

Scarlet's Journal

ISSUE 11

LIVING STORY SEASON 1 | SCARLET'S ALLIANCES | WHAT SCARLET REALLY SAW



Welcome to Issue 11

Editor's Letter

Over the past year, we've traveled from Ascalon and the Shiverpeaks to Lion's Arch and Divinity's Reach, took a detour to Caledon Forest and Kessex Hills and returned to Lion's Arch, all because of the sylvari Ceara, otherwise known as Scarlet Briar.

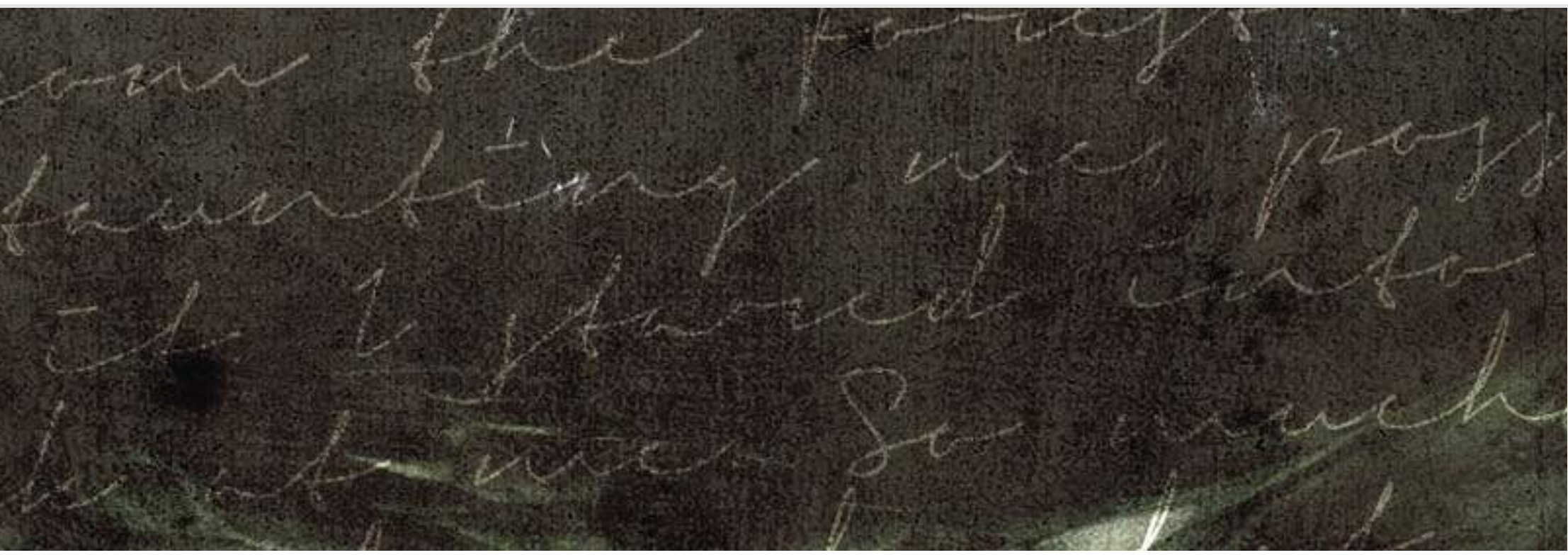
In this issue, we'll look at what Scarlet really saw, offer you an extensive recap of the Living Story Season 1, take a look at what we know of the various alliances Scarlet created and see what became of the once bustling townshaven of Lion's Arch. As an added bonus, we've prepared a fanfiction piece for you, as well as a look at what possible alliances we might've ended up with if things would've gone different. To round things off, we also managed to get some lingering questions regarding the first season of the Living Story answered.

This issue is dedicated to the first season of the Living Story and tries to uncover the truth behind Scarlet's rampage and help you catch up, just in time before Season 2 kicks off.

Ollannach - Project Lead

In This Issue...

