

Notes from Runelore

Genesis

The adventurers arrived in the village of Vasaria in the region know as Shykia in the Shadowlands. They were welcomed by Hollow, the wild were, the leader of the Gypsy clan, Moon Raiser, of the Shadowlands. Hollow told the adventurers one of her clan mates, a courier, had been captured by Orcs and she wanted the team to rescue him. Many courageous adventurers answered the call braving a trap-filled corridor, a shaky ledge and a trapped cell to break Hollow's courier out of his prison. They were to find out he was a petrified were-rat. Carrying the stoned body out, the adventurers were ambushed and attacked by a small group of Orcs but managed to fight their way clear and return the poor rat.

Once the adventurers returned they found Hollow had been joined by a young lady named TwilightNight and her guardian, TrueLies, Navarro of the Brightlands. Additionally there was a vampire lord and lady present, named Octultis and Lady Kervein of the Darklands. Apparently these two groups, Brightlanders and Darklanders had just emerged from a war. They both claimed to be the injured party in the war and were looking to sway people to their side. For some reason, even though the insults flew fast and furious, they never came to blows in the land run by the gypsies.

Late in the day a messenger arrived looking for Princess BrightMoon. It turned out TwilightNight was actually a princess in disguise. This messenger claimed his family had been slaughtered by a vampire. His sister, DesertRain was missing. The Darklanders protested their innocence and hired adventurers to prove it. Princess BrightMoon hired her own adventurers to find out what had happened and to rescue the girl. While this was happening the young messenger ran off to find his sister on his own. Many of the adventurers hired by the Darklanders gave chase while one quick-thinking mage working for the Brightlanders placed a magical tracer on him.

As the two groups followed the trail they came across a camp of Orcs. There was a great battle and the Orcs were slain and much treasure was gathered. The trail continued on until the adventurers came across an even larger group of Orcs, lead by a male and female shaman who had captured the girl DesertRain. There was a fierce battle including many great magics wrought that day, but finally the adventurers triumphed.

While the adventurers were looting the bodies they noticed another vampire showed up. He grabbed the missing girl; they embraced passionately and then ran off together. Neither the Brightlanders nor the Darklanders would comment on this act.

Story to be continued....

As told by *Moeris of the order of the Open Claw.*

Rise of the Necromancer

Once again the adventurers traveled to Runelore, this time braving the Darklands themselves. I traveled with them in spirit to observe. I was greatly tempted to intervene this time, but my charge will not let me. I can only watch, cheer and sometimes cry.

The Baron Deathknell, a powerful knight of the Darklanders staged a tournament to determine the best of the best. Staged was too true of a word; it was all a sham to lure the powerful to his lands so he could slay them in a ritual designed to bring back the Balen, the Necromancer himself. The Baron believed he was slighted when he was not chosen to be one of the five rulers of the Darklands. I believe he thought he could cut a deal with the Necromancer to be his chief lieutenant, but it all turned out terribly wrong.

The adventurers arrived after hearing many rumors on their travels. They found the guards to be surly, rude and very unfair in the judging. The Baron himself appeared to be friendly but it was quickly noted his personality was much darker.

In addition to the Baron and his guards there was a young lady that commanded a great deal of respect from the Baron's guards, Sevin was her name. Sevin ran a magic shop and sold items to the adventurers. Most of the items were cursed, but once again I could not tell this to the adventurers --- only watch. The curious part about this was Sevin commanded an Earth Elemental that stood guard. Knights should not be able to do that, but she radiates more power than a knight should.

After a few rounds of the tournament I saw Sevin giving commands to the elemental. The elemental then went out into the area with the adventurers and proceeded to attack them! None of the adventurers noticed Sevin's actions, or that the guards did not fight, only stood around the Baron. Eventually the elemental was slain and the Baron apologized, but he did not seem sincere. The Baron promised not to summon another guard for the shop. I wonder if he really believed he did the summoning or if it was Sevin all along.

Once the tournament was concluded the Baron gathered all of the combatants together. I noticed all of the guards formed a ring around everyone there and loosened their weapons, but no one else did. When the Baron opened the chest the guards moved to complete the ritual and slay the adventurers, but they were stopped.

Out of the chest flowed a smoky creature that formed into a man-like shape. This wraith called itself Dewlinis and froze everyone in their spots, even me! Dewlinis went on to explain the Baron's plot and claim he alone had stopped the Necromancer. Dewlinis claimed he was blocking his return, for the moment. I did not miss that threat! Dewlinis turned to the Baron and claimed he had a use for him and teleported the Baron and himself away. Once the spell was broken the adventurers turned on the guards and slew them for their perfidy.

After all of the guards had been slain the master of ceremonies, a cleric by the name of Nicolin Black, made sure the treasure the Baron promised was handed out fairly and the winners were paid.

This ends the my tale for the moment,
As told by *Moeris of the order of the Open Claw*.

We've Only Just Begun

How could a day of such promise end so badly?

It was to be a day of joy and happiness, when the Darklanders and the Brightlanders could finally set aside their differences. A lady of the Brightlands, DesertRain by name, was going to marry a Darklander--- Noctis Amore. Hollow had granted them sanctuary in her lands and was going to throw a wedding where all were invited and none would take action against their enemies. I saw Hollow's heart and intentions were pure and I prayed the day would bear fruit for all, but alas, Balen the Necromancer reared his head once again, only this time through his daughter, as I shall explain.

The day started innocently enough with Hollow greeting everyone. The guests proved themselves with some great and some not so great bardic skills in praising the young couple and all got along well. Princess Brightmoon of the Brightlands showed up with Lady Kervein of the Darklands and together they presented a wonderful cake to the new couple so everything looked to be in fine shape. Fritz the Dove, a cleric of Shaelaryn and one of Hollow's shifters, came to officiate the ceremony and to marry the young couple.

