

# THE LAUGHING CAMBION

For the first time, The Laughing Cambion frowns. The Synod's Virtue Funds that it used to reward the virtuous were stolen from the Empire. You have stolen from the heart of The Empire. All of our agents will listen. All of our agents will seek. Surrender yourself to the mercy of The Synod and the Magistrates. If the Laughing Cambion finds you, you shall smile no more.

But, we are not without mirth. The Empress has told another wonderful joke. She offers a reward for revealing our organisation. She'll give true liao for information on our whereabouts, and the return of 500 Thrones stolen from

"the Empire." Tell me, is the Empire missing 500 Thrones? No. The Laughing Cambion isn't either, funny that. Only The Butchers lost out. Let us assure you of one thing the money is still in The Empire. The Laughing Cambion believes in Prosperity. The Empress believes it is a greater crime that money is taken from the Butchers' Bank, than the Synod. It is no surprise that our Empress created spontaneous auras of the false virtue of hope. You would have thought that her sign offering a reward would become hallowed with how hopeful and lazy an effort it was to mislead. Of course, now we have two Em-

presses. It is so hard to tell which is better. Yael, the First Empress! Virtues be praised. According to her, it has only taken 350 years to return from the Labyrinth. Oh don't worry about human destiny everyone, it turns out that once you transcend the Labyrinth you just come back again. I'm sure we have a word in the Synod for that sort of talk... Funny too that Yael made no testimony. That she had no affect on the world until after her vision. Isn't it strange? Normally, when people are shown visions of hope in the labyrinth, it leads them off the path of reincarnation. But of course, Yael must be a paragon. Only paragons can

perceive the labyrinth, to transcend it. Because there's no way the Cardinal of Loyalty would mislead people over spectres of false virtues and aid a fellow from Highguard in accumulating power. Yael must be a Paragon, it's not like they ever need Synod approval, right?

We are not your enemy Lisabetta. The enemies of our Empire are plain to see. Never before has the Empire's virtue Fund been robbed. Never before have we had an Empress of the false virtue of hope. It is time to stop hoping and start fighting for your Empire, because the first empress is coming, and the people are so lost that they will follow Yael stories before Lisabetta. Lisabetta: save your Empire, or it will be taken from you.

I'm sorry, friends. Next issue I shall be back on form. It must have been all these parties.

## CRANE VS GRENDEL



Varushka, told Academy Adventures about their recent trip to acquire crane feathers and eggs.

### GRENDEL

After finding broken eggs and bloodied feathers they discovered a local man who had been brutally beaten and left for dead by Grendel raiders. Their timely help to get him to his house and heal his injuries was much appreciated. The scholars of the academy have developed a theory that the Grendel were killing and eating the birds.

### COURAGE

Yana of Varushka was particularly brave on this mission and helped to encourage the smaller children in finding their Courage. I wish the people of Sarvos luck in locating the intruders before more Imperial citizens and wildlife are attacked.

## ACADEMY ADVENTURES

*"Train Hard and with Spirit"*

By Sagua i'Ezmara

Summer was a busy summit for the Academy students, who crafted crowns and bracelets, put on a play for our new Empress and even created a floral crown for the coronation!

### ELECTION

Congratulations to Faustina Notturno di Sarvos who was elected

### EMPIRE FACT

Wise Rangara is a Winter Eternal who usually appears in the form of a very old blind woman. She often takes a young child as an apprentice to read for her.

The younger Academy students have not been idle, Eva Fletcher from the Marches and Sovica Martova Kovar from

## DEFEATING DIRE DRUJ DEATH BLOSSOMS

The Academy's cadets have discovered that the Druj are spreading deadly death blossom plants across the wilderness along on the border of Navarr and Urizen.

### COLLAPSED

While on a mission through the Sentinel Gate from Anvil, cadet leader Thelma touched one of the black flowers and collapsed. His

hand was instantly covered in agonising blisters that spread up his arm. Only the quick actions of his fellow cadets and expert treatment at the Anvil hospital saved him from a painful death.

### CAUTION

Death blossom are large black flowers that grow on long vines. Their leaves are similar to ivy

and the blooms have overlapping petals like a rose. Because of its poison a death blossom must be treated with extreme caution. In conversation with Academy Adventures writer Sagua i'Ezmara, Lucan Yanovich from Varushka said, "If you find death blossoms contact Ham of Wintermark immediately and

make sure you do not pick them up or touch them."