- What Scarlet Really Saw
  - Scarlet saw an entity while she was in Omadd's machine, but what did she really see? *[Lore]*
- Field Report on Scarlet Briar, Her Labs and Technologies
  - Scarlet has had many labs across Tyria, Miko Riel takes a look at each of them. *[Report]*
- Season One Summary: The Major Characters
  - Plagiarised gives a short summary of the major characters that we've come across during Living Story Season 1. *[Recap]*
- Season One Summary: Scarlet's Story
  - Plagiarised gives a comprehensive recap of the past year's events in which we saw the rise, and fall of Scarlet Briar. *[Recap]*
- Season One Lore Interview
  - Angel McCoy and Scott McGough answer Season 1's lingering questions and talk about Scarlet, the karka and more! *[Interview]*
- Fire from the Ground: The Molten Alliance
  - The Dredge and the Fire Legion: what did the silver-tongued person from the city promise these people and how did they end up fighting together? *[Lore]*
- Lightning Strikes: The Rise of the Aetherblades
  - The Aetherblades, a group of pirates combined with Inquest magitech. Archaes8 looks into their story. *[Lore]*
- Scarlet's Twisted Watchwork and Holomancy
  - Konig explores Scarlet's reverse-engineered inventions and their impact across Tyria. *[Lore]*
- Towering Nightmares: The Toxic Alliance
  - How did Scarlet manage to get the Nightmare Court to work together with the krait? Konig explores. *[Lore]*
- Lion's Arch: Before and After
  - Once a town bustling with trade, now its remains are the scars of Scarlet's quest. We take a look at the damage that has been dealt. *[Lore]*
- Alliance Forming 101
  - Seemingly opposite races, combined together. Scarlet managed to get them together and had plans for more alliances; Darryshan delves into them and suggests some more. *[Comedy]*
- Madness
  - A fanfiction by Chase I, in which he empathetically portrays how it felt to be on the other side of the story during the attack on Lion's Arch. *[Fiction]*
- The Back Pages
  - The last tidbits and a chance for you to get involved in the next issue!





What Scarlet Really Saw

Written by Tauz & Chase I

Waking from the Dream

When all sylvari awaken from the Dream of Dreams, they are already filled with knowledge. This knowledge is gained during their pre-life Dream, which sometimes results in certain sylvari following a Wyld Hunt - a strange calling that makes one feel compelled to do ‘something’, whether that be fighting the Elder Dragons or simply aiding a village.



However, Ceara was different. When Ceara emerged from the Dream, she was fascinated with the interlocking systems of nature. This seems like a fitting start for sylvari, though this wasn’t the only fascination of Ceara. She had a determination to forge her own path, independent from the Mother Tree. The ideas of following a path forged by someone else felt wrong to Ceara. Even if this may be a worrying awakening, no aura of evil intent was given off by this sylvari, just independence and confidence.

Trekking Tyria

Ceara studied for eight years at The Grove, learning the basics in life. Unfortunately, this was not enough for her. This sylvari craved for knowledge, in much more depth than what her race could provide. So, Ceara went to seek wisdom elsewhere. Her first stop: the norn named Beigarth, a legendary smith who knew how to craft Deldrimor Steel - a metal that dwarves used to cast (before they died out). It is said that smiths that are able to use this metal are highly skilled, hence Ceara’s reason for meeting Beigarth. Ceara wanted to understand metal, so, where else better to learn than through the experience of an epic smith? After spending a winter understanding metal, Ceara moved onto studying weaponry and demolitions. The one to teach her was the charr Asagai, an expert sniper and demolitionist of the Iron Legion. Upon Ceara’s exit, Asagai cursed her and threatened to gut her. This left things uneasy between the two.

