyed Nolan. Apparently, the Palenque pirate's word was not good enough, and the wise Council of Tiwanaku were determined to accomplish the objective. If Nolan failed in his mission, his neck would make way to Ragnak's steel. The way the islander looked at the pirate captain, the

more it seemed that he'd ultimately kill Nolan no matter what the captain did. 467. That will be Ragnak's tally.

"Ye look at me like a piece o' meat," says Nolan, as he squirmed somewhat uneasily on his chair. He faced the 'barbarian', as he called him, head on, unwilling to cede the man a single opportunity to murder him. *Why is he even in my room?* Nolan had procured him a decent-size cabin on the adjacent carrier. Evidently, he preferred the captain's quarters.

Ragnak snarled, bearing his teeth like a rabid dog. "Because I plan to strip ye o' yer skin, cook ye over a pit, and eat ye like I would swine."

"When did I ever wrong ye, bucko?" the pirate captain questioned. "Last time I realized, I was doing me job." He lips curled into a thin smile. "Ye're in love with me! Ye scallywag, ye've been waiting to hurdle me bones! Does yer daddy be knowin'? He would be mighty disappointed."

"Ye dare mock me? Ye walk amongst a pride o' lions, ye corsair," warned the massive man. He rose, blade in hand, and walked across the room. He flashed Nolan an aggressively ugly look, walking by menacingly, as if ready to pounce on his prey at his own discretion. It was as if he had channeled all his powers of self-restraint to not kill the Palenque traitor there and then. Only Nolan's task of betraying his people once again, and warning the Imperial Governor of the rebellious intentions of his peers, provided value to his life in the eyes of Ragnak.

Nolan scoffed back. "I'm not travelin' any seas as long as we be on this locomotive, so why don't ye bugger off to yer quarters?"

"I like yours more," said the islander, as he eyed the luxury around him. "Ye purchased me inferior hospitality. Ye do nothing but further seal yer death."

"Ye speak nothin' but putrid grog, scallywag! Beggars cannot be choosers." Sooner or later, Nolan would have to kill his 'bodyguard' before his 'bodyguard' killed him. The captain ventured to guess that it would be sooner, rather than later. The necessary peace between the two was dissipating and in its wake filled the blinding demand for a brawl.

Ragnak sneered back at the 'traitor' and then turned to focus on his own things. He revealed his weapon, a large menacing handgun, and started disassembling it. Spread out on a coffee table beside him was a rolled-out pack of cleaning tools, scrubbers, and solutions. Nolan looked at him curiously and then looked away, out a wide window. Evergreens and and conifers passed by in a haze, like an afterthought for the fast-moving bullet train. Sometimes Nolan could see the clear blue waters of the sea hugging Theohuanacu's eastern beaches, other times these were hidden from view by rolling hills, cliffs, or large, lush, green forests. He didn't pay attention to these things, though. The captain had other things, other worries, on his mind. Ragnak's presence was the least of it. Two months ago, the rebellion was only a dream. His actions in North Point would make it a reality. What would become of his crew, his friends, his people? Now that the clouds of war were forming overhead, everything seemed more real. It's easier to theorize about death than to actually face it.

Two months of preparation. Would it be enough time? Scandinavian weapons had flowed into Palenque with urgency. Millions of small-arms, tens of thousands of anti-tank and anti-shipping missiles, and myriad other weapons were being transported by air into the pirate citadel and then transported via covered trucks to Tiwanaku. To succeed, though, the rebellious pirates would need more arms, more heavy firepower. When war came, so would Macabee armor, bombers, aircraft, and ships. The rebels would need to be able to counter these, otherwise the cause was already lost. Their Scandinavian sponsors were doing their best, but they still needed more: ship-breakers, missiles capable of reliably targeting agile Macabee fighter planes. Two months wasn't enough, but it was all the time they had. If they waited longer, they risked being discovered. If caught unprepared, the rebellion would fail before it even started. At least this way they still had some control over the conflict; at least this way they could score an early victory against the Golden Throne.

As Nolan reflected on grim matters, the mouth of the River Ryn opened up to the sea as the train passed it by. Full to the brim and perpetuating a lion's

roar, the river was a testament to the undoubted benefit of Imperial occupation of Theohuanacu — it was just their submission of pirate holdings that brewed resentment. Just five years past, such a sight would not have been seen in Theohuanacu. While this part of the island had always been lush, nuclear war in its core had dried up all the sources of water for its network of tributaries and rivers. When the Macabees came, they committed themselves to gradually eliminate the toxicity to the country's air and soil, intent on exploiting Theohuanacu's mineral wealth and vast space. While at this point much of the core — technically governed by the Senatorial Government — was industrialized, this fact could not negate the resurgence of green pastures, vegetated mountain slopes, and thundering estuaries. This renascent prosperity, however, could not make up for how the Theohuanacu pirates had been wronged.

"What be concernin' ye, scoundrel?" booms Ragnak, catching Nolan by surprise. Perhaps what caught the captain off-guard was that the brute was interested in his troubles at all. After all, so far Ragnak hadn't shown any empathy in him at all. Maybe Nolan didn't want him to be empathetic, because that would only make killing the man that much more difficult.

Maybe he's only feigning, thought Nolan. *Maybe he thinks I'm plotting*. He shot Ragnak a thin smile, and then looked down at the pistol sitting in pieces across the man's lap. "Ye seem to be th' last person t' care about what be troublin' me. 'Sides, whatever I say might only persuade ye to keel-haul me soon rather than later."

"So eager to be tellin' th' Eagles" — how the pirates often referred to the Macabee — "o' our mutiny, eh?" Ragnak bellows a booming laugh fitting of an ice god.

Blue-Eyed waved him away, turning his head to look back out the carriage's window. Countryside gave way to relatively small communities of high-rising buildings. They were entering North Point's expansive suburbs. The capital city had grown over the years, and each of these satellite towns housed an average of half a million people. The city itself boasted a remarkable population of twenty-eight million, almost rivaling the great cities of the Empire's mainland. As a major military and commercial port, North Point attracted visitors from all corners of Greater Dienstad. Many of these moved in permanently, and the metropolis made a common target for immigrants. Indeed, migratory workers fed a rising industrial sector, manufacturing goods later exported to the rest of the Empire and beyond. This renewed economic vigor breathed life into a city that had been dying before the Imperial occupation, making North Point once again one of the most important urban centers in the southern areas of the region. The Governor's Palace — *Ras d'Jarún* — was a testament to this new found status, as it rivaled even the greatest of His Imperial Majesty's *châteaux*.

The bullet train left them at Station *Dargún*, North Point's great rail hub, from which they hailed a cab to take them to their destination. The driver made sure to eye Ragnak up-and-down before letting them into his auto, having never seen a real pirate in these parts of town. Theohuanacu swashbucklers typically stuck the southeastern coastline of the island, where the Imperial presence was relatively contained. Neither did the fact that they came scarce of luggage help. Their makeshift rucksacks made it clear that their stay would be limited. It made their presence all the more mysterious and unexplainable. As the driver stood there staring at the hulking beast, Nolan grunted and urged the little man along. Shuffling his feet back-and-forth and darting his eyes to the ground, the cab driver thought about it one last time and finally agreed to accept his new clientele. Like a bear trapped in too small of a cage, Ragnak struggled into the car and Nolan agilely followed in behind. The other man slammed the trunk closed, circled around to his seat, and jumped in hands-on-wheel.

"Where am I taking you, if I may be so bold to ask?" the driver said cautiously.

"Roasters, Boulevard *Artosis* and *Katedral*. I'll double your fare if you get us there quickly," retorted Nolan.

North Point was a large city. Still, they made it to Roasters, a quaint little café near the historic center of the city, within fifteen minutes. The cafe was nudged within the lower level of a twenty-story fortress of condominiums. Buildings rising into the blue skies, the steel and brick forest gave way only to

an oddly placed stone aqueduct that ran across the city and out to the mountains about eighty kilometers to the east. The aqueduct had been left behind by an ancient civilization, fortunately maintained over the years — indeed, the Empire paid a pretty penny to have it fully restored —, and it clashed with the monotony of modern urban architecture. Inside the café were but perhaps one hundred people. Men, women, children, all enjoying their late morning coffees and infusions. Roasters was known for its large menu of exotic beans and leaves, offering flavors unknown outside the opulent materialism of the Golden Throne. The finest unconstrained capitalism had to offer. It happened to see Markus' favorite Moka coffee, recently made available as result of GATA.

Markus Karrage sat by himself at a small green table outside the café. When he saw the two pirates exit their taxi, he waved them towards him. Nolan saw him first, who slapped his partner in the shoulder, and then started across the street. Nolan had been connected to Markus via a friend in Palenque. This friend knew of a bureaucrat living in the southern Theohuanacu harbor. One way or another, Nolan's meeting with the Macabee was arranged. Since telling the Imperial Governor himself was all but impossible, Karrage would have to do. He'd have to hope that the message would be communicated to the right ears. Nolan's friend in Palenque had told him that Markus was a high-level operative in the local security. Surely, someone like that would like to know of an impending rebellion. It could mean a raise or, better yet, a promotion. Besides, face lined with weathered crevices characteristic of a man who had not found life easy, Karrage did not seem like the kind of time would waste his own time if he couldn't do something with the information he was about to receive.

Markus gave his two guests a cool glance, waving over the waitress. "Bring these two gentlemen whatever they'd like."

She wrinkled her nose in disgust when she looked at them. Pirates tended to be ugly, and their rag-like clothing was more proper of the homeless. Nolan shook his head and Ragnak shot an angry glare that scared the woman away. Rejected, he scooted back inside and into the kitchen. The Macabee did not seem amused.

Leaning on the table, clasping his hands in front of him, Markus broke the ice, "What can I do you for?"

"I carry with me news from Tiwanaku," answered Nolan, somewhat ambiguously. Ragnak said nothing.

The Macabee took a sip of his coffee. "Did you know that the beans they crush into this coffee are imported from over three thousand kilometers away? What dashing men those merchants must be, who are able to bring the once destitute people of North Point some of the most delicious coffee in Greater Dienstad." He looks Ragnak in the eyes. "How pathetic are those who dare to venture only in local seas, to capture and sell those who cannot defend themselves." He was referring to pirates. "That's why we rule them. Cowardly criminals are unfit to rule themselves. That's why we crushed Palenque, not once, but twice." He slammed a closed fist on the table, startling a couple sitting nearby.

"Watch yer tongue, scallywag," roared Ragnak, who stood up menacingly and reached for his weapon.

"Oh sit down, you ugly, stupid, barbarian," responded Markus, dismissively. He pointed at the chair and waited for the giant to sit back down. Waving palm-to-the-sky towards Nolan, he continued, "My insides are about to burst of excitement, pirate. Tell me, what news do you bring?"

Nolan told him about Tiwanaku's intentions and about Palenque's doubtful loyalties. He told the Macabee agent of Scandinavian involvement, the arms shipments, and the plan to overthrow the local magistrate and deliver his head to the governor served on a platter, with an apple in its mouth. With each additional word, Markus' face twisted in disbelief at what good fortune he had to be the first to hear this. By the next morning, the Imperial Governor would know all of this too. The gears of war were turning...



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by [The Macabees](#) » Tue Feb 03, 2015 2:46 pm



North Point, Theohuanacu

The Golden Throne does not pay traitors...

They came for him while the shadows of the night danced upon the walls. Nolan had taken a room at a discrete hotel in the middle of the city and Ragnak slept next door. It wasn't discrete enough, because then during their first night in North Point he had already been taken prisoner. Five men, dressed in black, stormed his room, took the pirate captain by force, pushed him down the hotel corridors and staircases, until they arrived at the underground parking lot. There, they threw him into the back of a black van. Whether they had taken Ragnak as well was unknown to Nolan, as soon as he was chunked into the vehicle someone else fitted his head into a hopelessly thick, and uncomfortable, mask. Seconds later, they were on the move to a destination unknown. All the while, Blue-Eyed panted and heaved as he was paralyzed with anxiety, only to let it subside as he realized his fate was inevitable and that he could do nothing to stem the tide that had taken him capture. As the van darted through the city streets, the proud captain of the *Blade of the South* could only contemplate what awaited him at the end of this involuntary voyage.

The vehicle swerved left and right; it did not slow down for speed bumps and other obstacles. It was a truly terrific ride, but Nolan resolved himself to remain brave. As he lay on the van's floor, the captain did not make a noise. Neither did his captors. There was no dialogue, no voices. Only the hum of the motor, the occasional squeal of a skidding tire, and the ad hoc racket of the van's suspension broke up the monotony of silence. It was an hour or so of this, and then a sudden and complete stop. Or, so it seemed. A few seconds later, the van rumbled again, making frequent stops and turns as if in a compound of some sort. Finally, only *then*, did they finally arrive at their destination. Laid out on the automobile's floor, head hidden behind the black cloth bag, twitched Nolan. Now that it seemed so close, he yearned for freedom. Before he could think about it for long, Nolan was tossed from the van to the cold, hard asphalt beneath. No cushioning, the landing launched a pang up through his right arm and through his body.

Now the voices murmured between themselves. The sullied captain made out a clear, "Pick him up!" Next the shuffle of feet, as three or four men surrounded him to grab him by his arms and legs. These brought him to his feet, although Nolan could still not see. They made it through some kind of door — Nolan could hear someone open it —, and then traveled along some sort of passageway. Then another door, through which the pirate was thrown. He fell to the tiled floor, as the door slammed behind him. Outside, he could hear the faint yell of, "Tell the Governor that he is here!"

Blood trickled down his forehead, underneath the bag on his head, from a cut from the impact with the ground. At first, he lay still, wondering if there was already someone else in the room. He couldn't use his right arm, as it had been too heavily injured when he was thrown off the van. *Those bastards must have broken it.* They hadn't tied any of his natural prostheses together, but when he tried to push himself off the ground he quickly collapsed again when his right arm gave way. So he, for a short time, resigned himself to writhe around, exploring the room and searching for any furniture and the like. It did not take long to worm himself head first into some sort of metal table, consequently meeting a couple of chairs arrayed on either end of said table. After that, he didn't have time for much more, because he heard the door behind him swing wide open. From the artificial darkness behind him, a new voice mocked, "Oh, pirate, how I relish at the opportunity to see a fish out of water. You seem like an especially desperate specimen."

Nolan did not respond. Instead, he tried pushing himself up with his left arm. It was somewhat awkward, but he stabilized himself with his knees, and was finally able to extend one of his legs. Before he could stand all the way up, or fall from a lack of balance — he wasn't sure which would happen first —, the new voice called out again, "Pick him up! And take that bloody bag off of his head, will you?"

Four arms came at him from either direction, picking up and sitting him down on one of the chairs next to the table. The mask was yanked off and a bright counterfeit light, from a couple of fixtures up above, flooded into his eyes. These immediately contracted into thin slits, pupils overwhelmed. It took some time for them to adjust, but Nolan's captors were gracious enough to give him that. After almost a minute, he could finally see and across from him sat the Governor himself — or so it seemed, given the black double-headed eagle sown upon his left breast. Behind this man was a mirrored wall, through which Nolan saw his own reflection. His face bruised, a deep cut now almost fully dotted along the right-side of his forehead, the dishonored pirate captain could see that he was not in the custody of kind men. He turned his attention back to the Governor, who by now was studying him. Blue-Eyed looked around the room, seeing only one another man guarding the door. No sign of Ragnak. "Where be my mate," he inquired.

The Governor did not respond immediately. He made Nolan wait, preferring to continue studying him, like a malintentioned scientist researching a specimen of the lowest order. Finally, and with a low rumble, the large man responded, "That need not concern you."

Was he killed? Did he escape? There was no way to tell. The Governor's face was emotionless as he spoke, keeping Nolan as much in the dark as he was with a bag over his head. "You, my friend, have a much more important issue to bare." He paused, looked at the other man in the room, and snapped his fingers. The guard opened the door just enough to slip out. Theohuanacu's Imperial overlord looked back at the pirate. "You did us a great service, you know." It was more statement, with curiously aggressive tone, than question.

"Be this how ye reward those who do ye a service?" responded Nolan.

Behind him, the room's door opened and the guard entered once again. This time he came with three short, square glasses and a pitcher of ice water. He arrayed these out on the table and slowly poured water into each glass, handing one to the Governor and then taking one for himself. The Governor motioned Nolan to reach for the remaining glass, which Nolan did without consequence. *At least they are gracious enough hosts to allow me a drink of water.* The Governor took a large gulp, most likely necessary given his rotund size. Broad shouldered, like a warrior giant, but with a gut to put most overweight men to shame, he was a product of his age. One day, long ago, perhaps he was a man of pure muscle. Now that muscle had turned to fat. Whatever hair the Governor had left, it had completely greyed. His face was weathered, long trenches of folded skin flashing in every direction. Despite all of this, he exuded a wisdom beyond that of Nolan and his learned words dripped power. He was much like what you would expect from the Imperial Governor of the prized territory of Theohuanacu, one of the most prestigious positions within the Imperial Bureacracy.

To Nolan's previous quip, the Governor said only, "The Golden Throne does not reward traitors." His cold expression left Nolan wordless. The desert warlord took another sip of water. "Now, repeat to me what you said to...what is his name, Petr?"

The guard replied, "Karrage, sire. Markus Karrage."

"That's it!" The Governor smiled. His attention back on Nolan, he continued, "Yes, tell me everything you told Karrage."

It would be a long night for Blue-Eyed Nolan within the bleak compound that was Stirborough Castle, the Governor's residence in North Point. Nolan didn't recognize it yet, but that's where he was. He would be a guest of the Governor until his use met its end. The pirate captain would have to figure out his escape before that time came. Otherwise, he feared that he would meet the same fate Ragnak had.

Barbakán 'Matic', Industrial Sector of Theohuanacu
Storm clouds gather over the Empire's southern dominions...

A looming cloud of dust picked up to the west, outside of 'Matic,' one of the Empire's largest land bases in Theohuanacu. Located in the southern district of the territory's industrial sector, the base housed no less than seven mechanized divisions and two armored counterparts — a little over two hundred and fifty thousand men. Their families added almost two hundred

thousand more. These were all serviced, in turn, by at least one hundred thousand civilians, who lived in the various towns around the *barbakán*. To fit all these people within its confines, the camp was sprawled out over an area greater than one thousand square kilometers. It was a truly titanic monster of a thing, surrounded on all sides by a menacing layered defense of tall stone walls fitted with guard towers and chain link fences. There were other towers scattered within the base, but these only marked where prior walls stood before the camp was expanded. Given the pace of mobilization — the *Ejermacht* would rise to no less than 900 million men —, the walls would most likely move again.

Kabos Ern Dardel wiped the rolling sweat off his forehead. It was always hot in Theohuanacu, especially the further inland one traveled. Apart from the natural physics of things, the vast interior of the island-continent was — and remains, in part — a nuclear wasteland. Imperial occupation came with some efforts at a crude form of terraforming, or at least decontamination, but this did not do much to subdue the heat. Now that wasteland was pocked by various small towns, most of them made up of industrial workers, the families of the unfortunate soldiers deployed to this blight, and a minority of locals who had lived here since before the occupation. There were also numerous military bases, much like 'Matic,' called home by an ever increasing number of warriors. Why anyone would want to conquer such a wasteland, Dardel did not know, although he understood the value of the vast industry that had set up here. He was also aware of the large stocks of precious metals and rare elements deep within the territory's crust.