### ETERNAL

Lucan explained that Ham from Wintermark is an apprentice of the Winter Eternal Wise Rangara and – to Lucan's knowledge – is thus far the only citizen of the Empire able to touch the flowers without being harmed.

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Dignity Freedom Prosperity

# The Oathwright

The People's Voice

3 Rings

SECOND ISSUE

## THRONE HIT BY ASSASSINS

By Cormack Dun

Empress Lisabetta was cut down on the day of her coronation by knife-wielding freedom cultists who tried to assassinate her in the Applewood Arms. The head of state was quickly healed as her guards killed one of her attackers and captured the other.

### CURSED

Moments earlier she had been cursed by a suicidal attacker. Efforts to protect her from the enchantment were unsuccessful and she will now suffer from feeling cold for an entire year. Both attacks were launched inside the Applewood Arms where the Empress was enjoying what she

called "an excellent cheeseboard" with Gregor Grandmaster of the Shuttered Lantern.

The Empress said, "I could surround myself with guards so that such people could not get through. But I would not be able to do my job – there must be no distance between me and my people."

### MOTTO

It is possible to remove the curse on the Empress by making a deal with an Eternal but the Throne said, "I have a motto, ask yourself, what would Empress Giselle do?" Then don't do that. Giselle made a great many deals with Eternals, so I will not."



Woodcut copied from an original by Tom Garnett

## WONDROUS CORONATION DRAWS JUBILANT CROWD

Prosperous citizens of the Empire contributed 500 Thrones to celebrate the coronation of the 20th Empress.

Cesare Sanguineo Rezia Di Tassato, senator of League city Tassato, raised the money on behalf of the Empress.

### HOSPITALS

The Throne pledged to invest the huge sum raised for the celebrations in improving the nations' hospitals. In one of her majesty's first official acts she made this celebratory announcement, "Proud, loyal and

prosperous Imperial citizens, now is a time to join together in joy and celebration, the like of which has not been seen in our lifetimes! But let us not forget, in the midst of our revelry, that our necessary wars have a terrible cost in Imperial lives. I ask that all of us act howsoever we can, to stem this tide of Imperial blood. Let us ensure that our sisters and brothers, fathers and mothers, daughters and sons, may continue to fight on in pursuit of our Empire's great destiny."

## EMPIRE PAYS BLOOD MONEY TO GRENDEL

By Cormack Dun

The Empire has paid 250 Thrones to the Grendel after the orc barbarian nation demanded the money in peace negotiations. Speaker of the Imperial Orcs, Bloodcrow Ergot, stormed out of negotiations at the suggestion that the Empire would pay barbarians in the hope of ending war.

### WHIP HAND

He said, "It looks like the Grendel have the whip hand. Let's hope the Empire can get a grip before the Salt Lords' play ends!"

### POLICY

Paying enemies instead of fighting them is part of a new dynamic foreign policy using the Holberg

Reckoner – a sort of complex abacus – to evaluate each foreign power on its attitude to three principles: slavery, orc rights and The Way, and a forth priority for the Empire – reducing the number of fronts on which its armies must fight.

### NEGOTIATIONS

This fourth principle was the driving force behind peace negotiations with the Salt Lords. The Grendel's request for the sum of money was granted without question.

### UPKEEP

The upkeep of the Imperial Armies costs the treasury approximately 1,500 Thrones per season.

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Death blossom! Cranes!

# CULTIST EXECUTED FOR BLASPHEMY AND HERESY

By Cormack Dun

Gerrard De Lusignan was convicted of blasphemy and heresy and executed after it was discovered that for years he had been leading a night coven guilty of murder – including of children – and of cursing dozens, including the Empress.

## WENDIGO

His coven was exposed at the Spring Festival when Wendigo Eternals visited the Dawn camp and Gerrard was tried at the Summer Festival.

## PRAUD

Many members of his coven committed suicide during the audience with the night Eternal Janon at the Spring Festival and others evaded

## FOREIGN POWERS

## MAY JOIN EMPIRE

Imperial policy-makers are developing an accession path to provide guidance to foreign powers wishing to join the Empire.