The three great colleges of Dynamics, Statics and Synergetics greatly interested Ceara, so she travelled to Rata Sum. Although the Dynamics and Statics colleges were easy for Ceara, she seemed to struggle finishing Synergetics at such a fast pace. It was the subject that most interested her, thus immersing her deeper and deeper the more she delved into her studies. Due to this, she quit college and went seeking knowledge from the Inquest regarding this. Although she sought the knowledge that she thirsted for, things didn’t go quite as planned. Ceara’s asura friend, Teyo, snuck into the Inquest archives. When Teyo was caught, she teleported away and left Ceara behind. This resulted in the wise sylvari being removed from Rata Sum, receiving no qualifications regarding her work. Strangely, this didn’t seem to bother her.



One of Ceara’s last interests was alchemy, which she discovered by visiting the Hylek. Although she was interested in this subject, it bored her. She felt that everything she was doing could have been achieved during her time at The Grove. So, the alchemy wasn’t as fulfilling as Ceara had imagined.

This is when Professor Omadd, Headmaster Emeritus of the College of Synergetics, found Ceara. Her mentor offered the chance to explore the Eternal Alchemy. She agreed.

The Eternal Alchemy

After months of preparation, Omadd had finally finished setting up the experiment for Ceara to enter the Eternal Alchemy. For this to be completed, Ceara would have to enter the isolation module that was prepared for her. The way Omadd thought this to be possible was by shutting down the mind’s security system,

opening it to the truths of the Eternal Alchemy.

Once inside the chamber, Ceara saw what she believed to be the Eternal Alchemy. She saw Tyria, the Mists, the sylvari, the Nightmare Court and more. Upon delving deeper into the vision that Ceara saw, she heard a voice. It was the voice of the Pale Tree, begging her to not go any further. The Pale Tree displayed itself to Ceara, being strangled by a dusty-red, barbed briar portraying the betrayal of Ceara's actions towards the Pale Tree. Without hesitation, she traversed deeper into the Alchemy. It is unclear what Ceara saw beyond this point. There is one thing for certain though, whatever she saw as she gazed across the vast opening stared back at her. Whether this being is part of her imagination, or a real entity is unknown, but may have some influence towards her actions from here on out.

Emerging from the Alchemy, Ceara was gone. The sylvari that had awakened there was Scarlet Briar, derived from her visions of the red vines constricting the Mother Tree. She proclaimed, "Empires will fall, continents will burn, and when the conflagration is over, I'll be there to put my stamp on whatever new world this one becomes." Whatever it was that Ceara saw inside the Eternal Alchemy had completely destroyed her, driving her new incarnation insane. Omadd, her mentor, was the first to witness her rebirth; Scarlet strangled him to death with thorned vines that sprouted from her body.

Flame and Frost

Although Scarlet has yet to make her first appearance in this patch, she is still mentioned. Also, her involvement with the Molten Alliance is made clear later on in the living story. Using her persuasive skills, she was able to get both a faction of the Flame Legion and a faction of the dredge to join forces and work for her.

She told the Flame Legion that the dredge were ready to make weapons so that they could mutually benefit from each other; Scarlet later approached the dredge with the same story. The result was weapons that were part magic (from the Flame Legion) and part sonic (from the dredge). Later on, the technology evolved into the probes that are scattered around Tyria. The Molten Alliance gained new weapons, and Scarlet gained her new sonic technology.

Scarlet is mentioned when the player finishes the dungeon of Flame and Frost: Retribution, by a dredge locked in a cell:

> *"Yeah, the flaming cow pies and their fast-talking friend [Scarlet] from the city. Never again! Lying silver-tongued, snake-nosed trickster! Never again."*

Sky Pirates of Tyria

Not much is known about the origin of the Aetherblades. What we do know is that Scarlet used her influence with the Inquest to make an airship based on the pact model, and began to work with pirates.

Scarlet then arranged for the murder of Theo Ashford so that Mai Trin could get a seat on the council. Had her plan been successful, then Scarlet would have had a political advantage in the city. Little did anyone know, even Scarlet, that there was a leyline located underneath the city and she would have to destroy Lion's Arch regardless.