He followed the dust cloud with his eyes as it curved around the base. It was a man made storm; perhaps an armored column. He turned his attention away from it after a short while and proceeded to where he was headed. The *kabos* had been ordered to present himself at the *tabor* garrison grounds about ten minutes from his barracks. He, of course, awoke late and found himself nearly out of time. So he had none to waste and he continued trotting down the straight dirt path leading from his room to his destination. Dozens of men were walking and running around him, attending to their own matters. After all, *Barbakán* 'Matic' was a busy place. Dardel stopped only to salute an officer or to make way for another person rushing to his or her own post. For the most part, he carved right through the hubbub, towards a mid-sized, stand-alone brick casern. It looked as if it had been built in the 19th century by a technologically suppressed desert tribe. Perhaps it was; Dardel thought he remembered someone telling him of what stood here before 'Matic' was lifted.

The building's sizable, two-door entryway was already open, two soldiers from Dardel's company standing guard. One turned his head to peer at the *kabos* and cheerfully picked at him, "Almost late there, Dardel. You best make sure to follow orders, less you get us all decimated."

"Shit, I don't think any of us would miss you if it meant your head on a pike," shot back Ern. The other man scowled, but his face then smiled again.

Inside, there was a compact lobby, staircase to one side and another, smaller door directly parallel to the front entryway. This smaller door led to a large room packed with uncomfortable plastic chairs facing a only slightly elevated platform near the back. This platform, in turn, was decorated by a lectern and a large white screen. In the middle of the sea of chairs the young *kabos* could see a projector sitting on a wheeled cart. Apparently, no one had put in the effort to attach the projector permanently to the ceiling. It was one and on the screen was displayed a welcome screen. No one, however, was paying attention to it, as there were still a few minutes to spare before the briefing began. Instead, all of the soldiers present mingled between themselves, the expansive room roaring with chatter. Looking about, Ern saw a number of his friends and so he walked over to them, found a chair, and plopped down. His friends appeared not to notice him at first, so Ern dedicated himself to making derisive faces until someone acknowledged his presence.

A woman sitting next to him turned, eyed him, smiled, and said, "Well, well, well, well look who made it!"

Ern shot back a grin. "Shit, no thanks to Martel."

"Who dares say my name?" bellowed another soldier, sitting in the next room, a few seats down. He looked over at Ern. "Shit, it's Dardel! I didn't want to wake you. You seemed so at ease sleeping in your bunk this morning. I thought

it best to let you sleep through the briefing." Martel released a hearty laugh.

"I didn't know you liked to stare at me while I slept, Martel."

The woman interjected once again, "You're just too cute not to stare at." Ern looked back and poked her lightly in the ribcage. *That wouldn't be the only place I poked her*, he thought. Her light brown hair would have fallen down beyond her shoulders if it was not for the fact that it was tied in a bun, as was customary for a female soldier in the *Ejermacht*. Eyes green as emeralds, high cheekbones, and a curvy body to kill for, she was a true beauty. As the *kabos* looked into her eyes, they shared a moment of mutual emotional pleasure. Mariel and he shared the embers of an early love. They understood that Theohuanacu was no place for that kind of thing, but sometimes love makes you forget the harsh realities of life.

All that was soon temporarily forgotten when the room fell silent and upon the platform to the back appeared *Kapitán* Manu Norieg, the *tabors* commanding officer. "Welcome Deathstalkers," — in reference to the *terch* (division) — "I called you here today because I have received our orders for deployment." An increasingly loud murmur swept the audience. No one had foreseen the need to leave Theohuanacu. As if reading his soldiers' minds, Norieg continued, "Fortunately, our mission will not carry us far from here."

The projector changed the image on the screen to a map of southern Theohuanacu, with Tiwanaku and Palenque clearly marked. The *kapitán* extended a long pointing mechanism and placed it squarely on Tiwanaku. "This is our destination. We leave twenty twenty-six, eight, fourteen." They had six days to put their packs together and say goodbye to whatever family they had in 'Matic.' Ern, fortunately, had none. But he had Mariel. He looked at her, she looked at him, and all of a sudden he felt a wave of fear sweep over him as he realized that the only reason they would make such a big move in with such short warning was because they were going to war. But, against who? That is what Norieg spoke about for the next two hours. As the captain droned on, one could hear the first roars of a desert thunderstorm forming above them between dark clouds. They say that rain washes sin away, but in the middle of Theohuanacu it only rains sand. It was a dark omen, although one that the young *kabos* did not yet completely understand. He'd learn in Tiwanaku.

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Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

by [The Scandinavians](#) » Mon Feb 23, 2015 9:15 pm



The Sons of Erid: First Known Judaical Evidence *Emperor's Shadows: Audio Log # BA431R55. Date: Redacted. Restriction: Central Archive Staff. Security Level: Beta*

(First segment censored by the Steward's decree.)

"I, Emdron avt Genadp ao Menac, am accused of fermenting sedition on the basis of my actions to ensure that the divine will of Erid is upheld. Of striving to preserve the bloodlines which the Almighty bequeathed onto each of our houses so that we might lead the world into the era of the Second Kingdom," said Lord Emdron avt Genadp ao Menac.

The justice tribunal cut him off and exclaimed, "You have freely shed the blood of your peers and their kin in an effort to advance the cause of a fringe group which seeks to disrupt the ongoing balance of the Empire and force all of us into a war which we cannot truly win."

Lond Emdron coldly retorted, "We are Valgardians! We are the chosen redeemers of this world! Each of our lives belongs to Erid and God alone. At any moment every true one among us should be willing to freely give their lives to uphold the tenants of our Empire. Sadly, most here would not do so and would instead chose to cower away as the centuries go by content to live their in pitiable security. Not one of the pure that I have played a hand in killing had their lives taken in vain. Each one of their deaths served to further

advance the cause of our fathers. Every last one of them shall be freely welcomed into the eternal realm with their heads held high knowing that their lives ended so that the Glorious Empire of the Scandinvans might once more bring the light of God to all the dark corners of the world."

"That is enough of your propaganda! You have offered no information to whatever group you are tied! We know that someone is protecting and we shall have answers eventually! Your plans have already seen over two hundred Valgardians killed in the last six months. Whilst you had no direct part on ordering their individual killings, you nonetheless are the reason that they are dead today. You compelled your affiliates to begin targeting key members of the noble caste so as to agitate the general populace into demanding war by framing foreign elements as the culpable parties behind the attacks. Your actions would normally see you killed, but your worth as a potential source of ongoing information into the worldview of Valgardian puritan traditionalist militant circles is of ongoing value to the Inquisition and the Shadows. Thus I hereby condemn you to the prison of Dis. May you find redemption there kin slayer," the Tribune finished. With that the justice banged his staff against the ground,

Before the last tap hit the ground a loud decree rang out at the top of the accused Lords lungs, "The will of the Almighty shall be done! Glory to the Sons of Erid!"

After that statement the audio feed was immediately cut off to prevent any additional comments being heard.

Personal Commentary: Attached Shadow's Statement: Audio Log #VBAR098382n

"It is important to note that it seems that the mention of the Sons of Erid at the end was intentional and planned out. All further questions have proven thus far inexact and quite useless even after three months of confinement. In line with the review, it seems likely that the Sons of Erid is the extremist group which managed to organize the killings linked to Emdron. He has proven resistant to any coercion thus far. All tidbits gained have been freely offered in interviews and it has given us a faint trail at the least Torture, per imperial standards, has not been employed due to the damaged information which might be provided and the fact that the individual being questioned has clearly been prepared with falsified stories to provide in the event of such torture. We need to get him to offer more data so we can know what they are planning. My recommendation is to place Emdrom into prolonged solitary and deny him access to light until such a time as he is more cooperative with questioning.

Close audio log. Attach to The Sons of Erid: First Known Judaical Evidence Emperor's Shadows: Audio Log # BA431R55."

Imperial Palace, Scandinavian Empire:

"Your grace the organization of the first shipment of fifty mothballed of Yohannes origin Phlegethon Class Guided Missile Frigate has been finished. What are your instructions?" an older looking functionary asked the Crown Prince who was dressed in the royal blue of the Imperial family.

"Get into contact with our associates in Theohuanacu. Tell them that they can go to Shen Almaru for their ships. If they need to hire some additional hands we can offer them so refuse we have captured during our anti-bandit campaigns in the colonies. They speak English in a manner which should not be inefficient and prevent them from serving as remedial hands on their ships. The filth should be all too happy not to have to worry about being gibbeted and their families enslaved," the Crown Prince coldly responded.

Bowing the assistant said, "Your will be done your high grace."

With a wave from his hand the Crown Prince the helper prostrated himself before his lord and then left the room. The plans for provoking a war were quite quickly falling into place. Soon the pirates of Theohuanacu would once again take up arms against the Golden Throne. Effectively provoking a war to occur between the Scandinvans and the Macabees once the depth of the

involvement of the Scandinavians was found out. As the Scandinavians part in the slave trade, the disruption of trade lines, the arming of a major rebellion, and the direct challenge to the integrity of the Golden Throne's prestige would assuredly force their hand to played against the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. The Sons of Erid would have the conflict needed to revive the ancient spirit of Valgard and bring about the resurrection of the old golden ages when Gholgoth truly feared the cross of St. Peter.

In the meantime, the Prince would be awarded with a few more interesting slaves that he would be able to use as bargaining chips in gaining the loyalty of some fringe nobility who would appreciate such things. Those whose loyalty would have to be better tested in the future and if found wanting necessitate their purging.

Last edited by [The Scandinavians](#) on Mon Feb 23, 2015 10:56 pm, edited 3 times in total.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



The Scandinavians
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

by [The Scandinavians](#) » Tue Feb 24, 2015 8:23 pm



Imperial Academy Lecture on the Ongoing Slave Trade and Its Vindication: Speaker: Lord Professor Earst of the Imperial Academy

"Each of you here is a Valgardian, a scion of the ancient houses which compromise the nobility of our Glorious Empire. I am sure each of you has endlessly heard the constant praise given to our Empire and the merits that make it superior to any other political body on the planet. However, I doubt that most of you here have delved deeply into the philosophy behind our Empire and sought to comprehend the pillars upon which all our beliefs are built upon. For these things are usually glazed over in the rudimentary publications given to the lower castes and often times noble parents prefer to allow their children to come to such realizations through their own efforts so as to avoid having to explain complicated matters to them. Today, I shall break this trend. You shall come to understand the foundations of our society and the necessity of slavery within it.

Slavery is required in the Scandinavian Empire due to a very simple reason: a need for unskilled laborers. The free people of the Empire eschew drudgery. They seek to find fulfillment in tasks which require more mental acuity than what would be seen working as a field hand, bus boy, or custodian. This is certainly aggravated by the fact that currently our nation has enough positions to meet the career demands of our free populations. These factors in turn create a chronic labor shortage in the empire as there are not enough people willing to take on the back breaking labor performed by the lowest orders of any civilization.

The labor shortage in the unskilled labor sector are only compounded by things other than attitudes. The inability of the Scandinavian society to adopt outsiders is another notable example. The savage and sinful nature innate in nearly all foreign peoples prevents them from being free in our Empire. Any proles imported as free laborers would only serve to spread corruption and sedition within our nation. They would bring foreign taint to our shores and plant weeds which would eventually bring about the collapse of our society. Therefore are we compelled to enslave all imported workers so as to ensure that they do not freely spread their impurity and so that they might be made to occupy a productive place within our nation

Within our nation slaves usually are used within five fields: agriculture, domestic services, low skilled industrial roles, mining, and support roles.

Agricultural slaves are used in a fairly self-evident capacity offering work as general field hands. In the domestic capacity they serve as maids, cooks, concubines, attendants, tailors, and cobblers. Those working in an industrial setting are usually used in those positions which do not require certification to perform labor in and do things such as construction as well. Those who are assigned to a mining role are used to dig, quarry, pan, and haul materials. In the support roles slaves can be seen providing assistance to skilled laborers, custodial slots, and serve in a variety of other capacities. In these roles do the slaves find purpose. They are able to be brought into the light of the Almighty.

Many abroad would say that slavery condemns the enslaved. That is deprives them of their liberty without offering anything save the certainty of everlasting toil. That it is wrong to compel people to accept a faith in which they can never be accepted as full members. However, these short sighted fools condemn us for saving them from living pitiable lives. We bring them into the light of the Lord so that their souls can be eternally saved from damnation. We forcibly redeem those whose blood would otherwise bring them down the path of deprivation. Those whose descendants would ever fall to vice without failure. Only through slavery can these weaklings find the succor of a society capable of ministering to them in a manner which ensures their continued obedience to the faith due to the benevolent intercession of the owners of the slaves.

Remember that it is our duty as the chosen of Erid to bring the truth to the whole of humanity! it is our destiny to rule this world! We shall be the makers of the Second Kingdom! All shall one day fall to us!"

Last edited by [The Scandinavians](#) on Wed Mar 25, 2015 4:38 am, edited 3 times in total.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

by [The Macabees](#) » Sun Apr 05, 2015 1:55 am



First Battle of Tiwanaku, Theohuanacu *The Ejermacht receives a rude surprise...*

"Just another walk in the park," Mariel had said, streaks of her tied-back hair, as black as night itself, flowing from underneath her helmet. Pale face, large brown eyes, she must have been the most beautiful thing Ern had ever seen. Her kisses were as soft as freshly dried cotton, her embraces filled with tenderness and love. The young *kabos* even admired his budding lover as blood, red like roses, tricked down her face, curving around either temple and down her cheeks, dripping off her jawline and her chin. Those large, round, amber eyes, once full of stunning life, now dead. Even then, as her neck cracked and her head opened against the ceiling, a mixture of blood and brains pouring out, Ern yearned for her. He attempted to reach out, to touch her one last time, but his arms were being pulled in the opposite direction by the spin of [Shalmaneser](#), as it arced into the air and tumbled along the street. Ern had lost consciousness before the vehicle had stopped rotating, but it did not erase that final image of a dying Mariel.

Ern awoke much too soon for his taste. He blinked his eyes a few times, adjusting to the burning light of Utu, as he attempted to gain his bearings. The screeching cacophony of battle slowly filled his ears, the screams of zippering bullets and artillery shrieked down from the heavens above. The head of a soldier popped into the *kabos'* field of vision. He wore a helmet bearing a red across, large enough to be seen and recognized by an enemy soldier several hundred meters down range. The man's hard slaps gave only a numb pain, Ern still in the early seconds of a recovery, but they were enough to help him come to his senses before he bought the farm. Finally, Ern could make out the words the medic was yelling at him. "Soldier! Wake your sorry, borderline shirking ass up, son! Rise and shine, welcome to a battle, dang nabbit! WAKE

UP!"

Head still spinning, eyelids still drooping, Ern was still not concerned much by the man's bullying. Another soldier popped up over the *kabos* then, looking at the first one. He wore the red cross, as well, although underneath it was the bronze, parabolic crescent that marked his commissioned rank. "How's this guy, doing?"

"Concussion, sir," responded the medic. "No serious physical injuries, though, except a few deep cuts and scrapes."

"What happened to him?" The officer spoke briskly, as if he had better things to do and Ern was holding him back.

"His APC got blown to hell and back by a mine. Must have been a one hundred kilogram explosive, sir, probably meant for a Nakil." The younger medic looked down at Ern, and the officer followed his gaze. "He's lucky to be alive, and in this condition. Six of our men were lost, two suffered slow deaths from their wounds, and most of the survivors are severely maimed. Dardel, Ern Dardel, here is a lucky son of a bitch."

The officer didn't skip a beat. "How are you feeling, kid?" He didn't wait for a response. "Can you hold a rifle? What am I saying? Of course you can hold a rifle! Get up, soldier, it's time to go to war!" He turned to catch another man's attention, giving a shout, "Karmel, I got another one for you here. Brief him, get him to the rally point. Then come back here, cuz I guarantee I'll have more ready for you. We've been scattered like ashes in the wind."

The other officer — not a medic — took Ern by the arm as he tried to pick himself up. Before he could be snatched away, Ern looked at the younger medic who had first tended to him. Almost pleading, he asked, "Mariel Varotz? Have you heard anything about a Mariel Varotz? Infantry, *Harka CL*, 'Deathstalkers.' She was with me in the APC, heavily injured. Have you seen her around, has she been evacuated?"

"Shit, soldier, we haven't secured the road yet," responded the young medic. "Ain't no one gonna be evacuated at least for another quarter hour. I hear we're putting together a small convoy of HIM-TACs to carry the wounded north, but ain't no tellin' where one of those rockets is gonna come out of next." He took another look at Ern, who was now fully standing, and then shifted his eyes towards the ground, "Look man, I'm sure this Mariel is fine. Don't worry about her. Keep your head on a swivel and worry about yourself."

Ern didn't have anymore time to ask questions, as he was already being hauled away. He took a look at the officer's rank and name, *Leutnant* Goretz. The man spoke quickly, sometimes too fast to understand completely. He had the thick drawl of a Ruskan, and he wore the look of a man who had experienced hardship his entire life. "Alright,..." the *leutnant* looked at Ern's name, "Dardel, listen to me and keep your head low. We're headed to the nearest rally point. I'm going to hand you off, you just follow instructions. You're going to be reorganized into a new unit." He gave Ern a sharp look, "*Kabos*, pull your shit together. We've lost maybe a tenth of our force already and we're going to lose a lot more by the end of the day. Either you figure yourself out *right now*, or you're a dead man." He pointed at different windows all around them. "There can be an enemy in any one of those places, maybe in all of them. You might not have a heartbeat left, kid. Remember that. The more you keep your senses, the more likely you are to survive."

The sounds of war had become more intense. They came upon the corner of a building, where Goretz pushed him hard against the wall and then took position right behind him. "Alright, kid. Take a look around the corner."

Ern did as told, peeking out both ways into the street. The only thing he saw was the burned out hull of a Nakil, smoke rising out from inside the open hatch. Maybe the crew had been killed by a grenade after someone tried to open the hatch to escape. Or maybe the crew had thrown the grenade themselves, afraid of handing the tank over to the enemy. The right track had come almost completely off; it must have been a small mine. Behind it lay the hulls of two APCs, these knocked out by well-placed rocket propelled grenades. The armor was heavily pocked, suggesting that it had taken quite a few hits before finally succumbing to their assailants. There were no bodies, however. Whatever dead there were were either in the hulls still or had been evacuated

already. The strange thing was that there were no dead rebels, either, although there were three or four holes blasted into the sides of nearby apartment blocks. A shiver went down Ern's spine as he realized that the battle was not going well for his own side. "You said we've lost a tenth of our men, sir. What the hell happened here? How long has it been?"

"Since you've been knocked out?" asked the *leutnant*. "Fuck if I know. But, we were ambushed about thirty minutes ago. No one saw it coming. The bastards let our advanced units reach as deep as the center of the historic city. We had fifty thousand men spread out over one hundred square miles. We're not talking small firefight, either. There are enemies all over the place, thousands of them. They're shooting us from above; tore our armor up pretty good with heavy mines and rockets. Shit, you know, your APC got hit by one."

Before Ern could respond, Goretz nodded and added, "Alright, *kabos*. I'll cover, you cross the street to the other side. The rally point is just behind that next building. When you reach the next corner, wait 'til I reach you."

Ern nodded back, poked his head around the corner to take one last look, and then started running. The dirt around him spiked up into the air as the *kabos* was started by some timid small arms fire. Ern wasn't really sure where it was coming from, he just kept running. He could hear crackle of fire coming from Goretz' general location and the shattering of glass up above. Finally, he reached the building across the street and found cover within a small niche that framed a wide door leading to the building's lobby. He moved his arms as if to raise his rifle, but realized that he had not yet been given a weapon. Cursing under his breath, he turned to look back at the direction he came from, and he saw the *leutnant* already crossing behind him. He too faced some dispersed small arms fire, and this time an ill-placed round ricocheted off the gravel and into his shin. Goretz collapsed in the middle of the street, maybe three meters from the *kabos*' position. "Shit," muttered Ern before rushing into the street, taking Goretz' weapon, and then dragging the *leutnant* to the niche.