An accession treaty is being drafted that will, if it is agreed by the senate, give a route to other nations to join the Empire. Senator Bridget of Mitwold, The Marches, who is advising Empress Lisabeta on foreign policy matters

arrest by using ritual magic to kill themselves – according to witnesses they were enchanted so that they died by magic when they clicked their fingers.

## STABBED

Magistrate Seppa Dunning tried him in a tumultuous session at the Hub during which he was stabbed twice – causing the trial to be halted while he was healed and the perpetrators were fined for contempt of court.

## PROUD

At first evasive, a proud Gerrard – he repeatedly insisted that witnesses and even the magistrate correct the pronunciation of his name –

eventually cracked and admitted his guilt in the court. Due to the threatening nature of the crowd, which included many of Gerrard and his coven's victims, Magistrate Seppa decided that justice should be served immeditaly.

Dawn Egregore Lady Griffonbane asked to be the one to carry out the sentence. Gerrard was hauled into the street by an angry mob where Griffonbane slit his throat.

## WEDDING

She said of Gerrard De Lusignan, "He had been damaging the Empire for many years."

Dawn Egregore Galen D' Rondell

## CROWN STOLEN

The crown was stolen and given to the distant southern nation Sumaah Republic by someone using a boon with the Eternal Prospero. Noone knows when the crime was committed because the crown was switched with a fake crown made by *The Pledge* publishers the Printer's Guild of The League. Denying that the current members had anything to do with this crime the remaining Printer's Guild members were said to be "aghast."

To minimise the damage to its reputation the group is seeking a Synod statement that asserts that the culprit is no longer a member of the guild.

The Empress has asked The League group she founded, The House of the Seven Mirrors, to get the crown back from Sumaah. Horsa, Thane of the Renwyrd in Wintermark, gave the Throne a Sumaah religious icon to help in the diplomatic mission.

## FROM FIRST PRINCIPLES

By Bridget Eastville Senator for Mitwold, The Marches

Members of the Senate, Military Council and Conclave met last summit to draft a long overdue foreign policy. At the invitation of the Imperatrix, the group agreed the principles that will form our foreign policy. Our core principle is The Way – surviving as an Empire in order to spread The Way and to allow all sapient beings to fulfil their destinies. As such, our three priorities, in order of importance have to be: first to preserve the Empire, second that slavery is contrary to our principles, and third that orcs are considered equal citizens.

This means that, wherever the safety and future of the Empire is not at risk, we will use all of our influence in trading, military, magical and political arenas to bring an end to slavery, and a recognition of orcs as equal beings.

## ETERNALS

All future interactions with foreign and barbarian nations, and with eternals under emnity, amnity and neutrality should keep these three priorities in mind. Both the Senate and the Synod stated that, "The enslavement of sapient beings is contrary to the defining principles of the Empire,

our constitution, and The Way of Virtue."

We hope that a cohesive and consistent policy in our dealings with outside nations will win us the respect and influence that we have been struggled to achieve since Britta's death. While the battles against slavery, to secure the orcs an equal footing and to spread The Way will not be quickly won, it is my sincere belief that they are winnable and that this is a bold step towards that victory.

## HIGHGUARD HERALD LLOFIR IN REIKOS TO STAY?

By Jaylus of Highguard



Ongoing discussion of the constitution's statements about orc spirituality is vital. This should not be seen as an attack on orcs but simply an effort by the constitutional council to better explain its understanding of the eldritch document that is our constitution. Though, in this writer's opinion, the orcs of the Empire should be considering looking into their own spirituality, which has been proven by the Hierro Clan orcs to be separate from The Way but intrinsically linked to the virtues, but until then the more input into the Assemblies the better it is for all.

## DIALOGUE

An effort to excommunicate the Synod of the Sumaah Republic failed. While this writer is glad that this judgement did not pass I must say Dietrich Elias der Holburghan should show Pride in his actions, it shows great Courage to condemn another nation and to attempt to shape Imperial foreign policy. I hope we can invite a Sumaah delegation to the symposium to open dialogue.

## COURAGE

An inquisition can be welcome news; consider this: 'Inquisition of Asenath of Felix's Watch regarding her virtuous actions.' After the Battle for the Bridge, Asenath kept the Sentinel Gate open to allow survivors and the bodies of the fallen through. This was at great risk to herself but she strove to save as many as she could.