Furthermore, during Sky Pirates of Tyria, Mai Trin herself mentions Scarlet in a cutscene:

> *"This has all gone to crud. Scarlet's gonna have my noggin for screwing up."*

Queen's Jubilee

During the Queen's Jubilee, Queen Jennah created a small army of constructs based on the steam creatures that can be found mostly in Lornar's Pass. Upon discovering this, Scarlet found a way to twist them under her control. This was also when Scarlet made her first appearance in the living Story.



After a failed attempt at kidnapping the queen, she locked herself up in the pavilion. She was able to kidnap Lord Faren as well as a few other emissaries, however. In this patch we were also introduced with the constant invasions from Scarlet's minions throughout Tyria; Scarlet was coordinating them from inside the safety of the pavilion.

We also learned of the link between the Aetherblades and Molten Alliance, since we see them fighting alongside each other. After heading into the pavilion to stop Scarlet, Braham and Rox helped free the hostages and stop Scarlet. She reveals, however, that she was toying with everyone and disappears for several months.

Twilight Assault / Tower of Nightmares

Not much is known about how exactly Scarlet was able to get the Nightmare Court to work for her, however we learn that she was using Twilight Arbor as a personal lab and to produce airships. Caithe and the Lionguard joined forces to stop her, and in the process we learned that Scarlet knows secrets about Caithe that even Faolain doesn't know.

After the Blood and Madness patch, we were introduced to the Tower of Nightmares. Here we saw that Scarlet was able to gain the favor of the krait and have them make an alliance with the Nightmare Court, creating the Toxic Alliance. Scarlet was somehow able to obtain some krait obelisks and with them, she was able to lead the krait into believing that she could bring back their prophet.



A large tower appeared in the middle of Kessex Hills, one that the Nightmare Court grew and with the help of the krait, they defended it while the Seraph guard, Priory, and Vigil worked on bringing it down. The Tower of Nightmares had introduced a toxin that Scarlet had created; this toxin was spread across Kessex Hills as well as fused into the bodies of krait. While the attack on the tower was taking place, Scarlet was working on making the toxin stronger and on the “prophet” of the krait. At the beginning the toxin was only able to create illusions and make people sick, however, once Marjory created the antitoxin, Scarlet used it to evolve the toxin into what we now know as the miasma.

Once the top of the tower was breached and the “prophet” was disposed of (which later turned out to be a krait mutated with the toxin), Scarlet escaped the tower and allowed the self destruct mechanism she had installed do the rest of the work.

Fractured! / Origins of Madness / Edge of the Mists

As we are given access to the new fractal of the Taumanova Reactor, we discover that Scarlet was working with the Inquest in order to find the leylines of dragon energy that were located underneath Tyria. We see that during the Christmas patch, a large amount of probes were placed all over Tyria, their purpose was to find an area where many leylines were intersecting. Evidently, that location was Lion’s Arch.

Now that Scarlet knew where to strike she just needed the right weapons. In the Origins of Madness we see Scarlet descending over Lornar’s Pass, with the giant marionette everyone is familiar with. Her goal here was to test out her cannon, which she later uses during the final fight. It is speculated however, that the giant marionette’s purpose was a test to make the Assault Knights.

Finally in Edge of the Mists, we see that Mai Trin escapes from Lion’s Arch and gathers her troops in the Edge of the Mists, preparing for the final battle.

Escape from Lion’s Arch / Battle for Lion’s Arch

Scarlet finally commences her assault from her airship known as the The Breachmaker and she rallies her troops and begins bombarding Lion’s Arch. While she clears out the city with her new miasma, her army begins to act as cannon fodder so her airship has sufficient time to drill into the city. Despite her efforts however, the heroes of Tyria were able to evacuate the city and begin their counter attack.