When he looked down to see if Goretz was alright, he was shocked to find blood flowing out from the *leutnant's* necked. He had been shot while being dragged, and he was dying. There was nothing Ern could do to save him. The officer wouldn't even make it if he was dragged all the way to the rally point, just a block ahead. Before he died, the *leutnant* whispered, "We secured this area six minutes ago, we just couldn't spare the men to hold it. We didn't think we needed to. But, somehow, they're back in the buildings we cleared." He didn't even close his eyes at the end. His body give an inhumane bolt as his muscles tightened and then relaxed, and peace came to him. Ern took the body in a fire man's carry and then made his way to the rally point, wondering if the day could get any worse than it already had.

North Point, Theohuanacu *Breakout...*

The width of the cell barely sufficient for his shoulders, Blue-Eyed Nolan lay in a fetal position, shivering in the desert cold of midnight North Point. Locked up in one of the dungeons of Stirborough Castle, all Nolan could do was suffer and wonder when his value to the Macabees would expire. Then he could die; the pain of 'life' would be gone. Laying there on the floor, face streaked with a dirt that had already dug itself deep in his pores, he managed to smile. He even laughed to himself, but not a happy laugh. In the week he had been held prisoner in North Point he had grown mad. The torture — sleepless nights, physical beatings, waterboarding, and more — hadn't helped. Nolan's body writhed on the ground, rebelling against his own ambivalence. His spirits had been broken, but the instinct in him still pushed to resist. Nevertheless, he had already resigned himself to eventual and inevitable death, and the body could do nothing without the brain on its side. Mad laughter gave way to sobbing, what tears he could muster collecting on the stone floor along with his drool.

When the faint noise of steps approaching from down the dark hall he ceased making noise, except for an intense quivering. *They be comin' for me again!* In the night, soldiers would come for him and take him to some room, where he would be interrogated or tortured, sometimes both. Sometimes, it was several times a night. They came so often that Nolan began to wonder whether they were restricted to the night at all, especially since in those dark passages and cells of Stirborough's dungeons it always seemed to be dark. Neither was

there anyone to console the pirate captain when he was there alone. He couldn't see anyone else in any of the cells, the shadows impenetrable to his swollen eyes. Sure, there was always someone moaning or babbling incomprehensibly. One man narrated his attempted escape, as he attempted to liberate the bricks on the far end wall of his cell, only to use the first one he managed to pry open — after two days of trying, mind you — to beat his own head in, until he passed out. He bled to death slowly; he was not unconscious for all of it. Despite those decade groans and wails, Nolan thought more than once to pry a brick free for his own head.

It was too late for that now. One arm broken, swollen, and almost ready for an amputation, the other was too weak from malnutrition to even prop his body on. Nolan's muscles were still somewhat sharp, but their strength had been drained by a lack of food and sleep. When the five men arrived, he didn't even bother to look up. Not that he could if he wanted to. He was lying there, slowly rotting away, until the governor sent more dogs to make sure he was cared for just enough to ensure that he would live for yet another day. The five men didn't say a word as they picked Nolan's body up between two of them and then took him through the halls of the castle's prison. The captain was facing the ceiling, so he missed the bodies of the dead guards on the floor. He did notice when fresh air swept upon his cold, pale face. It was a sweet feeling, that of fresh air. He hadn't breathed anything but the stale, musty, and toxic oxygen of the dungeons for the week, and he had begun to miss the crispness of a subtle breeze. Nolan smiled as the men took him away.

They arrived to a black van, with no windows and no markings to identify it. A warning pang flashed across Nolan's head, memories of what had brought him to the Castle in the first place. Bound feet. Rolling across the floor of a van. Thrown off the back, the crack of the bones in his arm as they shattered under his weight. *Not this again.* He regained enough consciousness to make out the voice of one man, "Throw him in th' rear. Be careful, he be weak. Ensure those two do what they can to help th' cap'n."

As he was being placed in the back, gently Nolan noted, the captain managed to crane his neck a bit to look up at those around him. He gasped. It was members of his crew. Toothless Johnny, Four-Fingered Roger, and others, including that scallywag Ragnak of the Isles. As he looked at that mountain of a man, the one who he thought had been sent to escort and kill him, he could not be more relieved than at any other point in his life. "I thought ye were dead, ye hornswaggler!"

Ragnak grunted in response, but there was a grin hidden somewhere behind his scowl. He only said, "We all may still be, if we don't weigh anchor here swiftly."

The large man moved to close the rear doors, but Nolan called out before he could, "Ragnak, hold your cannons!" The heavily muscled buccaneer paused for a second to let the captain speak. "Whar we be headed? Whar be we leaving to?" Ragnak only smiled as he closed the door without answering. Within seconds, the van was on its way and a couple of men seated on either side of Nolan began to work on him, administering some kind of liquid solution through a tube, while they moved his arm to wrap it in a holster. Nolan let out painful groans as they maneuvered the damaged limb, and then a wild howl as they snapped it over his chest. He almost passed out before the drive was over. "Be careful ye squiffy!"

It was about twenty minutes later that the vehicle stopped and the doors were opened. The swift gale brought with it a salt water aroma, revealing the party's proximity to the sea. *The harbor!* The crew members of his there helped him out of the van and then supported him as he hobbled to turn around. He swiveled his head to look for Ragnak, starting to lecture the monster, "Ragnak, ye scallywag, I asked ye whar we were—" He closed his mouth tight when he saw what floated before him. The *Blade of the South!* Ragnak walked around the van to meet with Nolan and his men, and the captain turned to him. "Whar be we sailing?"

"Nicaro," said Ragnak. "Tonight."

Seas South of Scandinavians, Gholgoth
Stirring the pot...

The hull of the KSS 780 creaked under the pressure of the deep Gothic waters south of the major Scandinvan island. *Kapitán* Hans Lichter paid his ship's groans no mind as he quickly made his way through the



passageways to the control room. Eight weeks and two days, that's how long the *Korenja* had been hunting. Creeping up north from a patrol route just south of the Gothic continents, Lichter had been ordered to veer her course up north to intercept a convoy of Scandinvan merchant vessels that had left port only four days earlier. Whatever their cargoes held, they were evidently high enough priority targets to warrant risking war by sending a nuclear submarine to pick those ships off within Gothic waters. Lichter passed on a quick shiver. Gothic waters...few outsiders dared to tread there unwarranted.

As he walked into the control room the *leutnant* bellowed, "*Kapitán* on the deck!"

He was answered by an immediate, "At ease." Lichter strolled to the center and stood there for a second to look around. His men were at their battle stations, ready for orders. The *kapitán* seemed pleased; he had trained his men well, their discipline was rivaled only by the best crews in the *Kriermada*. He did not waste too much time, however, and before one could count to ten he was already distributing his orders. "*Leutnant* Ridder, Take us to thirty meters, zero bubble!"

"Rise to thirty meters" echoed the *leutnant*.

After punching some buttons, the operator responded, "Rising to thirty meters, sir."

As the *Korenja* gently rose towards the surface of the ocean, Lichter stood patient, rigid, like the captain of a submarine certain to score new kills in a very long time. The crew in the command room worked silently, a single sailor alerting the officer of the deck to new developments, such as changes in depth. In the torpedo room, the crew there were poised to load the torpedo tubes, but were still awaiting orders. These minutes leading to the strike were always the most tense. Finally, after some time, the navigator, with a low voice, reported, "Level at thirty meters, sir."

The *leutnant* repeated, "Level at thirty meters, *Kapitán*."

"Very well. Thank you, Ridder." He paused for less than a second, then adding, "Taking the conn." The *leutnant* nodded, but Lichter was already continuing. "Commence firing point procedures."

"Aye, aye, *kapitán*." The firing officer already had the team under him scanning the waters for the target ships. These parts of the seas were trafficked commercial sea lanes, traveled by thousands of ships each year. It would take some time to recognize the small convoy of Scandinvan cargo ships. Fortunately, Lichter had resources he could tap into to make his task easier. They had received coordinates from a satellite in orbit above, via ELF. Within minutes the four ships had been found and their positions triangulated. The firing officer announced, "Target one, two, three, and four, acquired."

"Thank you, *Valferez*." Lichter took a deep breath and closed his mind. He thought of his young boy, sitting at the kitchen table while his mother prepared him breakfast. The *kapitán* smiled to himself. He would not see them for quite some time. He could feel it in his gut, the feeling that his actions this day would bind him to war. Not just any war, but a war with a Gothic power. With the Scandinvan Empire. Lichter opened his eyes, and licked his lips. Predicted gross tonnage sunk: three hundred, eleven thousand. Today would be glorious. He would worry about the hangover later. "Fire control technician of the watch," the captain said, "prepare to fire torpedoes one through four."

"Aye, aye, sir!" A few seconds later, "prepared to fire torpedoes, sir!"

"Open torpedo doors one through four." The *kapitán's* voice did not tremble. Outside, the water quivered as the titanium doors slid open. Tiny bubbles popped all around the bow of the hull like suds, but the noise did not matter much. There were many ships here and the overbearing sound of their large hulls disturbing the ocean's surface dominated all else. At the deck, everyone had fallen silent, listening to the beeps of the sonar and the beeps and boops of the other equipment. Lichter brought the top of his right fist to his lips and lightly kissed the edge of the index finger, then bringing the fist up to his forehead in prayer to *Gíot* (God). He then proceeded to fill the silence. "Fire control technician of the watch, fire torpedo one and two."

The sailor did just that, pressing a button on his control panel. The *dunk* of the 'Hamerheads' dropping into the water and then the *swoosh* of their engines could be heard from within, and it was not long that they were on to their targets. The *kapitán* gave only a five second pause before he ordered the other two torpedoes fired, with one 'Hammerhead' headed towards a unique target. Perhaps a minute later, the sound of explosions and the cracking of hulls, as the 'Hammerheads' exploded beneath their targets. The fire control technician, looking pleased with himself, reported, "*Kapitán*, all four targets are hit. Three sinking, one has been heavily damaged but is still floating. Shall I prepare and fire a fifth torpedo, sir?"

"No. Close all torpedo doors." Lichter raised his head and then spoke to the crew. "Congratulations sailors of the KSS 780, today you have scored a great victory against those who we shall surely call enemies in the years to come." He turned to the navigator and ordered, "Take us to two hundred meters." To Ridder he said, "The conn is yours, *leutnant*. Take her to one hundred meters and then take us south." What came next was a big unknown, but for now the *kapitán* intended to get his submarine out of the area before they were found.

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Mon Jul 03, 2017 11:13 am, edited 4 times in total.

Former Sr. II Roleplaying Mentor | [Factbook](#)

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The Scandinavians
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalizt

by [The Scandinavians](#) » Fri May 08, 2015 12:45 pm



Southeastern Gholgothic Sea Lanes, Containment Operations in Effect

Imperial Armed Forces Directive General Radio Dictation:

"All naval forces, seaway defense initiatives, and available air assets of the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians stand at alert. The Emperor, upon hearing of an unprovoked attack against a Scandinavian shipping convoy, ha ordered that all forces be deployed to hunt down the culpable vessel. Current parameters indicate that chances of a air or warship strike are marginal The strongest probability therefore is that a submersible was used in the attack and due to the inability of existing monitoring systems to detect there is a very low chance of their being any large numbers of them and thus we are forced to conclude that only one or a small group are currently in operation."

Imperial Shipping Directive:

"Attention all shipping in Southeastern Gholgoth we are forced to advise that all shipping momentarily cease as there has been an attack on Scandinavian shipping and we cordoning off the area. We authorize all Gothic members not impacted by the blockade to deploy an escort or allow a Scandinavian warship to convoy their trading ships in order to ensure their protection. We apologize for the trouble and we shall do our utmost to solve the situation as soon as possible. If there is any economic harm born from our efforts we offer to provide compensation to the harmed parties on the condition of an independent analysis."

Southern Command

Lord Admrial Erida was caught in a bind. Under his watch the Empire had been attacked. The direct orders from the Emperor himself had been to cordon off

all approaches to the Empire and prevent any direct attack against the homeland. An order which had failed to have been followed. In order to retain his honor he had to find the responsible vessel. If he did not he would likely be subject to an incredibly harsh and thorough investigation by the Council of Lords. Something which could well ruin his career.

Therefore he was strongly incentivized to find whatever was responsible for the attack. He however did not believe it to be a submarine. He concluded that it was likely an experimental aircraft which had been able to use unknown technologies to slip through the Scandinavian security systems. Though he did acknowledge that judging by how far they were out at sea at the time of the attack it was likely that it might well have had jamming equipment which had been to allow it to suppress any maydays from the transports.

This in turn caused him to shift priority to searching away from the depths of the ocean. He was worried that a nation in Gholgoth itself might have decided to allow an enemy nation to use them as staging base or worse that a Gothic lord had been solely culpable for organizing such an attack. Something which would demand that the Empire react within parameters dictated in a purely hypothetical scenario. Most of the planned response models demanded that the Scandinavian Empire organize a force to spill the blood of the offending nation a hundred fold more than that had been taken from Scandinavian freeborn. Such would be the penance of the traitorous power at the beginning. After that would come a more properly organized effort to deal with the act of war.

Yet, the nature of the attack still demanded that a defense posture be taken so as to ensure the safety of Scandinavian shipping. Therefore naval assets were deployed to intervals of a hundred miles along the major southeastern seaways and aircraft were being sent out in regular routines to scan the air and sea for any enemy targets as was accepted doctrine. This was only the Southeastern Command's direct response however. There were other branches of the Emperor's services which had different opinions.

The Emperor's Shadows, the 1 intelligence services employed by the Emperor, had taken the nature of the attack indicated a waterborne strike vessel. Namely, they conjectured that only a submarine would be able to pull off such an assault. They however understood that being able to capture the vessel would be at best difficult. However, they did have one card up their hand.

With the approval of high command the Shadows dispatched their own ships to begin laying out the newly designed torpedo mine silos throughout the major seaways and the most direct paths to the major southern ports of the Empire. With the waters off the southern coast often only hundreds of feet deep the few reliably cleared waterways were fairly easy to control as the coral and rock free routes were only a few miles wide. Something which required additional measures be taken in order to stave off any potential lurking subs least the routes become killing grounds of a sort.

The Shadows were also beginning to enact purification protocols so as to find out if there had been a leak in the normally secretive shipping manifests. For although the downed shipping transports had nothing of notable value there was a strong chance that the offending party had been aware of plans to dispatch munitions to the fortress island of Vismer in order to better fortify it against any threat coming down the central Gholgothic straits.

Last edited by [The Scandinavians](#) on Fri May 08, 2015 12:47 pm, edited 1 time in total.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



by [The Macabees](#) » Wed Jun 03, 2015 6:54 pm

Seas South of Scandinavians, Gholgoth
From glory to blunder...





The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

QUOTE

The *Korenja* traveled south, away from the Scandinavians, away from whatever carnage its attack had caused. Its sleek, black, tear-dropped shaped hull pierced the deep, dark waters of a vast ocean. Her captain, *Kapitán* Hans Lichter, did not know how much damage he had caused; he did not care. His orders were to pop a few torpedoes at a small convoy of Scandinavian shipping and get the hell out. Since then, his attack sub had headed south to escape the southern fringes of Gholgoth's regional waters. They could then launch a buoy to the surface and organize themselves while receiving new orders. Until then, they darted through the expansive ocean making minimal noise, using — for the most part — only those sensors that protected them from mines and other underwater obstacles. Those had become a very real threat in past days. It was not uncommon to hear the soft *plop* of a mine being dropped via aircraft somewhere nearby, and all too often it was four or five mines they heard, or more. Undoubtedly those aircraft had seeded a large area before the KSS 780 and Lichter could not escape the sense that he was being trapped in a cage of explosives.

The Scandinavian response to his attack had been quick and comprehensive — the resources of an entire empire versus a lonely Macabee nuclear submarine tens of thousands of miles away from home. It would make for a hell of a story if the wolf made out of the pen alive.

Lichter stood resting against the back wall of his quarters, his right hand wrapped around his chin. Pensive, his eyes were lost on some distant point nowhere in particular. "It's time to change the game, Noah."

Leutnant Ridder frowned. Seated in a wooden chair anchored to the floor, lest it be knocked about when the ship jolted in sudden maneuvers, he sat with his waist near the chair's lip and his back steeply inclined. Scratching a light itch on his neck, the XO turned his frown into a raised eyebrow and asked, "What do you have in mind?"

"We turn east." Lichter stood up straight and walked toward a small refrigerator sitting at the base near the end of the small cot permanently attached to the *Korenja's* hull. Opening it, he turned to Ridder and asked, "Care for a refreshment?"

"Yes, toss me a Safi." Safi, a soft drink manufacturer and distributor worth hundreds of billions of dollars — perhaps more. Known for their sugar and all the bad stuff related to their acidic ingredients, including tooth decay and obesity. The kind of stuff most people just don't give a shit about. The *kapitán* passed his XO a can, Ridder catching it in one hand and seemingly automatically snapping the tab up. Lichter opened one of his own, taking a good gulp before walking back to the section of wall he was leaning against.

Placing his now somewhat less full can of Safi on the stunningly carved wooden desk anchored beside him, the *Korenja's* executive officer swept his hand against the short, thin hair on the back of his head. His face suggested that the *kapitán's* plan wasn't convincing him. "What's that going to do for us, Hans?"

Lichter's face was as readable as the surface of a stone. Apparently, his plan didn't entirely convince him either. "It's been four days since the run. Four days and we still have bogeys dropping mines in front of us. I don't think they know where we are, but they have a broad idea and they have the resources to narrow that idea down." He sighed, but solemnly went on, "Noah, there's a good chance we won't make it if we try to break out of their search zone towards the south. That's where they expect us to go, so ahead of us is where their resources are being allocated." Then he smiled and leaned against the smooth, gray wall again. "But, they don't know where we are. That means we can change the game without them knowing. We'll head east, where we'll send a surface buoy for new orders and an update on events. If they order us to stick around, which I'm sure they will, we'll loop around with the final destination to the northwest. Then we'll do whatever the hell those idiots in high command want us to do. Probably intel, until they get more assets to the area. Hell, if we have it our way, they'll order us back to home ports."

"You're telling me. It's been almost a year since I've seen Lori and the kids." The XO pulled back on the chair and slumped forward, putting his head in his hands. They didn't even have human contact in their last resupply, about three months earlier. A drone had dropped supplies onto the surface of the ocean

about five thousand clicks to the south. "Too fucking long, sir."

"Preadin' to the choir, kid," replied Lichter. After a short pause, he said, "That's why I'm going to try my hardest to get us all out alive, no matter what our orders are."

Ridder took out his wallet from the back pocket of his officer's pants, opened it, and took out a picture of his family. "Shall we give the order, then?" The *kapitán* nodded.

The *leutnant* stood up and opened the titanium door that led to a lighted hallway. The *kapitán* continued to lean against the wall for the second and then popped to his feet, briskly strolling through the door and nodding his head in thanks. Ridder walked out just behind him, shutting the door and standing aside as Lichter locked it. Then the *kapitán* outstretched his arm ahead of him, as if saying, *Lead the way*. The XO understood and the *kapitán* walked behind him as they made their way down the hall, through at least three hatches, to the control room. He studied the XO in front of him, thinking about what the man had said about not seeing his family. The *kapitán* had lost his own wife to a divorce and he hadn't seen his son in over ten years. Sometimes his lack of ties back home made it harder to understand the emotional forces that weighed down on his men. But, he could feel the tensions rising within the boat. They had been out at sea for a very long time, and now anxieties were at an all-time high since it seemed that they had just sparked an inter-regional war. He hoped that high command ordered them to go home, or at least limit them to an intel mission in Scandinavian waters.