## NATIONS

National questions are often raised in the Synod – at the past summit we saw Navarr being called to fight for the Blachthorns, Imperial Orcs

that the heralds of the Eternal Llofir in Reikos have been invited into the territory by unknown parties.

During a mission to rescue a number of Highguardians trapped in their chapter house, a delegation of heroes from the nation, alongside the Archmage of Spring, were beset by aggravated

heralds of the eternal. Thanks to the diplomatic skill and Virtue of the leaders of the delegation the heralds were kept at bay with minimal violence.

## FORTIFY

While there was some debate as to what was needed within the chapterhouse, and even unvirtuous suggestions of abandonment, it has been decided to fortify it.

## HERALD WAS ONCE HIGHGUARD

A solitary herald near a powerful spring regio has said that she was once a member of Highguard. Humans can shed their identity and join the realms of the Eternals, but it is highly inadvisable and shows a distinct lack of Wisdom and Pride.

## KINSHIP

This particular herald further claims to be the result of a human member of Highguard breeding with an eternal. This has raised the question of kinship and national identity within the nation.

Many exclusionists believe that to surrender to an eternal is final and are beseeching the Conclave to remove amity from her. It is clear some humanity remains within her, as witnessed with her desire to reside in her old chapterhouse.

While to many it is a sensitive subject, this provides Highguard with the perfect opportunity to bring our relationship with the magical realm into the light while deciding the fate of one more lost person.

should show vigilance to ensure that we do not have another issue in a similar vein to Golan the Wanderer that plagued Reikos for the past year. Furthermore, we need, as an Empire, to ensure that we do not accidentally slip into idolatry in our worship of the First Empress as I have witnessed far too many people do so far. However, safe travels to Jared, may he show Wisdom in his teachings.

Potions, teas and the finest real coffee in Anvil, brewed while you wait

Join Lumi by her fire in Sussuvare Hall, Wintermark

LUMI'S

# PROSPERITY AND WAR

By Duke Ferrero Master of the Imperial Mint

The Empress agreed the funding of the armies before considering the budget. She hoped that after the summer summit we could find places to cut the deficit. Her advisors and I agreed that it is not possible to cut spending.

I have carefully managed the deficit for two years. I pushed against senators' careless spending, I was forced to hold back the guerdon in order for us to keep our civil servants protected and the Empire functioning and I ensured that we kept enough in our coffers to prevent failings. At the past festival, the Senate applauded me for the most robust Summer budget in memory.

## DISMISS

The end result is that unless we wish to pull down fortifications, dismiss armies, shut down bourse resources, or put the civil service at risk, the only saving we can make would be taking away the seven Thrones the High Exorcist receives.

But the citizens can support our Empress. If the populace switch their resources to military units and send those units to fight for

## DISPATCHES



A vast and bloody battle for the Serra Briante valley and the Great Mine in Kahraman, Brass Coast has left 10,000 ores and humans dead and liberated the mine. The Imperial armies were the Brass Coasts' Fire of the South and Red Wind Corsairs, Wintermark's

A stolat in Dawn was attacked by an army of walking corpses from Semmerlak that crossed Semerholm. Fortunately the Golden Axe army of Varushka was resupplying nearby and was able to destroy the mysterious enemy.

## PRICE LIST

Duke Ferero lists his view of resource prices:

O richalcum 15r tempest jade 15r Green iron 20r weltsilver 12r amberbelt 14r beggar's lyre (up) 8r (down) dragonbone 20r iridescent gloaming (up) 12r

Iridescent gloaming starts to rise. Beggar's lyre continues to fall.

Liao 8r true liao (down) 45T Liao is still hard to sell at Anvil. True liao returns to a more reasonable price.

Mana crystals 35r

True vervain 5r cerulean mazzarine (up) 12r bladeroot 8r Imperial roseweald (up) 10r marrowart 8r Anvil Hospital providing free services, herb exchanges, and recent Spring magic keep herbs at a low.

Ilium bourse: Imperial bourse seat average 6T Street value 2T Mithril bourse: Imperial bourse seat average 5T 7C Street value 5T

Weirwood Imperial bourse seat average 4T 1C Street value 4T 4C

White granite: Bourse purchase average: 3T 4C 4R Street value 4T 4C National bourse seats outside of the League set their own prices. These range from free for projects they range from free for projects they

Fist of the Mountains, Dawn's Hounds of Glory, The League's Wolves of War, The Marches' Bounders, Navarr's The Quiet Step and the Imperial Orcs' Summer Storm – all told 35,000 fighting humans and orcs.