Moving forward with their offensive, The Breachmaker was successfully infiltrated. Scarlet was left to defend her airship as best as she could, however she was quickly overwhelmed and retreated to the control room of the drill. After one final battle Scarlet was finally defeated, and Lion’s Arch was safe once again, but it was too late. Scarlet had bought enough time for her drill, and she was able to breach through the leyline.The dragon energies were then disrupted and something was awakened.

Was Scarlet Really ‘Evil’?

Although Scarlet may have been seen as a villain by the majority of people, is it certain that she was truly ‘evil’? Sure, she had antagonised Tyria over the past year, but what was her reasoning for doing so? Thus far, nobody knows.

We do know that when she emerged from the Dream of Dreams, she was not at all evil, she just wanted to create her own path and not have it dictated to her by the Pale Tree. But, this could have all changed when entering the Eternal Alchemy. Although we don’t know for sure what Scarlet really saw inside that place, we were told that something was staring back at her. What could have this ‘something’ been?

Scarlet Briar’s Journal also seems to be relevant regarding this information:

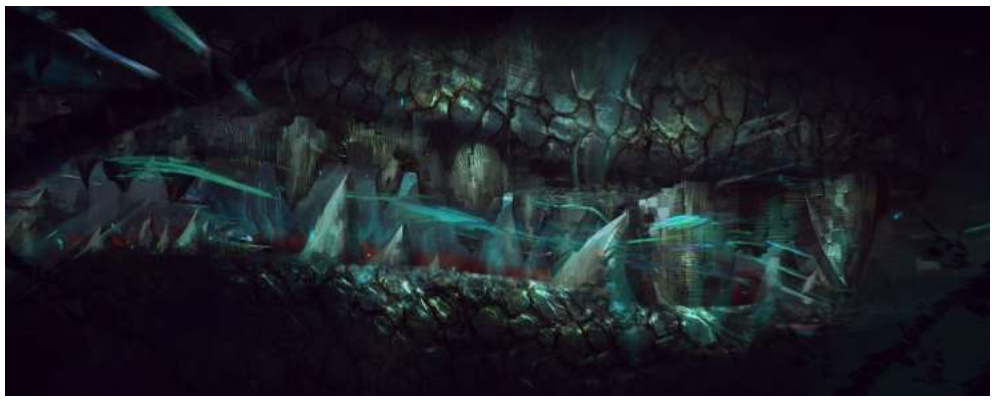
> *"I wake from nightmares—screaming, confused, and scared. It's getting wOrse. I've decided to talk to a mender. I've probably just been working too hard.*
> *Every night, the same terrors. It never changes. The mender was unable to help Me, and I feel like I'm losing control of myself.*
> *When the nightmare starts, an entity calls to me. I run—run into a sea of dArkness. But no matter how hard I try to escape, it keeps calling me.*
> *I'm trying not to sleep—too scareD to even close my eyes... So scared. Whispers come from the forest all night long, calling me, taunting me, possessing me.*
> *Tonight, I saw it. I stared into the abyss, anD it stared back at me. So much power. I don't know what's real and what isn't anymore.*
> *Control of my world, of myself, is slipping through my hands. And yet, I'm no longer scared.*
> *It communicated with me through images of death, destruction, and destiny. I must know more. I must confront it and put an end to this madness."*

After reading this, it almost made me feel sorry for Scarlet. If she had been going through this day in, day out, then it’s no wonder that her actions were a bit insane. The journal also adds to our knowledge about what she saw inside the Eternal Alchemy. The entity that she saw had ‘so much power’, which further suggests that it is an Elder Dragon, or a being of equal strength. Whatever it is, it had led Scarlet to the point of wanting to see it face to face. This can be viewed in various ways. Is it simply Scarlet’s curiosity that made her want to confront this being, or was the being manipulating Scarlet in order for it to be awakened?