"Officer on the deck!" announced one sailor sitting near the fore-entrance.

The *kapitán* waved him down as he stepped in behind the XO. "At ease, at ease." He paused and looked around, at the expectant faces looking back. These men were his only family and he intended to protect them. That required making difficult decisions. "Taking the conn. *Leutnant* Ridder, change course due east."

"Aye, aye sir," responded the *leutnant*, "Change course due east."

"Aye, aye sir, changing course due east!" echoed one of the navigators.

The *kapitán* nodded, stood straight, and looked ahead towards where fate would take him.

First Battle of Tiwanaku, Theohuanacu

The front lines take form...

The trickle of soldiers and vehicles that had escaped the inner neighborhoods of old Tiwanaku was devastating. Few men had made it out; most had died or were dying. The ambush was a success, chewing up and spitting out a considerable chunk out of two mechanized divisions — an estimated five and a half thousand dead or wounded out of about 45,000 soldiers. They had entered the city expecting a peaceful occupation. The possibility of resistance was considered so remote; after the last of the pirate wars, what fool buccaneer would risk the remnants of their people and culture? These pirates would, apparently. Tiwanaku was in open rebellion and it had re-introduced itself with quite a bang. Reeling back from the initial strike, the remaining 39,000 or so men slowly consolidated along a front that had recessed well into the outer suburbs. The local attack was relentless, rebellious fighters striking along the streets, from behind, and even from underground. It had all been well planned out, that much was evident, and it had popular support. Command estimated a total of no less than 20,000 fighters spread throughout the city. At least, that's what *Kabos* Ern Dardel had overheard the *kapitán* say to his *sargént*, as he filled him in on the big picture.

The *kapitán* turned to him and snapped, "What you looking at, Dardel?"

"Nothin', sir," was the *kabos'* meek response.

"Good," retorted the *kapitán* and *sargént* together. The *bandag* commander added, "We'll be rotating in about ten and I expect you to be ready in five."

"Yes, sir!"

It had taken less than 24 hours for Dardel to be reassigned to a new unit after his had been shredded to pieces during the initial attack. His comrades were all orphans like him, their units also decomposed by heavy casualties. Dardel turned to walk towards where the other men in his *bandag* had gathered, at the end of the block near one of the many rally points now scattered in an arc around the city. Looking at their faces he barely recognized any of them. After seeing the people he had known, even loved, for the past several years die, there wasn't much motivating him to get close to his new colleagues. Given the experience so far, it was just as likely that his new comrades would be dead before the battle's end as anything else. Why get close to anyone? Why suffer that pain? Not again; maybe in the future, when all this *shit* was behind him, but not now, not in Tiwanaku. In his defense, the other men and women of the unit hadn't made much of an effort to get to know each other either. Probably for the same reasons. Dardel couldn't blame them. The situation was "all kinds of fucked up." The only person Dardel had really made "friends" with was *Kabos* Jonas Distahl, and only because you had to talk to *someone* — otherwise, you'd go crazy.

Distahl's head popped up as Dardel walked over to him. With a smile on his face, he greeted, "Hey buddy, you're looking particularly down today."

"I don't know about 'particularly,' man. It's been a pretty shitty ride this whole time." Dardel was only half-joking. He seemed distant, his eyes pointed at the ground as he walked and his mind revolving around the tragedy that had befallen him the day before. He still hadn't heard anything about Mariel. He had no idea whether she was dead, alive, or still bleeding to death somewhere in the inner streets of Theohuanacu. Maybe she had been captured and who knows what the pirates do to their prisoners. He clenched his fists as he thought about it, his cheeks turning red as blood with anger.

They hadn't spoken much to each other, but just about the only thing Dardel and Distahl talked to each other about was what they had lost over the past 24 hours. Distahl could see what was bothering the other man, "I know she's still alive, bro. She's been taken to a field hospital outside the city and she's probably already on her way to Tlaloc, where they can fix her."

"You don't know shit, Distahl," replied Dardel.

Distahl's mouth twisted in a silent *tsk*, but all he said was, "Yea, maybe not. But, it doesn't help getting all depressed about what you can't control. Better to tell yourself it's all better and deal with the bad shit when you're not about to get shot at."

The two fell silent for a long time after, until the *kapitán* came by to collect them. Gabri Ames was tall, but thin, and with the look of a guy who went to college and was better at the intellectual stuff than he was at fighting. Which, for an officer, was oftentimes exactly what you were looking for. Behind him strutted the *sargént*, chest puffed high, with a face that looked like he was about to kill someone — the type of sergeant you'd like on your side. *Protosargént* Mikael Jor must have weighed close to 250 pounds and not very much of it being fat. Tall, with broad shoulders, the gods didn't compromise when making him. He was born for two things: to lead men or kill 'em. He was also older, already past his mid-40s, his greying hair instill confidence in those who followed him. With the amount of experience he had, he must have served during the infamous War of Golden Succession, the annexation of northern Safehaven, and the initial occupation of Theohuanacu, the brutality the man had seen in his life made even the horrific toll of this day's ambush pale in comparison. Sometimes looking at him made you feel sorry for the other side. Sometimes. Most of the time you felt sorry for yourself.

"Get up you lazy pack of starvin' muts!" the *Protosargént* yelled in his thick Ruskan drawl. "We're rotating to the front lines, and you boys are our cannon fodder. Congratulations, you've outlived your friends by a day. Let's see if you can make survivin' a habit."

Kapitán Ames walked by without paying much attention to anything and the men around him slowly got to their feet, rifles in hand, the pockets of their thin battle suits filled with mags and some snacks for later. The thin packs on their back, under a thin veneer of armor, held enough water to last them for 48 hours, if stretched. Most of their armor had scratches and scuff marks, tribute to the one-sided combat of the previous day. When they had all formed up, Ames turned around to look at them and, with a smile on his face, said,

"Don't listen to the *sargént*, he's just being a hardass. Now, I'm not one for words, so I'm just going to say this. They killed your friends, they might have even killed their lovers, so let's distribute some fuckin' justice." There were a few muffled cheers among the men.

The trip to the forward line was an arduous journey they made by HIM-TAC, which would then load up the remnants of whatever sorry *bandag* was holding their part of the line before they got there. Despite the consolidation that had taken place over the previous day, they hadn't been able to completely clear the occupied sections of suburbs of enemy fighters. They had learned very early on that making the distance on foot meant getting tied down in petty firefights in intersections, where they'd be attacked from rooftops, the windows of tall buildings, and fortified storefronts on the street level. Better to burst through by vehicle, with an IFV or two following from behind to scratch their back. Making the rotation was important because the fighting had kept up its incredible intensity all throughout the night and the subsequent morning. Men were getting tired and the forward line was slowly being pushed back. It was only just now that the two mechanized divisions in Tiwanaku had finally composed themselves after their initial disarray, and even then the unexpected strength of the rebellion was proving too much for the 45,000 or so men to handle.

When they arrived at the sector they were ordered to hold, Dardel could see the desperation in the faces of those who were rotating back to the "rear" (although, one questions the concept of a rear in a battle where the enemy seems unrestricted by the conventionalities of war). Dardel's *bandag* was positioned to protect a line running across four main intersections with the intention of helping to cut the flow of enemy fighters infiltrating into Macabee-held city territory. Nearby walls were riddled with bullets or suffered massive damages, from rockets and large caliber ammunition. The bodies of dead pirate insurgents littered a nearby alley, although, eerily, apart from those there weren't many other ones. Where were they coming from? The Macabee dead had already been collected and taken to the rear for nearly immediate shipment out of Tiwanaku and back to base. Most of the wounded had been evacuated as well, but Dardel could see some with broken arms, still using their other one to fire whatever weapon they had. Others sported white bandages, stained with blood, around their heads or thighs. The young *kabos* looked over at Distahl, who had exited from another HIM-TAC and had now come up to walk beside him, and said, "I guess this is what we have to look forward to."

Distahl took his gaze from Dardel to the soldiers getting ready to leave. To one, who was making his way to one of the HIM-TACs, he asked, "What the hell happened here?"

Without lifting his eyes from the pavement, the other soldier replied, "Watch yourself, man. They come out the holes, from behind walls you thought had been cleared, from everywhere and nowhere at the same time." To Dardel, "You have eyes on the back of your head?"

Dardel shook his head.

"Shit, you better grow some before some biscuit eater puts a burst right through your back." Dardel didn't know if it was his warning or the perpetual racket of nearby gunfire, that seemed to get closer with every ebb and flow in the neverending battle, that sounded more ominous.

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The Scandinavians
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

by [The Scandinavians](#) » Wed Jul 15, 2015 5:21 pm

QUOTE

"We are all serve the will of Erid. Even now after 5000 years do his words drive us onto the promised tomorrow. We shall bring order to this world and finally allow true peace to take root throughout humanity. We shall purge the taint of sin from mankind. We shall spread the word of the Almighty to all. The second kingdoms shall be built from within the ranks of the faithful. Then, united under the Emperors, shall we bring heaven to Earth so that we might eternally enjoin the two in everlasting paradise."
(The Cry of the Crusader)

War was an experience which forced a society to inexorably alter itself in order to meet its demands. War removed the weakest elements of a civilization by forcing it to remove those impulses which would undermine its martial efforts. War would drive the liberal factions into hiding as nationalist and imperialist ideals would become widespread again. War would unite the Scandinavian people in a common cause and prove that the outside world sought to destroy their ancient culture.

The issue of a war was something which the Sons of Erid had been long preparing for. The issue had been properly awaiting a moment to strike at a major power. The pirates of Theohuanacu offered the Sons a chance to exploit both a moral offense and internal security threat to the Maccabees. Whilst they certainly did not have the forces to engage in a particularly prolonged conflict, they did however pose enough of a threat to engage the force of the Golden Throne in a confrontation which could dominate the news of the Maccabees for a notable period of time.

These pirates were not prepared, in terms of materials and munitions, to properly pose a threat to an enemy force which had access to significantly more advanced weaponry and production systems. The sheer scale of the difference had internal analysts project that any war would see the Golden Throne bring to bear forces, which would likely just be a small fraction of their cumulative might, that would utterly smash the rebellion. Nonetheless, the issue required mobilization and hard fought battles in urban areas where the rebels had the home field advantage.

In order to ensure that the pirate's rebellion in Theohuanacu drained as much blood as possible some additional weapons were being shipped to the pirates. The flotilla in which the 50 fifty frigates were the core also brought with them the ordinance which would be required to supply the frigates. As well, a hundred hyper-sonic missiles designed as capital ship killers, a few thousand long range missiles built off of Yohannes templates, and a notable supply of deep sea trap mines.

Off of the Coast of Nicaro,

After dealing with the storm and a journey of months the flotilla had finally arrived off the landmass of Nicaro which had turned into a chaos ridden hell. Using this to their advantage the Sons of Erid planned to meet up with the pirates for the turnover of ships. The Scandinavian skeleton crews then sent out an encoded message to their allies in order for their forces to come meet them with them in the new day least the organized nations of the region react.

In the meantime purge orders were being prepared to deal with the slaves, who made up the majority of the crews, once the pirates were beginning the transfer process. None of the slaves could be allowed to leak details about the plan to any party. For now information had to be fairly tightly controlled even if it meant only buying an extra week or two. Every second was considered vital as suspense was a valued factor in the situation for the longer it brewed the more intense the reaction. Something which would better serve the interests of the Sons.

Whilst waiting for the pirates to begin the pickup, the Scandinavian technicians were running systems reviews and doing final checkups of the hardware. They had to be certain they were handing over properly operating equipment as the pirates might well not have the capacity to provide required repairs as their ports were being blockaded by the fleets of the Golden Throne. However, the Scandinavian flotilla had brought enough material to ensure that at least basic repairs on all the equipment. However, in the event of an engine suffering critical damage it would likely be impossible for the pirates to repair it. Though this was not the greatest concern to the Scandinavians, as all they wanted the pirates to do was given the Golden Throne a black eye.

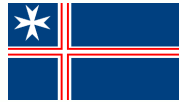
Once the pirates had been given control over the ships the Scandinavians were ordered to make for home as quickly as possible in the smaller transports which had been brought along. They could not be captured and risk interrogation at the hands of the Maccabees. Therefore, in the event of a severe probability of capture, the ships were armed with detonation devices controlled by the Sons of Erid commanders who did not fear death.

In the end they serve the cause one way or another. For in death is a martyr born and in life is a soldier still an asset.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavs. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



The Scandinavs
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

by [The Scandinavs](#) » Thu Jul 16, 2015 10:15 pm



"Good you still have some life left in you. I guess I can ease your passing with a story. Well... I assume giving a justification for our beliefs might suit your constant need for answers. To start with, we Valgardians are not something your kind can ever comprehend. The beliefs that we espouse are descended from customs thousands of years old. We follow guidelines that have been our governing precepts since the start of history. We have come to realize over the millennium that the order that we live under is the only thing that holds back the chaos.

Those who would oppose, such as you, only will weaken us as a whole. Your ilk represent a challenge to the long term legitimacy of the Scandinavian system by seeking to alter the caste system. You believe that it is proper to allow people to freely chose their destiny. This however only will lead to the spread of liberal secular ideals which seek to strip away that which makes us Scandinavs. By the end of it we would be another state whose purpose was lost to alien thinking which demands we all be consumed by a godless greater identify as humans. Something which we cannot allow.

I must say you however are correct in some regards. Many of us fully realize that the prophecies of Erid are not something which are a forgone conclusion. Erid's prophecies are best understood as a utopian vision of sorts, the dreams of a better tomorrow. The reason why global conquest and unification are prerequisites to his vision are that even so long our first emperor realized that so long as people remained independent of his will there would be a constant assault against his vision. The threat of which would ultimately see our movement destroyed by root from within due tot he inability of our system to realize its fruition. This process might take hundreds of years, but it would happen nonetheless. Therefore, so long as the promised tomorrow awaits, we must take steps to ensure the ongoing devotion of the body of the people to the second kingdom. We alone offer the world a chance for true peace. We offer all those conquered purpose in something greater then themselves which will span all the future of humanity.

Yet, your filth would see us forsake our mission in order to kowtow to your shortsightedness. That is why you will know die," with that said the Son of Erid drove a sword in the man's neck and left him dying alone in a dark alley where the casteless would loot then burn his corpse before daylight.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavs. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870

by [The Macabees](#) » Sat Aug 15, 2015 2:53 pm



Palenque, Theohuanacu
The rebellion spreads...

The headless corpse of the *diadok* — local attaché of the Imperial Governor of Theohuanacu — hung from the balcony of the Taraco *Kastil*, the body grey and

decrepit from having its blood drained by gravity. The eight other Imperial personnel were draped alongside him in similar state. Two hundred meters below were their heads, attached to the sharp end of eight-foot pikes organized along the base of the keep. Eyes rolled up and into the back of their heads, their faces looked frozen in the dire pain they must have been suffering while dying. Heads scalped by their murderers, and brains removed out of local tradition, what happened to them happened while they still breathed. The gory sight stood as a warning for going against the Council of Palenque, whose flags proudly waved on all corners of the *kastil's* walls, replacing the Imperial flags that once stood in their place. Palenque, historic swashbuckling paradise, was now once again firmly under pirate rule and this grandiose display of pent-up aggression was only the beginning of the Great Program. The city streets were rivers of red, the blood of revolution staining the pavement of stability.

The camera zoomed out from the bloody walls of Taraco *Kastil* and then swept across to the left, revealing a much more startling scene. The outer suburbs of Palenque burned bright against the cloudy night sky, much of the landscape ablaze. León Seramilla spoke excitedly into a hand-held microphone, looking out towards the horizon as he explained the events unfolding before his eyes. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, if you're watching this from home, I can assure that it's even more impressive in person. The entire districts of Ek Kabah, Chalak, and Gulcalco are being burned down as we speak." The streets around Seramilla and his camera team were eerily empty, people preferring to barricade themselves inside their homes, where they were safest. The gravel on the ground occasionally rattled under the pressure of some nearby explosion and the sound of gunfire was omnipresent, but nothing was more obvious than the overbearing heat of the growing city fire that was quickly racing its way around the impoverished ghettos of outer-Palenque. "It is so hot that I *feel* my skin sizzle. It must be a couple thousand degrees out there. I ask you to pray for those caught within those flames."

"One True God above," muttered Seramilla, most likely involuntarily. The cameraman kept his hand-held device trained on the fiery hell that was peripheral Palenque. "Those suburbs hold a quarter-million people, most of them provincial immigrants. They came here for new opportunities, but they in the end they have only found persecution."

A radio piece in Seramilla's right ear connected the reporter to a newsroom in Fedala, where two female anchors sat behind a beautiful desk and narrated the footage in between Seramilla's commentary. Over the feed, one of the anchors asked. "What do we know about the situation in those suburbs? Are there any reports regarding the evacuation of civilians?"

The reporter shook his head solemnly, "No." He paused to catch a breath. "Communication networks are down, the private sector ones at least. Besides, there isn't a military force here to evacuate, and whatever private security there is has been ineffectual in stopping the local pirate militias from sweeping into the outer suburbs and burning it down." Seramilla pointed to the cameraman to look upwards, at the flying Council battle flags. "They have joined Tiwanaku in rebellion and they are eliminating potential threats to their hold on the city, including the quarter of a million migrants who call this place home. It is a human tragedy of horrifying proportions and there's not a damn thing anybody can do about it."

"Are you safe there, León?" asked the other anchorwoman, who showed more concern for the reporter than the fact that she was on live television. Apparently, there were still people who realized that the price paid for the 'story' wasn't always right.

"We are not at threat this close to the city-center, Selín," Seramilla explained. "The people we really have to worry about are the seven hundred thousand plus of provincial-decent now being burned alive, trapped in their homes."

"What we are witnessing," said Selín, "is the worst mankind has to offer. As we have advanced as a people, grown from backwater villages to modern, industrialized nations, we have not been able to escape our most natural instincts. Man was born into violence, always with or over nature. We will never fail to stoop to our most basic, most terrible, and most irrational selves."

The other woman lifted her right hand and pressed it into her ear, her eyes

squinting as her face twisted in concern. Timidly, "Um, we will have to come back to you, León." On television, one would see Seramilla's feed cut out, with the main set now taking up the entire screen. "We have word from another special investigator on the other side of the suburbs. The footage coming to your screen...now," the set shrunk into a small photo of her face and behind it, corner-to-corner, raged the fires of Gulcaco, "is live. I repeat, the footage is live. We are speaking now to Special Investigator Franco Pernia" — a Havenic or Zarbian name. "Franco, what can you see on your side?"

It was a pretty stupid question, because you could see what was happening from just looking at the screen. The camera had been set up facing the suburb of Gulcaco, which had been converted into a furnace of doom and destruction. There was an endless throng of people walking up the road, approaching the camera with faces full of sadness, desperation, and terror. Small girls cried and some boys sobbed, their parents forcing them along as fast as they could. Some children walked without parents, making their way aimlessly towards wherever the crowd was taking them. Coming from the rear, towards the city, one could hear the steady staccato of automatic rifle fire and the subsequent cries of lives cut short, or, perhaps better said, cut down. *Klack, klack, klack*. But that was nothing compared to the roar of the inferno that was now the outer city. The fire raged from one side of the suburb to the next, and it continued on to the two flanking suburbs as well. It was spreading, spreading faster than the militias could control it. They had forgotten to account for the night's winds, which held no piety for the forsaken children of Palenque.

"We are looking at a genocide," was all that Franco said.

"What do you mean?" The anchorwoman, Moneka — a *pilpiltin*; or, half-Dienstadi, half-Theohuanacu —, replied.