Wintermark and Jotun permitted the honourable treatment of the dead on both sides. Navarr desecrated fallen Jotun and the barbarians responded by killing 100 civilians in the town of Briante. The Jotun aided by the Summer Eternal Cathan Canae continue to resist in the Damatian hills.

The Citadel Guard – Urizen's only army – have entered Tamarbode in Reikos, Highguard, which was claimed by the Spring eternal Llofir after it used its magic powers to overthrow the Grendel in the territory. The Imperial force met only light resistance from spores and animated plants. The army now approaches the region of Tamarbode which Llofir has claimed as its own.

support, to matching Imperial bourse seat value. If they do not provide savings to the Imperial budget of at least 10 Thrones per season, they damage the Prosperity of the Empire owing to upkeep costs. Street value is the average of sales prices for the previous season for purchase by citizens on the open market. This does not consider prices paid by the Senate which maintains the Bourse, nor does it consider deals made for funding at more, or less, reasonable rates.

Ilium historically always has a very low sales value to the populace as large quantities are required for personal projects and only so much is available each season. Ilium bourse seats are always purchased at a loss as they are either matters of pride or the premium is to ensure that the large quantities of Ilium are available for projects.

Best foreign Port: Riggia (Eastern Principalities of Jarm) amberbelt, dragonbone, green iron, imperial roseweald, mana crystals with improvements to your trade methods it outstrips its rivals.

Vezak (Southern Jarm) amberbelt, dragonbone, mana crystal. Not as good as Riggia but recommended if you need mana crystals and have only just started trading, but it falls behind if you have improvements.

More than 30,000 Jotun assaulted and captured the town of Overton in Mournwold, the Marches and its castle, Orchard's Watch. The defenders – 20,000 in all – included The Marches' armies the Drakes, Strong Reeds and Tusks, as well as the Imperial Orc's Winter Sun and Highguard's Granite Pillar. The whole of Mournwold is now under Jotun dominion.

The first Imperial navy in more than 200 years, the Freeborn Storm of Brass Coast, was defeated and badly damaged by a much larger Grendel fleet off Rebekah's Leap in Redoubt, Urizen. The Brass Coast fleet was beaten despite being supported by more than 40 independent captains.

## MILITARY THOUGHT



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Tancred de Rondell, general of Dawnish army the Hounds of Glory explains the strategy behind the movements of the Empire's armies.

Imperial armies can hold on one main front while attacking on another. In specific circumstances and with our new armies it is even possible to attack in multiple areas but some sacrifices still need to be made. The choice between ambition and protecting imperial lives remains at the forefront of the mind of an imperial general.

Finally in the Barrens and on the Eastern front the main development has been the orcs of the Forest of Peytaht being given refuge by the Navarr. This should speed along the collapse of the remaining armies despite only two armies now being committed on that front.

### COMMITMENT

The looming threat of the return of the Druj though is likely not to be too far away. With the depth of commitment in the west and risk from the South it will be a near

impossible balancing act for the military if this does happen before significant progress can be made elsewhere.

### DIPLOMACY

For this all eyes really are turned to those who manage Imperial diplomacy as for them to continue to precipitate conflict and refuse to compromise will leave us fighting un-winnable wars.

ders that the Grendel will be falling back. This will give the armies stationed there a chance to recover some of their losses ahead of the campaign season between Autumn and Winter.

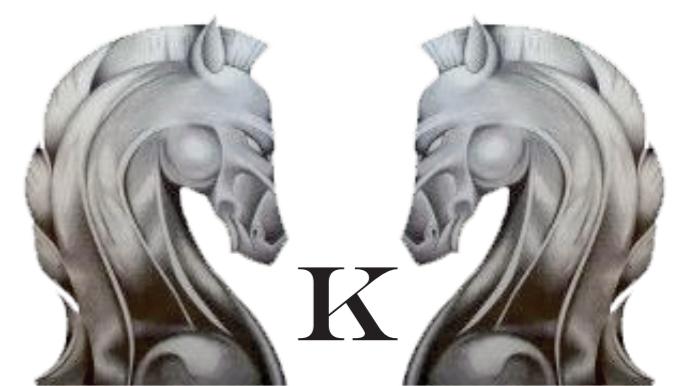
Meanwhile efforts are being made to prevent the Grendel from suddenly looting another city as they did with League city Sarvos.