All of this seemed a mystery, until one accessed the Marionette Control Panel during The Battle For Lion’s Arch Living World event. It read:

> *"It seems Scarlet wanted to disrupt the flow of magic. This is what captured the attention of the dragon we heard. Her goal, all along... was the dragon."*

This pretty much proved that the entity she saw was an Elder Dragon, but which one? Well, the cutscene after Scarlet’s death showed this Dragon being awakened:



This is the Elder Jungle Dragon, Mordremoth. This is the entity that Scarlet saw in the Eternal Alchemy, in her nightmares, the one that she wanted to confront. Knowing that this dragon manipulated Scarlet, it really does take a lot of the blame off her. She was just the face behind all the destruction caused, but the one commanding her, was in fact, Mordremoth. Of course Scarlet is to blame for some part of it, considering she chose to follow Omadd's experiment and enter the Eternal Alchemy. Should she have not gone through with that, would things have been different?





Field Report on Scarlet Briar, Her Labs and Technologies

Written by Miko Riel

[Field Report on Scarlet Briar, Her Labs and Technologies]
by Caitlin Donagh, Order of Whispers Initiate

To: Master of Whispers, Preceptors, and all Lightbringer ranked personnel
Re: Scarlet Briar, Her Labs and Technologies

As requested, herein is the field report of Initiate Caitlin Donagh's investigation researching information and evidence from Scarlet Briar's various labs and facilities, completed after the defeat of Scarlet Briar, 1327 AE.

Observations

Compiling information obtained by various Order of Whispers agents and their contacts and assets in other orders and organizations, we can now state the following:

- Scarlet did not have a lab in the Molten Facility but the facility itself allowed Scarlet's Molten Alliance to develop advanced fire and sonic technology to mount a ground-based attack and help converge power into the giant drill which she recently used in Lion's Arch.
- By mobilizing Aetherblades and the Inquest, Scarlet obtained advanced air and flight technology, using her Twilight Arbor laboratory to build an airship and bait a sylvari Firstborn, Caithe. She was also able to hone her army's fighting abilities, particularly the sophistication and devastation of their attacks.
- During the Queen's Jubilee, Scarlet commandeered Queen Jennah's Watchknight guards by using her understanding of the steam creatures and their technology. She also commandeered The Crown Pavillion, dubbing it her Playhouse, to challenge Tyrians with more of her minion Molten and Aetherblade armies. Her simultaneous invasions worldwide appear now to have been a distraction tactic, orchestrated to keep Tyrians focused elsewhere.
- In unifying a splinter Nightmare Court group with the krait to form the Toxic Alliance, Scarlet was able to process and refine poison which she later used in her attack on Lion's Arch. Her lab at the top of the toxic Tower of Nightmares showed remnants of her research and advanced technology obtained from the Molten Alliance, Aetherblades, Inquest, Watchwork Knights, and toxic spores used to grow the seedlings.
- In the Mists, we also learned that, via the Thaumanova Reactor, Scarlet discovered the existence of magical leylines across Tyria and apparently learned how NOT to conduct experiments at an intersection of these channels.
- Scarlet's Secret Lair in Lornar's Pass confirmed suspicions that the dredge in her army created the sonic thumper probes that appeared throughout Tyria, pulsing as they looked for the leylines of magical power spread across the world. Her lair also revealed that she'd developed a giant drill and was planning a coordinated strike on Lion's Arch in search of the convergence of these leylines. Lightbringer Miko Riel submitted the following photographs of a map noting the strikepoint and of the drill's schematics.







- Scarlet's attack on Lion's Arch forced the citizens out of the city by air and ground assaults and, more critically, by utilizing a highly concentrated and toxic miasma poison. Contacts within the Durmand Priory report certain hylek tribes discovered it will work itself out of an individual's system naturally when exposed to low doses. Priory contacts also confirmed that Scarlet's drill was positioned at the convergence of several leylines. (See photograph obtained from a Vigil engineer contact below)