Franco looked back at the camera in disbelief. Behind him, a woman came out from the moving crowd and fell to her knees. Looking up at the lens, for the whole world to see her, she shrieked, "Help us, help us! They're murdering us! My son...my son! They killed him!" she yelled, her face a waterfall of tears.

Klack, klack, klack. The rifle fire was coming closer.

"Okay, Moneka. Things aren't looking safe here, we're moving out." Ominously, he added, "León, if you can hear me, get out, get out now. These people are crazy. They don't give a shit if you're press. They will kill you anyways, so get out now." The screen turned black and was quickly replaced by the set.

Selín sat there looking confused, unsure whether to let León leave or recall him on the street. He apparently decided for her, because after a few awkward moments she said, "Actually, León is pinging us right now." The screens changed this time, this time showing the empty streets nears the *kastil*. Probingly, the anchorwoman asked, "How are things where you're at, León? If you are unsafe, you need to get out of there."

"Don't worry about us," was León's response. The camera turned back to the *kastil*. "They cleared the governor's palace earlier today, leaving the atrocious display you can see now. They are preoccupied with mass murder now. So, I stress again, don't worry about—"

A makeshift military truck came to a grinding halt up the street, past a small intersection, within full view of the camera. In reality, it was a repurposed tractor trailer. No, not the tractor-trailers that form the second-half of an eighteen-wheeler. It was an actual rinky-dink, wooden trailer meant to be hooked to a tractor. It was the type of thing you'd have if you were a small landowner with about one hundred hectares of vineyards. But, repurposed it carried "soldiers" instead. They were more like a very well-armed mob. Dressed in no particular uniform at all, some having their hair hang down almost to their waists, and all with bandanas covering their entire face except the eyes, they unloaded from the back of the truck in disorganized fashion — about six in all. Two more came from either side of what was pulling the trailer, a compact and hastily armored tractor. They looked mean, with knives hanging at their waists and black carbines in their arms, and whatever they were screaming sounded very intimidating. The makeshift militia squad trotted its way towards León and his two-man camera crew, who stood anchored to the ground by a sudden and overwhelming douse of fear.

"León, you need to go *now*," pleaded Moneka. "León!"

But he did not move. His legs were no longer in his control; his brain had shut down. One of the soldiers shouted, this time in *dienstadi*, "You! Who are you? Who the fuck are you?" All eight of them had their rifles pointed at the Macabee television crew. It was all going south, really fast.

It took a while for León to respond, but he finally did, "We're press!" He shook his head, trying to free himself from the unbearable grasp of panic. Flashing the ID hanging around his neck to the pirate militia, León kept repeating, "We're press. We'll leave right now, we didn't mean to bother anyone." The camera was still rolling.

"You bother us," said the soldier. "You bother us for too many years, you and your *people*. Get on your knees." His eyes darted to the ground, as if giving instructions. "Get on the ground, now!"

The other soldiers came up from behind and started to push them down, having them fall on their knees. The crew lost their hold on the camera and it fell to the pavement below, not broken and still transmitting footage. Now all one could see was the bottom half of an apartment building, but all the crewman were now also being caught. Their attackers were there too. It turned out falling on their knees didn't suffice, because the crewmen were kicked to the ground next. It was soon after that the shooting began, the militiamen opening fire on the three unarmed men. From their barrels flashed the red and black of expanding gases, simultaneously spouting bullet after bullet. They poured round and round into their bodies, the blood trickling from the corners of the crewmen's mouths and gushing out of the many holes which decorated their flailing bodies. And just as quickly as it had all began, it was all over. Three lifeless people lay stranded on the narrow street, towered on either side by tall apartment blocks, and the death squad soon departed without as much as a second look. All the while, the camera kept rolling and Greater Dienstad watched in horror.

[TL;DR:

- Palenque has started its rebellion, some days after Tiwanaku's.]

Battle of Salvasupuesta Sea, Northeast of Nicaro

The pirates score their first major victory of the war...

The pirate presence in Nicaro was scant and their new leader, Blue-Eyed Nolan, had not yet arrived. His voyage from North Point to the western Greater Dienstadi nation would take two to three months, largely because his ship — *Blade of the South* — was forced to travel a longer route around Imperial patrol routes and picket lines. Until his arrival, the two hundred Theohuanacu pirates stationed in Nicaro would be on their own. First things first, they would have to grow their numbers, because alone they would hardly be able to man a single ship coming from Scandinavians. So, they took advantage of the ongoing civil war to recruit from the local population. There was one stumbling block: the lack of effective incentives. They did not have enough money to pay high wages — most of a pirate crewman's income came from looting. On the other hand, they could promise a much freer life, adventure, and, ultimately, they overcame the money problem by simply founding an extortion scheme to tax whatever local business there was. It took some time, creativity, and effort, but by the time the Scandinavian ships had arrived they had inflated their ranks to just about two thousand men — enough for about twenty ships, maybe twice that if they went to battle at half-complement.

It would have to do, because the Scandinavian ships had arrived and a small Macabee patrol task force was now little over five hundred kilometers off the Nicaroan coast. The time to strike was now. Why bring attention to their presence if they couldn't even man the full fleet of ships their newfound Scandinavian allies had sold to them? Because the Golden Throne's *Kriermada* was in a similarly tough position and there was no sense in allowing it to get stronger by allowing it to gang up on pockets of pirate resistance at a time. The Theohuanacu rebellion could be strangled if the fleets in and around the island-continent were allowed to use their home strengths to set up a blockade. However, if there was a pirate threat to the northwest, it would force the Golden Throne to redistribute some of its home fleet. It'd be hard for them to take away from their territorial fleets, which would soon — in theory — be busy preparing for the foreseen war with Scandinavians (and was already

stretched to boot), so they'd have to reduce their numbers in Theohuanacu. Now, hoping for no blockade at all was wishful, but a leaky one could be exploited.

Because some of the crewmen had to stay in Nicaro, to continue training a steady flow of local recruits, Raiding Fleet "Serpents of the Seas" left with fifteen of the supplied *Phlegeton-class Frigates*. Their complements were a mixture of seasoned pirate officers and greener recruits. The entire raiding fleet was put under the command of freshly-minted Commodore Jackson 'Six-Wives' Burles. A veteran of all the Theohuanacu Pirate Wars, between 2022 and 2025, it made sense to put him at the forefront of the offensive. During the initial clashes with the Golden Throne, it had been he who embarrassed a super dreadnought off the coast of North Point by sneaking past its picket line and hitting it with six anti-ship missiles. Of course, he didn't do much damage, as most of the missiles were shot down, but just to have made it so close to such a prized target was enough to be highly commendable. He, of course, continued to distinguish himself throughout the many battles he fought during the following four years. Now, it was time to prove his steel once again, fortunately against a slightly easier target (in a relative sense).

The Imperial patrol fleet was about forty ships strong. Detached from its *krierflot*, it was sent to perch over the Nicaroan civil conflict — fueled by rumors of Moka and other



[Art by Yohannes.]

foreign involvement. It did not expect the presence of a pirate fleet. It was mainly composed of the newly designed *Desorah-class* destroyer,¹ which were designed for just this kind of operation. Hard to see (with electronic sensor equipment), carrying big guns, and armed with a considerable number of surface-to-surface missiles, the *Desorahs* could intervene in the Nicaroan conflict if necessary. These numbered twelve, and they were joined by the always impressive *Indestructable-class* aircraft carrier. This latter ship required an escort, which was made up by two *Grospek-class* battlecruisers and four more of the *Taniat-class*, ten *Koria-class* frigates for anti-submarine duties, and twelve support ships of at least two different kinds.

The presence of a carrier was a real problem. If it had time to react to an attack it could let loose its wing of aircraft. Attack runs by small, agile GLI-76s was the last thing Commodore 'Six-Wives' Burles needed — he *did* have a decent SAM stock, although the Scandinavians had not supplied very many spares (the Nicaroan pirates would have to think of a way to get more, otherwise they'd have to modify the ships to carry the missiles of whatever country *did* supply them). It could very well be that if they used up their surface-to-air defenses now, that'd be it for the foreseeable future. So, they'd have to stay off the carrier's RADAR, so to speak. To do this, Burles banked on the fact that the Macabee force was focused mainly on the Nicaroan mainland. The pirates would sweep around and hit them from behind, where there advanced warning coverage was thinnest. But, even then, his own fleet of warships was rather too large to hide. Even a light AEW screen would probably discover Burles' attack from several hundred kilometers, giving the *Indestructable* enough time to put no less than a flight or two in the air. Besides, the battlecruisers would be able to exchange missiles at range, although here there was a slight possibility that the Macabee fleet had a comparatively low complement of anti-ship missiles.

Because they had nothing to lose, Burles ordered his ships to pose as small cargo vessels making the lane between Lynion and Hailandkill. Frigates are typically "somewhat" smaller than modern cargo ships, so beyond changing the hull's shape, they would have to be lengthened. To do this, they created a faux hull out of light, cloth materials — that from distance (and electronically) would reflect similarly to metal — that acted as a sort of growth hormone. Only being able to do so much, they'd still look small for cargo ships, but it would have to do. But, by the time the Macabee fleet noticed, it would be too late. The new additions were made to quickly breakaway when needed, falling into the sea and revealing the original hull. That way, the Nicaroan pirates could begin to engage when they were close enough for the types of missiles they had on hand. And with that plan in mind, the twenty-ship strong pirate raiding fleet emerged from behind a coastal alcove and started its roundabout route to the Imperial fleet's rear. The time for departure was planned; there was an estimated gap in the Golden Throne's satellite coverage.

It took about half the day to sail the two hundred or so kilometers to get into engagement range with the Macabee fleet. The trip was harrowing, although more so due to nerves than to anything else. But, as they got closer, the only blips that showed up on RADAR screens were those of the ASW helicopters and AWACS/ELINT aircraft. These they tried to skirt around, or avoid, but at some point they'd be unavoidable. The idea, in any case, wasn't to escape detection, it was to prolong it the most as possible. So far, it was working. They had, of course, been seen. The Golden Throne was monitoring everything going in and out of Nicaro, so of course a twenty-ship convoy would be seen. But, it seemed that the Macabees hadn't realized the true nature of the threat. Even a submarine, that the pirates hadn't known about, had simply contented itself with pinging them (it'd make the planned withdrawal more difficult, though). By 13:47 they were within three hundred and forty kilometers, now headed on a trajectory tangent to the northern rim of the Imperial fleet. That's as close as they got before the battle — the first naval engagement of this size since 2023 — started.

Because of how the Macabee fleet had arrayed itself, the heavy firepower — the *Grospeks* — was about four hundred and fifty plus kilometers to the south. Still, that was within Sledgehammer range. Fortunately, the *Grospeks* wouldn't fire if the *Indestructable* floated between them and their targets. So, they'd have to manoeuvre and that would buy Burles time. The four *Desohras*, though, could start to engage right away, although their VLS was filled for more general purpose cruise missiles. That made their engagement range similar to the pirates', and four destroyers versus twenty frigates gave the buccaneers good odds. The *Taniats*, though, were deployed near to the *Indestructable*, providing an incredible umbrella of protection. And even if the anti-air battlecruisers were attacked themselves, they would prioritize the vitality of the carrier as most important. That would make it difficult to sink *Indestructable*, but perhaps they could do some damage. And, in any case, sinking the other Macabee ships would be such as effective for the purpose of the attack.

Hostilities started when an Imperial LAMPS neared the convoy with the intention of boarding the lead ship. They obviously wanted to make sure that it was indeed a legitimate merchant convoy and not some attempt to, say, smuggle weapons in or out of the country. The helicopter was summarily shot down, after it refused to turn away. That's when Burles ordered all ships to discard their *faux* hulls. Now that the gig was up, it made no sense to go into battle with their weapon systems covered (even if they would blast right through it). Two of his twenty frigates had broken off near the back of the formation to trail the submarine that had pinged them earlier. Another six broke off, turning slightly north in order to continue a tangential route with respect to the Macabee force. The other twelve, including Burles, turned south and spread out, quickly closing the gap between them and the enemy. This would form the brunt of the raid, with the intention of drawing the enemy's strength in that direction. That included a flight of five GLI-76s that the *Indestructable* had just managed to scramble, with more coming undoubtedly soon.

It was about a minute later that the *Falcons* and the *Phlegethons* started to exchange armory. Surface-to-air missiles streaked in one direction and air-to-surface missiles in the other, the sky filling with a crisscrossing patchwork of contrails. As soon as these began to fade, the orange, red, and blue streaks of explosions started to take their place. With an emphasis on size and agility, the *Falcons* could not carry the heavy Sledgehammer IIs, which was fortunate (for Burles and his sailors). Nevertheless, they packed quite the punch and they were hard to hit. An initial salvo of SAMs had destroyed two of them, but not before all the fighters had gotten off their own salvo of cruise missiles, which streaked towards the target while running the gauntlet of missile fire and CIWS. The pirate raiding fleet shook as three frigates were hit, two suffering complete damage (and starting to sink) and the other one sufficient injured to no longer be of any help in the fight. By the time the *Falcons* came back around they were joined by another flight, so to keep them on their toes Burles ordered his ships to switch to a rolling barrage firing pattern for the SAMs.

Happening all very quickly, they came within engagement range with the light picket of Macabee destroyers. There was a brief exchange if missiles, but the local swashbuckler numerical superiority decided the match. Committing a good amount, but not lethal, amount of damage on three of Burles' frigates,

the four destroyers were in return pelted with enough cruise missiles to sink all of them in one salvo. By some sort of miracle, one managed to survive, albeit with a significant limp. It started to peel away from the battle, hoping to get behind friendly ships, so that it could engage with protection. Over a hundred kilometers behind it, the *Indestructable* started to manoeuvre, as well. It couldn't hope to put distance between it and the attacking frigates, but it could reduce its profile with respect to them. It'd also help the *Gospeks* join the fight faster, which were already ready to start engaging with Sledgehammer IIs. All the while, some twenty-four *Falcons* had been sent to date to prowl from the skies. Under the new pirate firing routine, they started to suffer from bigger losses — out of twenty-four launched, at least seven had been outright blasted out of the sky and another two pilots were forced to eject. All things considered, it was going good for Burles.

When the *Grospeks* finally started to engage they too were within the pirates' range. The range-advantage of the Sledgehammer II had been nullified. It got better, though. As the Macabee force started to move its other destroyers to intercept the twelve (now eight, two barely moving), the six Nicaroan pirate frigates that had previously broken off from the main force had turned to engage the enemy from their new rear (which was changing, as the picket line readjusted to deal with what was previously perceived to be the main threat). The *Grospeks*' opening Sledgehammer II salvo was rudely interrupted by the six frigates, which had opened fire themselves. With the *Taniats* still focusing on the *Indestructable*, the only air protection other than their own came from any accompanying destroyers. In their current state of disorganization, their defenses were clearly compromised. In exchange for sinking five of the frigates belonging the main pirate force — a decimation really —, the *Grospeks* were effectively put of action, one suffering heavy enough damage to start taking on water. They'd still be able to fight, but now they lacked what made them such a threat: their massive missile stock.

The second pirate force of six frigates had also targeted the *Taniats*, who were preoccupied with an ongoing attack from whatever remained of the main buccaneer naval squadron. While there were no hopes of completely eliminating the four anti-air battlecruisers, they could at least be damaged enough to force them to go home for repairs. The *Indestructable* would go with them. It was time to wrap the battle up. The six-frigate squadron — which had lost one, so it was really a five-frigate squadron now — skirted around the carrier and its four *Taniats*, instead deciding to engage the destroyers which were chasing after the three-frigate squadron under Burles' direct command. Burles, for his part, had started to disengage, ordering his and the other two frigates of his force to rendezvous with the two frigates that had been engaging in ASW duties. From there, they'd fight all the way back home. As the Macabee fleet was drawn northward, the five-frigate squadron sailed perpendicular towards the west, engaging the southern flank of the moving destroyer picket line. All they gave time for was a single exchange, which resulted in the loss of three frigates in exchange for the destruction of four *Dehoras*, then continuing to move westwards to catch up with Burles in his attempted withdrawal.

First pulled north, then south, the Macabee fleet decided to allow the enemy to break off. It was better to reorganize, assess the damage, and figure out what to do from there. As the two fleets started to move in opposite directions from each other, one started to see the full extent of the damage. Eight of out twelve — 75-percent — of Imperial destroyers were sinking; most of them could probably be towed to port, but for all intents and purposes they wouldn't be relevant again for a long time. The *Koria* frigates, despite not involving themselves too much in the battle, had suffered three lost. That made for eleven ships sunk altogether (the supply vessels were not touched, as they were low priority). The rest of the Imperial task force had suffered incredible damage, including the two *Grospeks* and two of the four *Taniats*. Even the *Indestructable* had suffered a hit, although the damage from the enemy cruise missile had been comparatively minor. The *Kriermada* would have to withdraw from Nicaro for now, which meant that the pirate attack had succeeded. The cost? Fifteen frigates — thirteen to enemy missiles, another two to the blasted submarine (which managed to get away). The other five would need to sustain significant repairs before seeing battle again.

A pyrrhic victory, perhaps, But a pirate victory nonetheless.

[TL;DR:

- There is a growing force of pirates consolidating along the northeastern Nicaroan

- coastline.
- An engagement between two smaller fleets (20 v. 40) ended in a significant defeat for the Golden Throne, which is now temporarily withdrawing its fleet from Nicaro.

]

Notes:

1. It's been a while since I've looked at my miltech, so there's no write-up for this — I just don't remember the names of my ship classes, so I made one up. I will get a write-up done asap. [/size]

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Sun Jan 07, 2018 9:16 am, edited 6 times in total.

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The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

by [The Macabees](#) » Wed Sep 09, 2015 9:10 pm



Seas South of Scandinavians, Gholgoth
A suicide mission in southeastern Gholgoth...

HEAD NORTHWEST TO TARGET LOCATION.

UPLINK AT TARGET LOCATION FOR FURTHER
INSTRUCTIONS.

Kapitán Hans Lichter mulled over the *Korenja's* last orders. He hid behind the walls of his small cabin, so that his men couldn't see the worry on his face. Not even the XO was present. Lichter had ordered *Leutnant* Ridder to stay in the command room ever since the submarine re-entered the perimeter of Gholgothic waters. They were headed for Scandinavians, a country investing quite a few resources on searching and destroying them, and the thought of piercing shark-infested waters without a known end goal made Lichter nervous. He'd have to launch another buoy to the surface, and who knows what orders he'd get then. Maybe he was the only major asset in the area, and *Fuermak* High Command wanted to keep the *Korenja* in the thick of it. Still, High Command would be rolling the dice on extremely unfavorable odds, unless they had some secret plan to distract a small fleet of anti-submarine destroyers and other ships, along with their aircraft and helicopters. That meant that they were accepting the *Korenja's* inevitable loss, and the *Kapitán* was not quite sure how he felt about that. So he sat on his cot, leaning forward on his knees, assimilating and coming to terms with reality.

Beside him, fastened against the wall, he opened the top half of a beautifully designed globe bar, revealing a bottle of *Diamánt* and six small glasses arrayed around it. He took one of the square-bottomed glasses and poured some of that rough Frommian liquor. He reveled in its bitter taste as it ran down his throat when he took a truly impressive gulp.

Lichter was once an alcoholic. He was becoming one again.

The bottle of *Diamánt* was beautifully decorated in the brightly-colored ceramic tile style of Beda Fromm, the Golden Throne's largest ceramic-manufacturing region. It stood in the globe bar as a test of Lichter's will. For many years, it remained unopened, never touched. A testament to the illusion of newly found strength and independence. But, life had begun to take its toll. Lichter's wife had left him for another man long ago, and she bore him no children. In the time since, he had spent as much time as possible on deployment,...to have *something*. But, he taken a poor gamble, as the eternal enemy of man, loneliness, crept up on him. Now, seeing the limits to his future plainly, the *kapitán* felt the feeling of insufferable solitude more than ever. As he sat there, on his cot, he came to the solemn realization that there was no one back home who would even be aware of his passing. His mother would know, of course. Lichter's father had died during the War of Golden Succession, at Otium Aqua. He would end a line of condemned sailors, it appeared. So he drank, pouring himself a new glass of liquor as he finished the previous one.