Armies requiring resupply have been mostly positioned along the south coast to ensure that there is resistance wherever Grendel might try to land.

## GRENDEL

Against the Grendel we have been fighting more aggressively in Spirral, Urizen, with the primary aim being to liberate Ossuary and with it the Legacy and the necessary proportion of the territory to return it to Imperial control.

As this was achieved through heroic action through the Gate, the armies there were set up to defend with the expectation based on intercepted or-



K

KRAFTINAR

The Kraftinar family invites you to  
Wintermark's premier pub

THE  
ARTISAN'S  
ARMS

Enjoy hot food, excellent ales, spirits and cocktails in a warm and friendly atmosphere

## IMPERIAL ORCS AND PROUD

All my people take Pride in the name they were gifted by Emperor Ahraz. We are the Imperial Orcs and we will always be the Imperial Orcs. More than any nation we put what is best for the Empire first. Our Loyalty is undoubted. We are loyal to the core! We are proud to be Imperial Orcs!

### LOYAL

It is for this reason that the Throne knows we can be trusted, even if some disagree with our methods. It is no surprise that the Empress sees the benefits of her most loyal, her most fierce fighters.

### SLAVES ONCE

Lisbeth asked me if would we take other orcs into our nation, I said that it is unlikely now. We have welcomed some of the Shattered Sun but like us they were slaves once. We are the same, except that the Shattered Sun did not take Emperor Ahraz's offer to join the Empire at the time of the orc-slave rebellion.



Bloodcrow Ergot

Woodcut copied from an original by Paul Baker

## LACKLUSTRE

We have a saying in the Imperial Orcs, "Everything must be fought for." Why? Because if it is not the bearers are not up to task.

This is very much the case for Imperial Consul Aureliana Perpetua Nicasia Saverio di Sarvos who won

her position as the diplomatic voice of the Empire at the Summer festival 380 YE.

### FEARS

The visit of the Grendel delegation confirmed my fears. While I have nothing against the human in question she does not have what it takes. The Imperial Consul didn't even try to haggle to save throwing 250 Thrones away to the Salt Lords. No doubt they still laughing their heads off at that joke.

### INSULT

We didn't even get a one Throne discount for beer money? This is not the person to present a firm lead for trade treaties that will see slavery banned and the Empire Prosper. This Grendel insult has gone over the heads of a state that has already forgotten the many lives lost in Dawnguard.

To defeat the Grendel we should not be giving them money. We should be taking their money. Stormerrow Rorks said that war in the barrens could prove expensive for the Salt Lords, if we raided their vulnerable supply lines until they ran out of money. Instead we have given them the time and money they need. Something has to change.



following sentence, "The Senate will assume responsibility for relations with other nations", insert the following, "ensuring that prosperity is not at freedom's cost (gb)." (gb) Prosperity is in context defined as Imperial trade with foreign nations and freedom is the guarantee to the people of trade partner nations that they not be subjected to slavery.

### CHANGE

I will seek the signature of the Throne, of senators and cardinals and all who will show support for this constitutional change.

I call on all that seek to put an end to slavery and an end to the Empire's complicity in denying others the chance to follow virtue.

What can you do? Talk to your senators, your generals, cardinals and priests make your voice heard and it will bring the change that is has been sorely needed.

### SLAVERY

In the second half of my proclamation to the senate I spoke about slavery and trade, "My people are already disenfranchised. But when

## ROADMAP FOR FREEDOM

At this summit I addressed the Senate and said, "This is the first time I have used my power of address to the Senate as I believe in brevity in this house, but it should not be at the cost of the process of state. Allowing an ill-conceived law of annihilation to pass without full debate."

Ironically the motion by Escalados de Carsenere, Senator of Semmerholm, Dawn failed scrutiny. Stern, League Senator for Holberg, who seconded the motion apologised after my announcement. He said, "I am a new senator and I didn't fully understand." Wisdom teaches we can't know all. He added, "I'm very embarrassed."

### SOULS

The motion stated that it should be illegal to destroy 'human' souls and it seems to be based on the ramblings of Isaac di Sarvos in his statement of principle (Winter

this Empire uses proxy slavery which is no different to slavery; this is an insult to my people and our history. That is why I have written this Final Motion that will transform the constitution so that all trading with slavers is banned. I will be receiving signatures of support from senators, cardinals and the like."