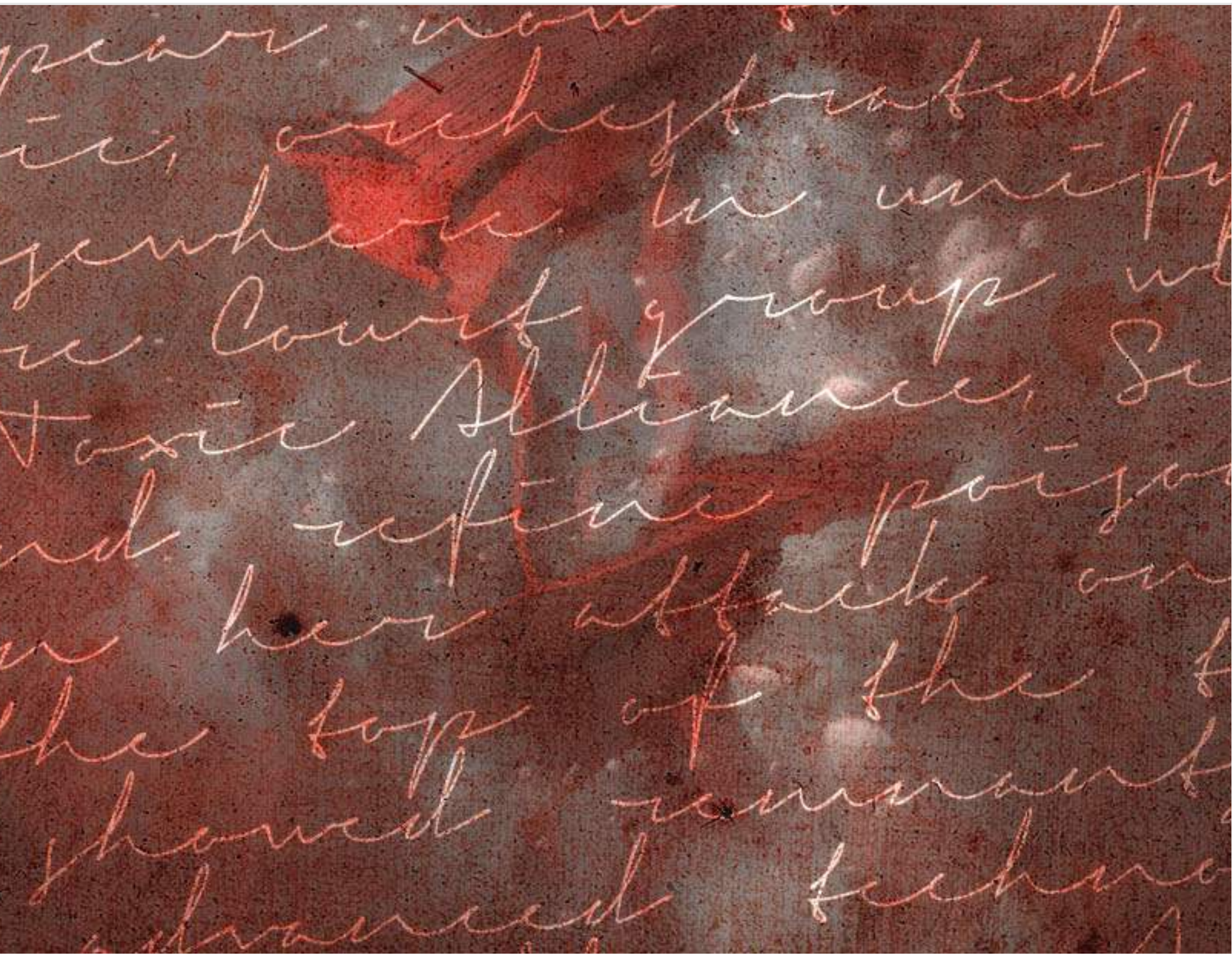


- Engineers tell us that this drill, positioned over the ruins of Old Lion's Arch at this convergence, was not meant to be shut off but to continually pulse into the leylines, disrupting them.