While the prizes for the day's bardic events were being given out, Fritz took the young couple aside to advise them on what marriage and living in the clan of shifters would entail. *That was when disaster struck.* While the adventurers were gathered together Sevin crept up the Cleric and slew him. The vampire tried his best to protect his young bride but she would not allow him to enter danger alone and alas they too were slain. DesertRain uttered such a cry of despair when her love was cut down it drew the adventurers outside. They were just in time to see Sevin raise the wedding party as undead.

Then a most curious thing happened. Instead of just attacking, Sevin threatened the adventurers. She claimed they had helped in the slaying of her father and she promised they would all die, starting with the clerics of the land first.

Could Sevin be a long lost child of the Necromancer Balen? Could the reason she attended the Baron's tournament be to raise her father? That could possibly explain her abilities and why she was not only capable of raising the dead, but able to summon a water elemental to attack the adventurers at the wedding. It would also explain the earth elemental at the tournament, but how could a lich father a child? It is not possible, but I digress. My charge is to report, not interfere or surmise.

After Sevin made her speech, the undead wedding party attacked the adventurers, seeking out clerics first. A water elemental rose and sought out any magic using types. Eventually the wedding guests prevailed and the wedding party was restored to life. The wedding was hastily concluded and I would like to say everyone lived happily ever after, but Sevin escaped again and I fear for this land. If she is truly somehow a child of Balen it bodes ill for all.---- *As told by Moeris of the order of the Open Claw.*

Shadow of the Witch

Is it good or bad that Sevin has fled our lands? Only time will tell, but I must tell how it happened.

Hollow called for a group of adventurers to aid her. The clerics and fortune tellers were missing or dying and the Lycans needed help. Many adventurers gathered to hear Hollow tell them about the plight and she also told them a prophecy issued by the two sisters of the Lycans. After hearing the prophecy the adventurers left to find the two sisters only to find out Sevin had arrived before them. The guard dog slain, a house in ruins, a final message left upon a table and a set of fleeing prints were all they found. The message showed a woman of great power bringing about great change, obviously a reference to Sevin. Moving quickly the group followed the tracks to a deep gorge with no way across.

Quickly stringing ropes the group attempted to cross the ravine only to be interrupted by Sevin who was also in pursuit of the fleeing women. Sevin accosted the group only to leave hurriedly to try and catch the fortune tellers. As she was leaving, the adventurers noticed a necklace that fell from her. Picking up the necklace the group found two names on it, 'Kaelin' and 'Balén'. When the adventurers tried to decipher the magic on it they felt a presence, female and somewhat divine, touch them and it left a scroll behind. Reading the scroll the adventures found this prophecy:

The Prophecy of Kailein Child of Light, Child of Darkness

A child from the womb of a paladin good
whose home was the warm plane of fire.
An evil-bent man who a lich would become
bound a girl and become the child's sire.

In stasis she stayed for nine months and one day
never to see her daughter's young form.
And wasted away to die on that day
as the child breathed it's first breath and was born.

Kailein the mother's name sake, a paladin's path she was to take.
Born seventh of the seventh, twisted was her fate.
An innocent soul caught in his web, Balén sang with glee
evil songs to bind his intellect and from death he would be free.

An evil lich grinned 'I've a plan! Let it begin!'
and hid a part of his soul in the child.
In total immortality he took one last step to a perverse immortality.
Dark rituals stole her innocence, chained her will for evil was to be.

Blinded by a dark taint the world she would feint
and become one with her father's dark wiles.
A knight's soul lost in shadows in the form of an evil dark witch
The world will know only as Sevin that which hides Balen the lich.

But as innocence goes there's a soul of fresh snow
trapped by a an evil shadow as dark as black night.
Free the soul, free the lie, lift the shadow, touch the sky.
A father's curse keeps the truth from her sight.

The mother's soul the child received, but the lich's plan deceived.
Now the world does not know of the soul made of gold
that is trapped just beneath the foe's stranglehold.
Expose the lie, the shadow must die!

As the evil recedes, her soul shall be freed.
Where darkness controlled, now light will lead
and the paladin lost whose soul weathered the cost
will be found in a girl-child redeemed.:

This prophecy seems to indicate Sevin may be more and less than she seems. The adventurers followed Sevin only to come across an angry Wyvern. The wyvern demanded the return of its book that was stolen by Sevin. This book is a magical tome on how to create portals. The wyvern makes more and more demands the group could not in good conscience meet and because of the beast's actions they were finally forced to kill it.

Once more following the tracks the adventurers come upon a dying cleric of the lycans. This cleric tried to stop Sevin but was hurt badly. The adventurers rescued the cleric and traveled on, following Sevin. In front of them they saw an old temple Sevin was heading for but before they could reach it several undead rose from the ground and attack the brave adventurers. After slaying these foul creatures the group managed to open the locked and trapped door to the temple.

Inside the temple the adventurers managed to defeat several traps and more undead. They also crossed a corridor of mud that was inhabited by a mud elemental. As they traversed this corridor the adventurers heard chanting ahead as Sevin attempted to open a portal and then they heard a scream as the two fortune tellers perished by Sevin's hand.

Rushing into the final room the adventurers confronted Sevin who stood before an open portal. Saying a few parting words Sevin summoned an elemental of Ice and one of Fire to delay the brave adventures as she stepped through the portal. Once the adventures defeated these creatures they followed Sevin into the portal.

I have lost sight of these brave adventures now; they have passed beyond my sight. But if they are beyond my sight mayhap I will be beyond those who watch even me if I follow.

Maybe it's time I broke the rules and took an active hand in events! I leave for the portal

As told by Moeris of the order of the Open Claw.