The Empire is still being built by slaves. This must be an uncomfortable truth to those humans that already bear an unvirtuous scar upon their souls for their part in slavery in past lives.

### TRADE REFORMATION

This motion will make an amendment to the Constitution in the Senate Section. At the end of the

## COLD COMPROMISE



An interview with Thane Tobrytan Dun of Dunearth

Wintermark has been exposed as suffering from a dearth of bold leadership after the Thanes' Council was branded a "shambles" by an anonymous source.

Thanes' Council meetings - theoretically the powerhouse of the Empire's largest and most powerful nation - were described as "The humble leading the brave." To find out more *The Oathwright's* Editor-in-chief, Cormack Dun, spoke to Thane Tobrytan of Dunearth hall.

*The Thane's Council has come in for criticism lately. Has that always been the case?*

Tobrytan: No, we must remember the proud landmark decision the council made to surrender Skarsind. In a symbol of supreme sacrifice after hours of debate the council decided to give the territory of Skarskind to the Imperial Orcs in recognition for their sacrifices for the Empire.

As the Empire's strongest military power Wintermarkers are used to dying for our fellow citizens so it was natural for us to make this sacrifice.

*That battle was a victory but it was followed by more raiding by the Jotun, wasn't it?*

Tobrytan: Yes, two halls took the field and the others followed as we

had agreed. We won but the Jotun hate us more than ever and more importantly don't trust us not to break treaties.

"...the council is down on one knee."

In Spring 380YE, the Thanes' Council again heard that there was still no action. There was no statement made to the Senate, no process of any kind. A sense of inaction, apathy, lethargy seized the council and led to a further breaking of the nation's Skein.

*Are there other examples of the Thanes' council taking such selfless decisions?*

Tobrytan: In Autumn 379YE, The Military Council at the behest of the Senate decided to make a sneak attack against a Jotun fort in violation of an Imperial treaty. They dressed this up as a 'raid' which was allowed by the treaty.

There was a collective feeling in the Mark that this was a breaking of our word, hence our skein - the destiny that each Wintermarker makes for themselves - and a violation of the virtue of Loyalty to our word.

The majority of thanes agreed that to take the field and break the treaty would shatter our skein and our virtue.

In a token of our own worth of Loyalty, a decision was made that if any Halls of Wintermark took the field then all should go. But - and this was voted by unanimous decision - if we took the field this time then the Senate, the Military Council and the Empire as a whole should know our anger. Many Halls also swore they would never again fight as oathbreakers.

*As the Empire's strongest military power Wintermarkers are used to dying for our fellow citizens so it was natural for us to make this sacrifice. The thanes felt it was the loyal thing to do and that is was in our Pride to make such a decision.*

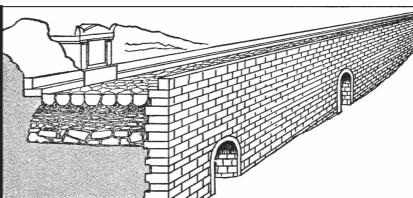
The Raising of the Wintermarks third army has proven fortuitous and may be the elixir that remedies Skarsind's ills and could be a face saving exit for Thulebane.

What has the Thanes' Council done?

Tobrytan: Dogri Thulebane's rebellion against the will of Wintermark shames us all. He said that the Imperial Orcs are no better than Thule. When he refused to meet the Thanes' Council at the Anvil Witan he said it was because he thought his life would be in danger in Anvil - a grievous insult to the hospitality of all the Halls of Wintermark.

Dogri said that only folk of Skarskind had a say in its fate which is spitting on the memory of those of Hahnmark, Kallevesi, Semersuqa who died for its recapture in two hard years of bloody war. He has rejected all offers of negotiation and plans to dig in further and only communicates on his own land or through messengers. In recent council I called him out for his unvirtuous actions and named him a coward.

But there is one thing I must respect about Dogri and that is that he is clearly uncompromising as a Wintermarker should be. But the council is down on one knee and offering him everything to leave. Once again, the cold is compromising.



funds for future phases to connect other territories and the remaining nations. All who help, whether by sponsoring a milestone or naming a road, will be recorded on the Pillar of Benefactors.

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