Still, the *kapitán* managed a small smile. There still was a faint sliver of hope. That High Command had devised some brilliant plan.

There was a knock at the door, and Lichter barked, "Who is it?"

"Your XO, sir." *Leutnant* Noah Ridder.

Lichter hurriedly drank the liquor left in his glass and then put it, along with the bottle, back into the globe bar. After closing the latter, he made his way to the door, which he had locked — there were some vices that the *kapitán* had picked up these past few days that the men could not walk in on. He swung it open, with some of the excesses of inebriation. Neither man greeted the other. The XO simply walked in, the *kapitán* nodding towards a chair bolted to the floor. Lichter walked over to his small refrigerator and opened it, taking out a couple of soda cans. He tossed one to the *leutnant* before opening his own with a *snap* of the tab. He took a hefty gulp, hoping the soda restrained the stink of booze radiating from his mouth. It tasted flat, a product partly of the fact that the refrigerator had suffered from inconsistent power, namely during those days that the *Korenja* went into silent rigging, which were made much more frequent by the relentless hunt against enemy submarines the Scandinvan fleet had launched. It reminded Lichter that he and his crews were headed back between the jaws of the Scandinvan beast, so he put the can on the table next to the XO and said, "You can have the rest of mine too, actually."

"I thought you quit," said Ridder.

"Quit what?" The *kapitán* sat back down on his cot, facing opposite of his XO.

"How long have we served together?" asked the *leutnant*. He gave Lichter a cold, penetrating stare. When the *kapitán* didn't respond, the XO went on, his voice just a tad bit raised, "It's been...what? Six years? We don't keep secrets from each other, for the good of the men." He nodded towards the globe bar, "I can smell it on you, Hans."

Being referred to by his first name, by his subordinate no less, did not faze the Lichter. The XO and he often called each other by their first names when alone. Six years stretch to many more when confined to a tin can. Man was not meant for such restraints, and without a true friend it can be hard to survive — mentally especially. The *kapitán* looked down at the metallic floor, head resting in his hands, and it was at that vulnerable moment that *Kapitán* Hans Lichter came closest to crying. He didn't. Crying would shame him; men did not grieve for problems, they discovered solutions to them. "A temporary sin, I promise."

"Temporary? Enforced by will or by time?" doubted Ridder. When Lichter rose his head to look into the eyes of his XO he found no pity. He had disappointed his friend and his second-in-command. The man had come to slap some sense into his *kapitán*, and he would not doubt relieving Lichter of command if the *Korenja's* commander were no longer up to task of commanding her. The XO continued, "No matter, I suppose. There are more important things at hand and I need to know if you're still healthy enough to carry the responsibilities entrusted to you by the *Kriermada*." He looked at Lichter and put his hand on his shoulder, "And if you tell me you aren't, I'm going to fuggin' beat your ass, guy. Every other sailor in this boat will suffer the same fate as you. Your selfishness astounds me! Do you not think we lament opportunities lost? Or that we weep for the fact that we may never see our families again? Some of us have a lot more to lose than you and yet we are at our stations doing our jobs! I don't give a damn if you drink, Hans! Just get your ass to the command room and lead us honorably until the Gods decide that our threads have been expended."

Lichter shook his head, then said, "I needed that, Noah. Thank you. But, at the same time, fuck you." He chuckled lightly, then went on, "Have you disclosed our orders to the men?"

"No," responded the *leutnant*. "When is the last time I did something without your permission?"

"On duty, right?"

"Right."

Smiling now, the *kapitán* slapped his knees, rose, and exclaimed, "Then I suppose it's the right time to break the news, then. And, why don't we celebrate a bit, too?" He walked over to the globe bar, opened it, and pulled out the bottle of *Diamánt*. He left the glasses in the bar; he couldn't take those out to the command room, or some damn fool would drop one and have it shatter all over the ground. No, that wouldn't do. "Hey," he said, directed at his XO, "do we still have those red party cups in storage?"

"Yes, but my motivational speech wasn't intended to have you get the crew drun—"

Lichter waved the XO's moaning away and cut him off, "Well, if I can't drink this brilliant nectar of the gods, I suppose the men should be able to. Besides, the news will not be good and the alcohol works hard to help us forget our fates, even if it's just for the night. Surely, the men deserve that, *Leutnant* Ridder."

"Yes, sir," the XO nodded. The *kapitán* was back to his old, insufferable self.

The two left the *kapitán's* quarters and walked the short distance between the cabins and the command room. There was no noise apart from that of the machinery, the men busy at work. They were an excellent crew; Lichter would not do with anyone else in combat. As their *kapitán*, whom they had not seen in over a day, emerged, the sailors lifted their heads to look at him. On their faces was displayed a mural of hope, fear, and desperation. Although they did not know their orders, they were not stupid. The men of the *Korenja* knew very well in what direction they were headed and they knew their bearings. They also knew what it meant to enter into hostile Gholgothic waters, with an insatiable foe who knew about, and was looking for, them. Even if Lichter came bearing bad news, they knew that he was the man who would get them out of trouble, if getting out of trouble were at all possible. Another wave of shame chilled Lichter from head to toe. How could he have abandoned them? He looked at the bottle in his hands and then slammed it on top one of the bulky machines next to him. "This is for later," he said.

The XO stood by the entrance as the *kapitán* slowly walked through the room. "I will not bore you with talk of patriotism, of the greatness of the Empire, and of your duty as soldiers. None of those things matter. What you really fear is never seeing your son, or daughter, again. What makes you doubt yourself now is that yearning for what you know you will no longer enjoy ever again. I know, because I am victim to the same emotions — I, like you, am only human, after all. But, we cannot indulge ourselves in our weaknesses, lest we lose the clarity in our minds. We are still alive. We are also men, and as men we will continue to survive. The situation we are in is really no different from any other you've been in. At all times, we must simply do what a man must."

He stopped his slow stroll, his voice growing menacing, "Yesterday morning we entered Gholgothic waters. We are headed to a position near that of our first strike. There, we shall wait for further instruction. Now, I will not lie to you and say that there is no need to worry. You must realize and embrace that we are headed into the belly of the dragon. To win and to leave will require all of us to endure extraordinary measures, but I have no doubt in our success. We are the KSS *Korenja* and we shall raise hell, fulfill our duty to His Imperial Majesty, and I promise that then we will see home once again."

Lichter turned to get good looks at the faces of all his men. "Pass the booze around, *Leutnant*," he said to the XO.

The *Korenja* slowly speared its way through the icy cold waters of southeastern Gholgoth and, for a few hours at least, her crew enjoyed that could easily be the last night of peace they would enjoy in a long time. Perhaps the last of their lives. The *kapitán* retreated back to his quarters soon after. The XO would meet him there soon, and perhaps some of the NCOs. They had to start planning for the battle.

Upper Senate, Fedala

The provinces call for Scandinavian blood...

His Imperial Majesty, dressed in his white military uniform — a double-headed eagle on each soldier —, a cloak extending down his back, sat in the throne

located in the center of the chamber. Around him rose the seats of the Upper Senate, which had grown silent in anticipation. For long hours before, Fedor and the many party leaders had deliberated the option of a unified declaration of war against the Scandinvan Empire. Despite the historical animosity between the Upper Senate and His Imperial Majesty, the chamber today had been surprisingly supportive. Even the High Lord showed only a subtle dislike of Fedor, a dramatic change from the more characteristic hatred. After the scenes of Palenque, however, there was little room for hatred between the people of the Empire. The men, women, children, elderly, handicapped, and defenseless the pirates killed in the city's outer suburbs had lived in the provinces less than a decade prior. They had families there, people who cared about them. The Massacre of Palenque, as it was being called now, had sparked horror and a war fervor that the Empire hadn't seen since the Havenic invasion over a decade before. The people lusted for war and the Upper Senate would give the people what they wanted.

Fedor, sitting upright in the throne with his back straight and shoulders back, looked at High Lord Vitrán Dagos. There was a smugness about His Imperial Majesty that was befitting of him. All emperors of the Golden Throne have been arrogant to one point or another, but Fedor's status as a conqueror had almost deified him. In the Upper Senate he was especially haughty, as it was on his initiative that the original single-body Senate had been reformed into a bicameral system, diluting the individual power of the Senators. He looked at Dagos, hazel-gaze pressuring the High Lord to expedite matters.

"Let us begin the vote," said Dagos, the walls and ceiling carrying his voice to far heights of the chamber. Stoic, the High Lord began down the alphabetical list of Senators, "Andros."

A tall Guadalajara rose on the center-right, who said, "In favor."

"Aravánt."

"In favor."

Down the list the High Lord went. Some said nay, but most voted in support of a declaration of war. Enough to pass the motion. It would go to the Lower Senate next, but their populist tendencies and the fact that their membership also included representatives of the Imperial Territories — the dominion of His Imperial Majesty — virtually guaranteed passage there as well. It was a foregone conclusion really. When the last senator voiced his opposition, joining a very small group of friends, High Lord Dagos confirmed the final tally. The Golden Throne was going to war.

Rising, Fedor strolled through the center of the chamber, paying the surrounding Senators no mind. They were rehashing, debating, and arguing the debates and their votes, the minority opposition very clearly fuming in a clump together. His Imperial Majesty walked into a hallway leading to another one running across the far end. There he was intercepted by Senator Marko Kanaris, a mid-ranking member of the Dienkrat party. The man's hair was greying along the sides and was almost completely white along the fringes. Only an inch or two shorter than Fedor, his blue eyes were level with those of His Imperial Majesty. A mid-ranking member of an important party aside, Kanaris was also Cardinal Scribe. He would be responsible for drafting the declaration of war — these days, the real work was done by his staff —, or he would under different circumstances. Fedor had informally insisted that the joint declaration be drafted by his own staff this time. Kanaris would only revise and sign it, in the name of Congress. The Senator acknowledged the inherent asymmetry in power, but it didn't mean he had to like it. As he came up to Fedor, his face was twisted in something of a half-sneer.

"When can I expect it by?" said Kanaris, voice flat.

Fedor did not bother to look at the Senator as he kept walking. Kanaris followed him. Without turning, His Imperial Majesty responded, "You will wait for it tonight. If not tonight, you will wait for it tomorrow morning. If not by then, then you will continue to wait for it until it comes to you. That is, after all, your "purpose" in all of this, is it not?"

Karalis came to a stop, almost stomping his feet, and loudly said, "I hope you do not fail, Your Majesty."

Slowing his step and then turning around, Fedor stood proudly, radiating power. "If I fail, you will stand united alongside with me, for that would be a dark hour for the Golden Throne and even a man like you would not be dishonorable enough to turn on his country." Kanaris remained silent and Fedor took the opportunity to press on, "But, do not fear, because I will not fail. The rebellion will be crushed under the heels of our armies and the Scandinvans will be repaid in kind for its interventions in our affairs. I will return triumphant, as I always have been and will forever be. I am Emperor of the Second Empire of the Golden Throne."

When he saw that the Senator was not going to respond, Fedor dismissed him, "Go now, Kanaris. Have your staff prepare you coffee, for I suspect that you will be up late tonight." With that, Fedor turned around and gracefully continued to make his way down the hallway, where his security detail was waiting for him. In his head, the drums of war were already playing.

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Mon Sep 14, 2015 4:52 pm, edited 2 times in total.

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The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

by [The Macabees](#) » Fri Sep 11, 2015 10:12 pm

QUOTE

Valdra, Scandinvan Empire

The Golden Throne's declaration of war is formally submitted...

Ashav Heroz, one of the few Sarcanzan-born bureaucrats of the Imperial Government, made his way through the chaos that was the Golden Throne's embassy in Valdra, the capital of the Scandinvan Empire. To his left and to his right, in front of him and to his rear, interns, staff members, and high-ranking officials toiled at shredding huge stacks of paper documents, permanently deleting data storage systems and then destroying them, and doing all the other activities associated with an evacuating embassy. The Golden Throne's diplomatic presence in Scandinvans would soon come to an end, because, frankly speaking, there was no longer any purpose to having one. There was no hope for peace for at least the next few years — the Dienstadi empire suffered from blind bloodlust, out of outrage at a foreign government which dared to interfere with domestic business, and, in its hubris, it believed that it could successfully launch an invasion of over a distance of several dozens of thousands of kilometers. With that sort of investment being made, aborting the plan was too much of a failure to even consider. Yes, the great war between the Scandinvan Empire and the Second Empire of the Golden Throne would be a long one.

Heroz was headed to his study, where he had summoned Lord Erida to meet him. The Scandinvan Imperial Steward was most likely soon arriving and the Golden Throne's *Jogormos* — essentially the head of the diplomatic mission to a country — should have already been at his office. Unfortunately, the ongoing chaos was occupying some of the man's time. Regardless, weaving in and out, he was able to finally reach his study, thankfully before anyone else had come. He opened the dark and polished wooden door, revealing his beautifully decorated office inside. He left the door open behind him and walked over to sit down in a chair of the same wood and color as the door. There he waited for Lord Erida, organizing a sheet of paper in front of him on a large rectangular glass table, which was supported by a gorgeously contemporary wooden stand. He couldn't avoid shuffling it around a little, while he tried to suppress his nerves. Even the boldest of men knew the implications of handing a foreign government — a Gholgothic power, no less — a formal declaration of war by part of your government. It was best, in any case, to rid oneself of the jitters right then and there, rather than have them surface in front of the enemy.

It was less than ten minutes before an embassy aide escorted Lord Erida to Heroz' study, leaving him at the door and then closing it behind the Scandinvan as he entered the room. Erida and Heroz knew each other to one extent or another. You couldn't be an ambassador without at least conversation with the major officials of the host country, after all. So, the two exchanged cordial handshakes and other sorts of pleasantries, asking after each others' families (Heroz avoided telling Erida that his wife and two daughters were already on a long flight back to Fedala). Finally, with a deep breath and a long face, the

Macabee *Jogomos* brought the discussion to the main point.

"Look, I'm afraid the news I bare is not of the good kind," said the ambassador.

The Scandinavian Imperial Steward grimaced, responding, "I cannot pretend to be ignorant of your intentions. The deterioration of relations between our two governments has been as drastic as it has been sudden. However, I suffer the burden of responsibility to warn you."

"Warn me of what?" asked Heroz, bemusedly.

Lord Erida chuckled. "What does the Golden Throne expect to gain from all of this?"

"Justice, I suppose," answered the Macabee ambassador.

"Pride," said the Scandinavian. "What motivates your people is pride. But, pride can easily spawn arrogance, and arrogance can be a veil against reality. I ask again, what does the Golden Throne expect to accomplish? Will you harass our shipping in Greater Dienstad? We benefit from a vast slave network, of which your region is only a minor part. Are you looking to politically humiliate us? I trust you are intelligent enough to see that very little shame us — we are the Scandinavian Empire." He paused, then said, "And, I cannot believe that you are even considering an invasion. Does Fedor really think he can successfully occupy even a square inch of our lands?" He laughed and shook his head. "No, that would be too foolish, even for Fedor."

"I do not know what Fedor believes, nor do I know his motivation," replied Heroz. He turned the piece of paper on the table between the two over and slid it over to Lord Erida. "Here, this is for you. Take it to your leader. The letter will be released to the public in twenty-four hours."

Joint Declaration of War Against the Empire of the Scandinavians

His Imperial Majesty Fedor I and the Congress of Kingdoms declare that the Second Empire of the Golden Throne and the Empire of the Scandinavians are in a state of war. The Golden Throne refuses to stand down against the grotesque provocations of the Scandinavians, including their funding and arming of the ongoing rebellion in Theohuanacu. The Imperial Government cites the Nordheim and Stinson Doctrines, calling on the nations of Greater Dienstad to unite against the threat against the region that the Scandinavians represent, including their support of the continued slave trade in Greater Dienstadi waters.

His Imperial Majesty Fedor I is hereby granted full recruitment privileges in the Imperial Provinces and the *Fuermak* is authorized employment of their strength to achieve the Golden Throne's goal of decisively eliminating the Scandinavian Empire's ability to meddle in Greater Dienstadi affairs.

— The United Governments of the Golden Throne

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by [The Scandinavians](#) » Mon Sep 14, 2015 6:09 pm

Nicaró Coast,



The Scandinvans
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

The priest accompanying the mission took out a small book and read from it, "The word of God is to be first spread by the missionaries who come in peace to those lands consumed by sin. Those who would not accept the true teachings forfeit their rights to peace and the sword must be raised in order to bring them into the fold. Know that is a kindness on your part to conquer them. Without you they are damned to forever exist outside the embrace of the Almighty."

Closing it he said, " My brothers we each owe a duty to God and our Empire to wholly devote ourselves to the holy endeavor this day. Through our actions shall we finally cause restore the spirit that once made us great. Through it shall we as a people once more realize the need for the world to be brought into our Empire's rule. Only through us can we become civilized. Only through our collective will can we uplift humanity and bring them to the second eternal kingdom here on Earth. Only through our actions can the whole of humanity be redeemed. Only by our courage can the dawn be made to come at long last."

Opening a smaller leather bound book he quoted, " In childhood we prepare for service. We learn what it means to be a Valgardian, the tenants of being a warrior, the legacy that Erid imparted upon us, and do come to acknowledge the part we have to play in the salvation of all humans. In adulthood do we find ourselves in an eternal struggle against enemies within and without. We must control dissenting elements of our Empire lest they tear us apart, we must challenge those who would deny our rights, and we must quash those who would dare to try to impede the will of the Emperor."

Placing it down he lectured, " We might well see our deaths in the near future, but we each must do out assigned duties regardless of our sacrifices. We must kill those who might compromise our mission. So we must now kill the slaves lest they prove to be a liability against us. They, having been chosen due to their spiritual weakness and inability to offer any good to the Empire, have at least done one good thing in their lives. May they find atonement before the Almighty through their required sacrifices. Deus vult!"

5 Minutes Later

With that said so did the purge of the slave skeleton crews begin. In the space of ten minutes had nearly slave been killed through the warrior caste attaches to the mission. They felt no remorse for what they did. They were men of the Sons of the Erid and they had abandoned their sense of self at the start of this mission. The glory of the Empire must be restored was the only thing that ran through their minds as they killed old and young alike. Men and women. Concubine and steward. None were spared from the attempt to suppress information.

Last edited by [The Scandinvans](#) on Mon Sep 14, 2015 6:15 pm, edited 2 times in total.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinvans. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



The Scandinvans
Senator

Posts: 4948
Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

by [The Scandinvans](#) » Sat Sep 19, 2015 6:09 pm

QUOTE

The Adulation of Duty

"1. We are not born to freely follow our own dreams. We are not made to serve the petty whims of the mobs. We exist to serve the Emperor alone. His will is that of God and his word is divinely inspired. Through him do we find purpose. Through him do our lives have meaning. Without him we would lose all value that our lives would have.

2. In childhood we prepare for service. We learn what it means to be a Valgardian, the tenants of being a warrior, the legacy that Erid imparted upon us, and do come to acknowledge the part we have to play in the salvation of all humans. In adulthood do we find ourselves in an eternal struggle against

enemies within and without. We must control dissenting elements of our Empire lest they tear us apart, we must challenge those who would deny our rights, and we must quash those who would dare to try to impede the will of the Emperor.

3. In war we must not falter. We must obey competent orders without hesitation. We must defend our lands and our way of life regardless of our own drives.

4. A true warrior knows fear, but does not let it define their actions on the field of battle. We must look within and come to terms that we are mortals who at times must chose when we will face our dooms.

5. Life is but a passing phase for us. We are sent to this world to advance and uphold the majesty of the Empire.

6. Our lords lead us into battle by the sanction of the divine and the authority of the Emperor.

7. Duty to the Emperor is paramount above all other compulsions.

8. A warrior's weapon is the expression of his craft. It is the tool by which he shares his worth to those around him and banishes those who would do harm to the Empire. It is our duty to respect our weapons and try our utmost to keep them in proper working order.

9. Respect for the self is something earned by proving yourself on the field of battle and by years of loyal service.

10. Sacrifice is noble. Suicide is not.

11. Your brothers (in arms) are there to aid you and in turn do not turn your back on them when they are in need.

12. Desertion leads to the destruction of one's honor and thus destroys your right to life."

We are the Sons of Erid. The chosen of God and of Erid. We alone have been given the responsibility of restore the Empire. Today we begin completing the final measure. The Second Empire of the Golden Throne of The Macabees has declared war against the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. Now the final gambit has begun. Soon we shall be able to show the Empire the need for it to return to its glory. Soon we shall be able to show the people of the Empire that expansion is the only hope for the ongoing survival of our ancient ways and to ensure a future for our people.

Now that the enemy has moved against us we must begin laying the final preparations for this long awaited war. The Attestors must be completed so that we can supply a force which would be crucial to us winning the upcoming battles. As well, we must muster our clandestine forces to ensure that the conflict falls within the parameters foretold to be required. Through our strength and honor shall we overcome the enemy!

Last edited by [The Scandinavians](#) on Sat Sep 19, 2015 6:09 pm, edited 1 time in total.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



by [The Scandinavians](#) » Sun Sep 20, 2015 12:48 pm

QUOTE

“ The Macabees wrote:

Senator

Posts: 4948

Founded: Oct 09, 2004
Capitalist

Joint Declaration of War Against the Empire of the Scandinvans

His Imperial Majesty Fedor I and the Congress of Kingdoms declare that the Second Empire of the Golden Throne and the Empire of the Scandinvans are in a state of war. The Golden Throne refuses to stand down against the grotesque provocations of the Scandinvans, including their funding and arming of the ongoing rebellion in Theohuanacu. The Imperial Government cites the Nordheim and Stinson Doctrines, calling on the nations of Greater Dienstad to unite against the threat against the region that the Scandinvans represent, including their support of the continued slave trade in Greater Dienstadi waters.

His Imperial Majesty Fedor I is hereby granted full recruitment privileges in the Imperial Provinces and the *Fuermak* is authorized employment of their strength to achieve the Golden Throne's goal of decisively eliminating the Scandinavian Empire's ability to meddle in Greater Dienstadi affairs.

— The United Governments of the Golden Throne

HIM Fedor,

The Glorious Empire of the Scandinvans has endured for over 5000 years. For millennium have we served as the truest beacon of order, rationality, piety, and honor throughout the world. This declaration of war is merely an attempt by your nation to assert its rule over the sovereign and legitimate of the Scandinavian Empire as part of the global anti-slaver wars which have been waged for so many years. You seek to enforce your decadent secularist worldview upon our people. We however shall not kowtow to your wishes. We shall drive back any by your forces to invade our lands. We shall resist to the last any effort to intercede against our sacred traditions.

Deus lo vult. De shim krاند a'lon asno alk veradam saravln. What ours is ours. What is yours shall be ours. The future belongs to the people of the Almighty.

Signed,
Imperial Steward,
Lord Erida

Last edited by [The Scandinvans](#) on Sun Sep 20, 2015 12:51 pm, edited 1 time in total.

We are the Glorious Empire of the Scandinvans. Surrender or be destroyed. Your civilization has ended, your time is over. Your people will be assimilated into our Empire. Your technological distinctiveness shall be added to our own. Your culture shall be supplanted by our own. And your lands will be made into our lands.

"For five thousand years has our Empire endured. In war and peace we have thrived. Against overwhelming odds we evolved. No matter what we face we have always survived and grown. We shall always be triumphant." -Emperor Godfrey II

Hope for a brighter tomorrow - fight the fight, find the cure



Havensky
Diplomat

Posts: 888
Founded: Jan 01, 2008
Left-wing Utopia

by [Havensky](#) » Sun Sep 20, 2015 8:43 pm



War Room One
Citadel City, Havensky
Gholgoth

The Skyan War Room was abuzz with activity as *Stars and Signals* Commander Mathias Willow walked into the room. As the Officer on Deck he was in charge

of the War Room until the next shift change that would happen in a few hours. Conversations from staffs from the Departments of State, Defense, and every major command filled the room with an intense din. Screens lit the faces of each Skyan staffer as reports from around the globe poured into the hexagonal room.

95th Expeditionary Fleet reports all units have returned from Hab Centre 06...

Pudu Ambassador secure... assailants in Federal Police custody..

Humanitarian Fleet Command has increased it's death toll of Scandinavians to three hundred thousand people.

Signals Reports indicates that LGBT leaders in the Empire have disappeared.

Willow's watch began to vibrate. The tall lanky man pulled up the sleeve of his trenchcoat and read the message on the thick glass wristband.

CODE: **SELECT ALL**

Golden Throne declares war on Scandinavians

Willow cursed, *"And I just lost the damn pool. Attention on deck! We have a HARRIET Situation and are at REDCON TWO. Inform the High Council. Ensign Nyota, can you send an additional message to Secretary Atticus asking for approval to request an audience with -"*

Secretary Atticus has already sent a request to meet with Jogornos Rikjaard Johansen as soon as possible. Ambassador to The Golden Throne Violet Redwing is on standby to brief Golden Throne Representatives in Fedala at their request. "

Willow nodded in gratitude. If there was anyone more connected to his device that he was it was Secretary of State Atticus.

"Excellent, thank you Ensign."

As he spoke, additional staff members began to flood the room preparing for additional departmental staff. Monitors were being set up, coffee pots and snacks being carted in and security staff were clearing the room to prepare for the Prime Minister, King, and Queen to enter the room. Other staff members were pulling up every dossier and fact file on the current situation they could find.

Willow was making notes on the large white board wall inside the war room. In big red letters he had written out "OPTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS"

1) Support the Empire as good Gothic allies - despite the Sons of Erid having committed crimes against humanity.

This option was immediately crossed out. The Skyan people would never tolerate open support of the slavers.

2) Support the Golden Throne and hope the war knocks out the Sons

Another option that would be troublesome. The Empire could declare the Skybound Republic and Oathbreaker and then the Republic would have to worry about the forces of the Kraven Reich and the Empire *and the rest of the region* bearing down on them. And things were complicated enough.

3) Covertly support the Golden Throne and bring diplomatic pressure against the Empire by arguing that the Empire is making the region insecure by inviting trouble.

"A fair point with that nuke going off", remarked Ensign Nyota.

A rebel group had taken a town inside the Empire that held a nuke. The nuke went off killing everyone in the city. Rebellion over.

"Yes, a fair point. We've got enough trouble on our hands in Vetalia. We don't need this... but the Empire has got to be held in check. Send word - discreetly - to the other Gothic nations about the situation. Tell them that we've become very concerned over the course of action by the Sons of Erid and that it would be wise for the council to command the Empire to come to terms with the Golden Throne, lest we invite outside influence to the region."

"Am't we outsiders Sir?"

"By the Grace of Gods! Remind them how we got a seat on the council to begin with! Maybe they'll see things our way. If we can't manage to solve this diplomatically before forces arrive, it could get very complicated on our end."

Last edited by [Havensky](#) on Thu Oct 22, 2015 9:02 pm, edited 1 time in total.

The Skybound Republic of Havensky
(Pronounced Haven-Sky)

Territory held in
[Texas](#) - [Gholgoth](#) - [Sondria](#)

**N&I RP Mentor Specializing in PMT, Character Development,
Worldbuilding, and Diplomacy - TG me for help!**



The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

by [The Macabees](#) » Fri Oct 23, 2015 12:42 pm



Citadel City, Havensky *A foot in the door...*

"Sir, I have your daily report right here," the aide attempted to hand it over to Rikjaard, who responded by brushing the manila folder away.

Walking quickly down a wide hall towards a small lobby, decorated with comfortable couches and chairs decorated in light blue padding. Three silver doors on each flanking wall indicated a lift hub. The space was empty now, but at around 15:30 local time all hell broke loose on this floor and on every floor, everyone trying to rush out to their cars so get home before rush hour in the city *really* peaked. At this time, 7:30 in the morning, all souls in the Golden Throne's embassy in Citadel City were diligently at work. A few walked passed the two men as they continued down the hall, quickly getting to their office or to their work rooms, and rarely saying anything other than a passing greeting to Rikjaard, who was *jogornos* — head of the Macabee diplomatic mission to Havensky — and, as such, commanded the respect of all diplomats and staff workers under his stewardship. Rikjaard, however, was not obliged to return that respect, and as busy as he was he decided that he wouldn't. Instead, he kept his head down and his right ear was exclusively allocated to the aide, a man in his twenties that the *jogornos* believed to be named Alen. *Alen something ruther...his name will come to me.*

"Take a walk with me down to the lobby," Rikjaard said. "Let me see your ID."

"Um, why do you want to see my ID?" asked the aide, as he handed it over. The *jogornos* was referring to his ASU, a universal security clearance that all members of the Imperial Government received when first admitted to the bureaucracy. It was like a currency, useful to purchase entry into any Imperial building or room that you were authorized to see. As identification, one surface sported a photograph, along with various other details, like height, eye and hair color, and other physical characteristics used to define a person. On the other side was a large barcode, which allowed anyone with the right scanner to display all the information on the card — and much more — digitally, rendering the written information obsolete. Some habits are hard to break.

Rikjaard looked over the written stuff quickly and then handed them back. "Thanks. Not as interesting as I thought it would be. Talk to me Ratho, give me the gist of the brief on our way down."

"Yes, sir." They came to a stop at the lift hub area and the aide paused to push a button on the wall, which turned green. He went back to the brief

quickly, "Starting with the status of our advisor group deployed here in Havensky. No abnormal activity there, not a lot of traffic from the fatherland yet. No information on any planning, either. It's as if our base here will not actively participate in the mobilization against the Scandinvan—."

The aide was interrupted by the *ding* of elevator doors opening. Inside, a woman wearing a very formal skirt and dress shirt raised her head and gave Rikjaard a shy look, as if she were trying to hide from him. The *jogomos* yanked his thumb back over his shoulder, "Get out. Catch the next one down."

"Uh,...okay. Yes, sir, I guess." She said as she stepped out and Rikjaard, followed by his aide, went in.

"Keep talking,...err...umm...Rathos." *Damn I suck at last names*, thought Rikjaard.

"Right," the aide replied. "So nothing new regarding local troop levels." The *jogomos* had shown the most interest in hearing about Imperial military activity in Havensky. It made sense for the Golden Throne to approach its GATA ally in the Golden Throne. Without a friend, an ally, an anchor in Gholgoth, the invasion of the Scandinvan Empire was going to be formidably difficult — even with a friend it was difficult enough. Rikjaard was not privy to strategic discussions in the fatherland, so his knowledge of the preparations were minimal, but he found it hard to imagine what the generals could do to solve the overbearing logistical nightmare that would be an invasion of a powerful state around forty-thousand kilometers away. Havensky made the most sense, but nothing was happening yet. Maybe they were waiting on the outcome of today's conference. That's where Rikjaard was headed; the Skyan Secretary of State had invited him to meet and the Macabee ambassador did not hesitate to accept. And his excitement was not just over the opportunity to discuss the war, but also to take it as an opportunity to grow Skyan-Macabee relations more generally. It was mostly about the war, though.

"We have 30,000 troops in-country?" It wasn't really a question.

The aide answered it anyways. "Yes, sir, 30,000. Mostly support personnel and a lot of ground defense. You know, our surface-to-air and EW assets. that kind of st—"

"Do I look like a fucking general to you?" Rikjaard snapped, giving the aide a glare of death. The kind of look that gives a strong warning to stop wasting the *jogomos'* time. "Speak to me in plain *Dienstad*, Ratho. Like, when it comes to military acronyms, I don't know jack about what I'm talking about, because I really don't. I deal with political warfare, not the...primitive...kind."

"Uh, sorry, sir," struggled the aide. "The base is defensive in nature, as you know. It's not meant to support an invasion. I don't think that was even a factor when the two governments came together."

"Right, right, they're here because of GATA. This I already know. I'm guessing this is another useless brief," sighed Rikjaard. "If that's the case, you might as well get off on the next floor" — Rikjaard pressed the button corresponding to two floors down — "and go back upstairs. Keep your eye on that base, though. The war pigs back home are the type of people who'd start ramping up troop levels without letting us known. Maybe they'll understand what's at stake here and they'll behave themselves, but I don't trust them. We need to know everything about that base, so we can do damage control. We can't piss off our only major allies in Gholgoth. So, Rathos, you got anything useful for me?" The elevator doors opened two doors down. There were a couple of people waiting outside, but upon seeing the *jogomos* and his death glare they decided to wait for the next one. The aide didn't step out either. Apparently, he had more to say. A speaker *pinged* again and the elevator doors closed, Rikjaard and the aide alone inside. He felt a lurch in his stomach and the lift went on its way down again. "So, tell me, what else does the brief say?"

"Well, there is something here you might find interesting," replied the aide.

"Might?"

"Um, yes, well, you see...there are reports of large sea-based platforms leaving Imbrinium moving east." That was obviously all the report had to say about that, because the aide fell silent thereafter.

"To New Empire?" Again, Rikjaard wasn't exactly inquiring. It was more like thinking out loud.

Again, the aide misinterpreted, "I don't think so, sir. We don't have a deep-sea naval port ready there yet. The [Berliston Krierstatón](#) is not ready yet and the National Self-Defense Act hasn't been passed yet."

Rikjaard leered at the kid. He would need to be taught when and when not to speak. The elevator doors pinged open again, revealing a byzantine lobby. Tall and wide, the whole area was quite large, with vaulted ceilings supported by internal buttresses. At the front where six double-sided doors which automatically opened for people as they walked in and out. These immediately led to a cordoned-off area with security and metal detectors. Behind this area was a large circular desk, made of a light wood with patterned brown streaks, occupied by four women who were already attending embassy guests. There were also seating areas all around, with coffee tables, sofas, and chairs arrayed to allow small groups of people to sit and talk. Some sat alone with their laptops, working here rather than in their offices — Rikjaard wasn't sure why anyone would want to work that way, but to each his own he supposed. The *jogomos* stepped out of the elevator and waved at the aide to stay behind. "You were useful, in a loose sense of that term. Go ahead and go back upstairs, and get me some better intelligence damn it."

"You got it, sir," said the aide.

Smug asshole, thought Rikjaard. Maybe it was time to fire him and find himself a new aide. Rikjaard wasn't a fan of the type of people who say "yes, sir, yes, sir" for appeasement's sake, only to turn around and do the exact opposite of what they were asked to do. Maybe the aide would be better placed in the military — with conscription laws re-implemented, maybe Rikjaard could force a transfer of that kind. *That would be too mean*, he reminded himself.

The *jogomos* left the building without too much hassle, everyone who mattered already knowing who he was, but he didn't go out the front doors. Instead, he took a detour towards the back, where a Macabee soldier opened a locked door. This led down a series of stairs, which finally ended at an underground parking garage. There was a black sedan waiting for him there and his chauffeur was already standing with the door open. Rikjaard got in, the door closed behind him, and soon enough the car was off and leaving the garage. Rikjaard didn't pay much mind to the scenery around him, already having seen Citadel City enough times for it to be burned into his memory. He didn't even notice when they had left the embassy walls behind them, and he missed the long, daily throng of people waiting in line to visit embassy staff — whether expatriates looking for new paperwork or people looking for the right visas to emigrate. Instead, Rikjaard focused on a packet of paperwork he had prepared for himself, which had notes relevant to the talk the *jogomos* was about to have with Skyan Secretary of State Atticus. Everything else was just an irrelevant blur for the time being, and so it was until they arrived at the Citadel.

The Citadel was an imposing building, its art deco architecture standing in stark contrast to the buildings around it. All four walls, and even the low towers rising from within it, were decorated with hundreds of windows, corresponding to offices and other rooms inside. Rikjaard's sedan stopped at a designated delegate drop-off zone, security already waiting for him there. The chauffeur stopped, stepped out, rounded the car, and opened the door for the *jogomos*. From there, Rikjaard was escorted by four large men into the building and all the way to where Secretary Atticus was waiting for him. Along the way, the Macabee ambassador took into the scenery around him. Many of the workers were dressed casually, at least when judged by Macabee tastes, but it was an eclectic sort of casualness. Some wore slacks with dress shirts, others wore suits, and yet other wore local garbs that Rikjaard had hardly seen before. It was different to the relative uniformity of the official work outfit of the Golden Throne's Diplomatic Mission to Havensky. Still, Rikjaard had been in-country for a few years now, so this kind of stuff no longer served as a culture-shock to him (not that it would have anyways, knowing the gradual liberalizing of Macabee cultural values, much to the disgust of conservative Rikjaard).

Finally, the guards brought him to what looked like a medium-sized conference room with enough furnishings to make it seem cozy and personal. There

awaited Secretary Atticus, dressed in a suit and wearing a genuine smile on his face. With the escorts now waiting behind, Atticus stretched out his right arm and Rikjaard took his hand in a shake. "Thank you for having me here, Secretary. There's much for us to talk about."

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Thu Oct 29, 2015 7:46 pm, edited 3 times in total.

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Havensky
Diplomat

Posts: 888
Founded: Jan 01, 2008
Left-wing Utopia

The Lions Emerge

by [Havensky](#) » Fri Oct 23, 2015 10:09 pm

QUOTE

The Citadel

Office of the Secretary of State

Havensky, Gholgoth (2400 km from Scandinavians)

Secretary of State Lance Atticus adjusted his wire frame glasses as he waited for the Jogornos. He was reading the latest intelligence reports from Dienstad and the Golden Throne's battle with the pirates. He had read reports like it before, but he always liked to have a refresher before meeting somebody of Rikjaard's level. This was particularly important as Rikjaard was known for being a no nonsense person. The last thing Atticus wanted was to be unprepared.

The Secretary's Conference Room was rectangular in shape and dimly lit so the digital walls could be seen more easily. When powered down, the room would look like an ordinary conference room with glass windows and a thick glass table. However, the windows and the table were really large digital screens that now displayed the latest satellite imagery of both Gholgoth and Dienstad. In between the two maps, the face of Admiral Colina Murciel looked out into the room. Documents in digital form were piled on the table with Atticus moving fingers across the table as he flipped through them.

Murciel and Sky Marshal Gonzales were having a conversation about the readiness of Task Force Kacer (Hunter in the Deinstad tongue). The Golden Throne and the Skybound Republic had agreed to a base exchange as part of their GATA treaty. As a major economic trade partner to the Golden Throne, billions of credits worth of goods came flowing through Citadel City Port destined for any number of ports within Gholgoth. Given that strategic interest, The Skybound Republic of Havensky had offered a small parcel of land to house Golden Throne forces and allow her navy free use of Citadel Port. In exchange, the Skyan Legionary Armada maintained a base in the Macabees. Admiral Murciel commanded the Skyan forces there on her flagship *The Red Queen*.

Murciel had been picked for the position because she was a very capable naval commander - but also because she spoke Dienstad. She wasn't Macabeesian in origin, but her husband was. In fact, her husband was an escaped slave during the last pirate war in Theohuanacu. He and about five other people had been horrifically burned in their escape attempt, but had managed to make their way to Havensky. Her husband became a citizen shortly after as part of the Skyan Refugee Act which took in all comers in an attempt to build up the Skyan City-States.

Mr. Murciel may have been scar-faced, but he was terrifically hilarious. "Joey" Murciel may have been the only man on earth to get Admiral (then Lieutenant Colina Dathail) to crack a smile - much less laugh uncontrollably. Colina had grown out her bright red hair and she had (probably unfairly) gained a reputation for being short tempered, absolutely merciless, and downright mean. Being six foot two, she had been called "Big Red" and more than one subordinate had learned the hard way what happens if your ship was less than perfect.

However, Joey had some sort of secret key that just bursted through the wall that Colina had created. It was almost magic. After about a year of dating, Joey proposed and she had said yes - enthusiastically so. It had been an interesting match as nobody would have guessed the strict naval officer would have ended up with a standup comic. At work, she was still very strict and all business. At home, she laughed - always.

That had been years ago of course and the Admiral was now the mother of three. Her family had traveled with her to the Golden Throne and she was happy to see her boys growing up handsomely - if ironically mere miles from where their father had escaped capture. Her boys looked just like their father - except for the scars - which was a constant reminder of what he might have looked like otherwise.

Joey would say, "Hey, I'm not angry. I moved halfway across the world and the universe rewarded me with VA - VA - VOOOM!" (And the privilege of being the only person on the planet who could ever get away with that line.) That said, Admiral Colina Murciel was angry for her husband and his family. While Joey was just thankful, the current trouble with the pirates was personal for the Admiral.

While most Admirals would have picked a carrier as their flagship, *The Red Queen* was a Railgun Destroyer. Which, in all practicality, was really a modern battleship designed to rend asunder any naval vessels that stood in its way by way of giant high velocity shells aimed at the enemy topside. To add insult to injury, *The Red Queen* supported four dozen patrol boats armed with Legionares that were trained to board enemy vessels that were suspected of piracy and blow holes right through the pirate ship's crew.

Big Red had a mean streak.

Atticus imagined that Rikjaard would have been briefed on Admiral Murciel's history. In any event, it didn't matter so much.

When Rikjaard walked in, the Sergeant of the Guard saluted the Ambassador and stated in perfect Dienstad "Welcome to the Citadel - Please let me know if there is anything you require."

The Skyan practice of having at least one guard that spoke the native language wouldn't have surprised Rikjaard after having spent a few years in Citadel City. It was one of the many subtle things that the Skyans did to make people feel at home.

Atticus returned the Ambassador's handshake firmly.

"Jogomos Rikjaard, how good of you to come. Yes, we have much to discuss. Thank you for coming on such short notice during what I imagine is a very busy time for you."

Atticus motioned to the table where a platter of kimchi beef and pork tacos had been laid out along with chips and guacamole as well as eggs in soy broth.

"I know it's near lunchtime so I took the liberty of ordering some lunch of us. Please, dig in. That said, I also know that our discussion will be rather serious so I also ordered a bottle of Sky Marshal Whiskey. You take your neat yes?"

Atticus of course knew this having been briefed beforehand, but it was a subtle way of showing favor. He poured two glasses without prompting and handed one to the ambassador. Sky Marshal Gonzales, still being on duty, sipped horchata.

The other subtle sign was the obviously classified nature of the pictures on the glass screen. Almost real time satellite imagery of the region including locations of all Skyan military assets and suspected Slaver locations. A fuss was not made about this being in plain view of the foreign ambassador - a sign of trust.

"Jogomos, I would like to introduce you to Sky Marshal Gonzales of Citadel Command. He is responsible for the Gothic Theatre which includes Golden Base. I have also included Admiral Murciel who is the commander of Skyan forces in Dienstad."

The face of Murciel nodded in a respectful gesture and spoke through the screen in perfect Dienstad.

"Jogomos, it is an honor to meet you. I would advise your submarine venture west. If they can cross into the Skyan Safe Passage Route we might be able to bring them home."

The Skyan had noticed the *Korenja* and this was a way for them to say "You aren't getting anything past us in our own backyard" while also saying "Let us help you."

That had also had the effect of surprising the Jogomos and not just because the Admiral spoke his own tongue. Atticus spoke before the Jogomos could respond.

"Jogomos, the Skybound Republic can't openly oppose the Empire without causing the region to turn against us. However, we understand your situation and we want to help. We propose expanding the Golden Throne's presence in Havensky by building up a naval base here. As we trade billions of credits worth of goods, this should seem natural. At the same time, we will bring the issue of the Empire's behavior to the Gothic Council and push for them to abandon their current path. I have also brought the Admiral into this call so that our forces may assist with anti-piracy measures in the Deinstad.

We have no love for the Empire, but we must be careful not to cause the region to turn against us, I would love to discuss ways for us to support you without causing more trouble."

An aide handed the Jogomos a glass tablet as paused and Sky Marshal Gonzales took over.

The Sky Marshal had a large frame and greying hair. His jet black dress uniform in perfect condition with a slew of ribbons detailing his long career with the Skyan Armada. On his right shoulder flew the Skyan Winged Lion and the other the "Island Castle" flag of The Citadel City-State. He rose from his chair and pulled up a map of Havensky and the surrounding region.

"Currently, Golden Base houses about 30,000 troops and support staff mostly geared around stopping an air attack from the Reich as well as helping us to augment our security around Citadel Port. The Golden Throne's navy mostly uses our Armada Port for refuel and ports of call. Our proposal will to expand the naval port at Shield Point. Shield Point currently serves as the operating base for the Skyan Safe Passage routes which acts as the escort for trade vessels coming in and out of Havensky. It is also the part of Havensky with the shortest distance to Neo-Cydonia (Kraven's island fortress). Our proposal would double the port's size with us leasing out a significant portion of land to the Golden Throne. Officially, the mission of the port would be to act as an operating base for escorts of trade vessels. However, in the event of an invasion of Scandinavians, it's facilities would serve as a good staging ground."

Atticus spoke next pointing to a map of Gholgoth on the far wall.

"In the meantime, I will approach the Gothic Council bringing up our concerns about the declaration of war. Any evidence that you have showing that the Empire gave direct support to the pirates would be most useful in these talks. As we already have a base in the Golden Throne, my government will have to make a statement to the press regarding their status. This will include a call for peace talks and an statement that Skyan forces there will be hunting for pirates that would raid our shipping and that we will advise the Empire not to send their staff to pirate vessels lest we accidentally fire on them."

Atticus took a sip of his whiskey.

"Thing might get a little messy - but I've talked enough. What do you think Jogomo Rikjaard?"

Last edited by [Havensky](#) on Mon Nov 30, 2015 8:11 pm, edited 4 times in total.

The Skybound Republic of Havensky
(Pronounced Haven-Sky)

Territory held in
[Texas](#) - [Gholgoth](#) - [Sondria](#)

**N&I RP Mentor Specializing in PMT, Character Development,
Worldbuilding, and Diplomacy - TG me for help!**



by [The Macabees](#) » Fri Oct 30, 2015 10:38 am

The Citadel, Citadel City





The Macabees
Senator

Posts: 3870
Founded: Antiquity
Anarchy

Laying the cards down on the table...

QUOTE

Rikjaard looked impassively at Admiral Murciel as she spoke. He didn't know she'd be present; his aide had left that "little detail" out. She spoke *dienstadi* fluently, but to Rikjaard's native ears her words carried the sharp twang of a foreign accent. Her presence hadn't surprise Rikjaard, not just because the Skyans had a history of accommodating their guests, but also because he knew about her. Most high-ranking bureaucrats of the Imperial Government did, and those who did not were the kind that would forever stagnate in the bottom rungs of the bureaucracy. She was, after all, commander of the only Gothic fleet *stationed* in Greater Dienstad, a region that prided itself on the absence of out-of-region powers. The *jogornos* wasn't sure how he felt about her yet. As diverse as the Golden Throne's culture was, the provinces and most of the core territories shared a common distrust of extraregional aliens. And a Gholgothic fleet outside of Theohuanacu still made many people nervous. However, the Skyans' entry into GATA and the base exchange pointed towards a bridging of inter-regional differences, and Rikjaard had a gut feeling about their inherent good will.

While his eyes did not deviate from Admiral Murciel's as she spoke, he had taken in his environment as he had walked in. The walls were large screens — it must be said that the *jogornos* was impressed and would have to apply the idea in one of his offices — and they displayed sharp images of Skyan military bases. It was all satellite imagery, sharp enough that Rikjaard could even see the fuzzy black shape of aircraft or ships in some. Some of those were bases he didn't recognize. He didn't have access to the Golden Throne's own satellite intelligence, and he did not even know if the Golden Throne knew. In any case, he had the feeling that the information was sensitive. Of course, some squares on the walls displayed other areas, some of which Rikjaard recognized as parts of the Theohuanacu coastline. Others may have been the Nicaroan coastline. Outside of Theohuanacu, the *jogornos*' knowledge of geography became more general, so he could not readily identify those locations. Still, the intent behind the Skyan's dazzling open display of this intelligence was not lost on him. As Murciel ended her introduction, Rikjaard became visibly more relaxed.

Then, something about that last part of the admiral's words suddenly caught Rikjaard's attention. He was about to ask her to repeat what she had said, but Atticus had swiftly taken command of the conversation. *Did she just ask about the Korenja?* He thought about this as the Skyan secretary of state spoke, although he himself was not privy to all knowledge about the *Korenja*. Only His Imperial Majesty, the *Krierlords*, and key members of the *Fuermak* (High Command) knew about the submarine's whereabouts. But aware of his own ignorance, and with some intuition on the size of the 'need-to-know' group, he was still curious about how the Skyans knew about the *Korenja* and what exactly they knew about her.

Without actually moving his head, he temporarily shook those thoughts away to pay full attention to Secretary Atticus, who went straight to business. *I can respect a man who gets straight to the point.* Time is far too scarce to waste on superfluous small talk. As Atticus explained the Skyan Republic's position relative to the newborn Macabee-Scandinvan conflict, Rikjaard had to expend more and more of his concentration on containing the excitement. These were the kind of political negotiations that could earn you a promotion into the *Krierlordship*, His Imperial Majesty's trust inner circle of imperial advisors. With some mental focus, he compartmentalized those thoughts and pushed them to the back of his brain, turning his attention back to Atticus.

When the Skyan Secretary of State turned the floor over to Rikjaard, the Macabeesian bought himself some time by taking a long sip of whiskey, which he had thanked Atticus for earlier. Finally, he put the glass back down on a small table next to him, and said, "I thank you Mr. Secretary of State for inviting me to speak with you." He turned to the admiral's image and added, "The honor is mine, as it is not every day that a man of my stature meets the commander of Task Force *Kacer*."

As it turned out, the Skyan's proposal was bittersweet. Very sweet, actually, because the Skyans had essentially pledged their support in the Golden Throne's invasion of the Scandinavian Empire — there was now a base of operations within strikeable distance of the enemy. However, in return, the Golden Throne would undoubtedly be forced to negotiate with the Scandinavian Empire before it had an opportunity to invade the country. Not only would that

increase the risk that the billions of *riokmarks* invested in mobilization and the beginnings of the Greater Dénstad-Gholgoth "express lane," which would serve as the corridor of the Macabeesian supply train, but it implied focusing Gholgoth's attention on the conflict. As an outsider, this was not necessarily in the interests of the Golden Throne. While Gholgoth had divisions of its own, Rikjaard knew all the way the unifying power an outside invader could be. Alas, the Skyans were an honorable people and would be responsible members of the Gothic Council. *It is what it is*, thought Rikjaard. The two empires would never agree to terms anyways, they were both far too eager to prove themselves in battle.

The *jogomos* turned back to Atticus, "Mr. Secretary of State, your proposal is a remarkable gesture of good will towards the Golden Throne. I can't even begin to express our gratitude, as I'm sure His Imperial Majesty will make known when he arrives as part of the Imperial Family's tour. The port's expansion, and the granting of privileges to a large section of it, is an incredible boon in our war against the Scandinvans. And, with our resources soon to be stretched thin, like a piece of string pulled from both ends, Admiral Murciel's task force in Theohuanacu will be of great help to our siege there. You have earned the Golden Throne's eternal indebtedness."

He paused to take another sip of whiskey. The translucent, honey-colored liquid had a sweet taste, and while it tasted strange to Rikjaard, its smoothness was starting to grow on him. Slowly, he placed the glass back on the side table, his gaze returning to Atticus. "But I think we can be more ambitious."

"Let me explain." He turned to the walls, "Can you focus that map Neo-Cydonia and the Skyan Republic? I want to draw attention to what should be the proper context of Skyan-Macabeesian relations. If we are to involve ourselves there, by having our ships help with escort duties, I believe that would justify an expansion in our ground forces. We could grow our anti-air umbrella by deploying more surface-to-air missile batteries to bolster your defenses. And it would only be sensible to increase the size of our other ground forces as well."

The truth was that at some point the Golden Throne was going to have to be straight with the Skyans. While the invasion of the Scandinvans had already been planned with the assumption that the Golden Throne would have no Gothic allies, the Republic's support would undoubtedly be exploited to use the country as a major base in the war. Atticus, of course, had explicitly invited use of the Skyan Republic as a staging ground, but Rikjaard wanted to make sure that they knew exactly what they were getting into. Indeed, it was rumored that the Scandinvans fielded over three billion soldiers, and although most might have been peasants, a machine gun in the hand of a peasant could still cut an overconfident soldier to ribbons. The *jogomos* had seen the estimates. A friend in Fedala sent him digital copies of a secret report. The *Fuermak* was bloating to a billion and a half soldiers, of which over one billion would be in some way involved in the invasion — these forces spread between New Empire, the Scandinavian Empire, the seas in between,...and now the Skyan Republic. It was a very large army, and being how attractive its position was as a staging ground, it would only be a matter of time before someone in the Imperial Government brought this up, so better if it was Rikjaard who took initiative.

The *jogomos* continued his amendment of the proposal, "At the height of the war, we are looking at possibly 700-800 million soldiers in-theater. For an invasion of that scope, using the Skyan Republic as a staging ground might involve the permanent presence of 70-150 million personnel, with another 100-200 million flowing in or out of theater.¹ And this can materialize as early as a year from now. This is the reality of using your country as a staging ground. Is this still something your country is willing to host?"

He let that question sink and then pressed on, "If so, like I said before, the Golden Throne would be forever indebted to the Skyan Republic. With that in mind, I believe it is safe for me to pledge military and financial assistance in the defense of your country in the event of a foreign invasion, namely one conducted by the Kraven Reich. And," he looked back at the wall on the map, "I propose that this is how we frame our growing military presence here. Not as a preparation for our invasion of the Scandinavian Empire, but as part of our duty to help an ally against an aggressor. One with a history of violence, knowing what they did to Vetalia. And to think that at one point our industry was helping to arm them." Rikjaard shuddered.

"We will, of course, agree to negotiate an early peace with the Scandinavian Empire," continued the *jogornos*. "However, I am afraid that there isn't much support for an early peace within the Imperial Government and, more likely than not, the conditions we set will surely be unacceptable to them. To be completely concrete, the two terms would most likely be to compensate the Golden Throne for the projected costs of the Theohuanacu rebellion and to end the slave trade. Of course, we determine that cost and, with regards to the second demand, we would not ask for the emancipation of existing slaves and their offsprings. But, the Scandinavians will never accept these conditions, so any peace talks will only be superficial in nature. Of course, I suspect that you already expect this. But, as with everything else, it is best to speak frankly and honestly."

He took the glass of whiskey in his hand again and took another sip. He'd have to ask his aide — or whoever he replaced that lazy dog with — to order some of this excellent beverage for his own office. It'd take the place of his *jinharem*, a drink no longer "politically correct," given its identification with piracy in Theohuanacu. He said as much to Atticus, "This is truly some exemplary whiskey, Mr. Secretary of State. I am impressed."

With that, he returned command of the conversation to Atticus.

Notes:

1. SICly, this isn't exactly true. Rikjaard isn't privy to all information, so his assumption is that, given Havensky's proximity to Scand, it'd be our major staging ground. I can give more details over IRC.

Last edited by [The Macabees](#) on Fri Oct 30, 2015 6:31 pm, edited 3 times in total.

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Havensky
Diplomat

Posts: 888
Founded: Jan 01, 2008
Left-wing Utopia

by [Havensky](#) » Fri Oct 30, 2015 7:48 pm



Atticus gave over the slightest of frowns as he listened to Rikjaard's demands for an early peace. He tapped his fingers along the glass table for a moment and a map of southeastern Gholgoth appeared behind him on the wall.

Atticus gave a frustrated gesture to the nearly three dozen brackets traveling to and from the island nation of the Scandinavians. Each bracket encapsulated a seaborne vessel that the Skyan *Stars and Signals* Command felt confident were trafficking human goods. If they had been found on the open sea flagged with any other nation but the Glorious Empire's, the Armada would have seized it instantly. Only the Non-Aggression Pact kept these vessels untouched.

"The Scandinavians entire culture is built upon the anachronistic belief that a select group of families have a divine right to rule and all other people must bow to their will. The idea of their 'god-given' right to enslave others is the keystone to their culture and their economy. They would never give it up willingly."

Atticus took off his glasses and placed them on the table. The region had long tolerated slave ships inside Gothic waters. It wouldn't be enough to sway the region.

"However, we may be able to work it out to cease all imports of human cargo from Greater Dienstad. I expect them to reject that offer immediately, but as we bring diplomatic pressure to bear it may look more appealing. Any physical evidence that you have of his involvement your region would make this task much easier. While we are committed to aiding you, doing so without exhausting all other options would be considered an act of war to many in the region. We have to prove that the Empire's actions have jeopardized regional security. I realize it's frustrating, but I'm afraid this will take some time."

The screen shifted again to show a close up view of the *Task Force Kacer*.

"In any case, we consider your proposal worthwhile, we'll have the Admiral

report to your naval authorities to assist your nation in taking care of the pirates as well as coordinating escort duties to and from our regions. I'll have my diplomatic staff in the Golden Throne coordinate with your departments on the leasing of the ports. I can also grant you access to our offshore stations that we use to administer the safe passage routes. They aren't much, but their facilities should aid in your fleet's movements. By adding you to the Safe Passage program, it will also be easier to justify new ships and troops in our ports."

Atticus paced around the room again.

"At some point, we will have to make a statement to the region about these events. It will be difficult to keep such news hidden and it would be wise to start countering Scandinavian press. I will have our offices pass a draft along before we release it."

* * * *

Skybound Republic of Havensky Official Statement

The People of Havensky note with regret the State of War between our allies of The Golden Throne and fellow Gothic Council member The Glorious Empire of the Scandinavians. The People of Havensky call for immediate peace talks between these two great powers - talks that the Skybound Republic would be happy to host at Citadel City.

We also take this time to affirm our commitment to the safe navigation of Skyan Vessels at Sea. To that effect, we continue to participate in anti-piracy efforts globally including Task Force Kacer in The Golden Throne. Prior to the declaration of war, the Golden Throne had also committed to the participation of the Safe Passage Route. We expect these efforts to continue, but no Golden Throne vessels will be in Gothic Waters without Skyan escort.

The Skyan People would also like to express concerns at the recent action of the Glorious Empire. Their actions in Pudu, the recent massacre of their own people, and the nuclear device that was exploded on their own soil mark an instability and a recklessness unseen by the region in quite some time. We urge the Council of Lords to encourage the Empire to participate in peace negotiations.

On the behalf and behest of the Skyan People,

Queen Jessica Heart

The Skybound Republic of Havensky
(Pronounced Haven-Sky)

Territory held in
Texas - Gholgoth - Sondria

**N&I RP Mentor Specializing in PMT, Character Development,
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