Scarlet's objective, it appears, was to use the advanced sonic and aether technologies she'd obtained to deliver a powerful magical surge into the leyline convergence in Lion's Arch. The drill, however, seemed to disrupt the flow of magical energy, rather than tap into it to channel and amass it. When the drill bore into the ground, agents report having heard a dragon awaken. The trace of the surge track appears to have traveled west of Lion's Arch, likely ending somewhere in Maguuma. The ramifications of what another awakened Elder Dragon will mean to Tyria are likely dire.

Recommendations:

1. Work with local Lion's Arch officials to help with the drill clean-up and city's recovery.
2. Send exploratory teams along the surge track.
3. Prepare defenses against a dragon and dragon minion incursions.





Season One Summary: The Major Characters

Written by Plagiarised

Before we look at the storyline of season one, we must first familiarize ourselves with the major characters of the living story. These characters have a major role in the plot and are often recurring. I will give a brief summary of each of these characters. We will look at all of the great personalities, from the young norn Braham to the mischievous Scarlet Briar, and how they fit into the storyline and the world of Tyria. Let's get started.

Braham Eirsson is a nomadic norn, son of Eir Stegalkin and the late Borge, the Sun Chaser. He is known for his brute strength in battle, only being surpassed by his ability to defend his allies. As a young norn he shows many of the characteristics of the norn: brutality, charisma, and recklessness without showing many characteristics that come to his kind with age, such as wisdom and knowledge. The norn is known to have resentment towards his mother.

Rox, previously known as Rox Pickheart, is aggressive but tactical like charr usually are. She shows great fear of living a life as a gladium forever, doing whatever she can to be accepted into a warband. The charr is also known to be quite superstitious in her actions, having many habits to remove bad luck.

Kasmeer Meade is a human, formerly a noble of Divinity's Reach. She shows great devotion and interest in the field of magic, especially mesmeric abilities, although her inexperience of the outside world beyond the human capital becomes clear. She is devoted to Marjory, whom she sees as all she has left.

Marjory Delaqua, also known as Jory, is a private investigator and former member of the Durmand Priory and Ministry Guard. She is dark and secretive about her past but refuses to let it show through in her work. She rarely gives compliments and is conservative in her personal thoughts—the only exception being Kasmeer.

Taimi is an asuran prodigy and a ward of Zojja. She shows great admiration for Scarlet and her work, deeming her search for knowledge and freedom above her maniacal blunders. She understands that the sylvari is crazed but is certain to overlook that fact to work with her. Taimi is known to be arrogant as most asura are, especially to those who see her disability and age as a disadvantage.

Scarlet Briar, formerly known as Ceara, is a sylvari that has rejected the Pale Tree. She is crazed and sociopathic, doing whatever she pleases with a carefree demeanor. Under this personality is a cunning and ruthless killer that stays tactical. She shows great admiration for knowledge, seeking it out for the sake of expanding her mind. However, the sylvari shows an ability to abandon her subjects of knowledge for others, ultimately making her a jack of all trades.

Ellen Kiel is a human captain on the Ship's Council as well as a member in high ranking of the Lionguard in Lion's Arch. Her lawful protection of the pirate haven is only overshadowed by her devotion to Captain Magnus the Bloody-Handed, whom she sees as a father figure. She is known to hold deep hatred towards the Consortium and the Inquest.

Mai Trin is the captain of the Aetherblade Pirates, currently under the call of Scarlet Briar. She is skilled in fencing and quick witted. She is known to have great fear of Scarlet for unknown reason, although this does not affect her loyalty to the sylvari.

Canach is a secondborn sylvari previously working for the Consortium. Due to his station in the sylvari hierarchy, he can become narcissistic and proud. The sylvari sees himself as a hero of the people, doing what is right no matter what, even at the cost of civilian lives. Presently he shows deep hatred for the Consortium and their actions against him.





Season One Summary: Scarlet's Story

Written by Plagiarised

As season one of the Living Story comes to a close, let us look back at the story with this comprehensive recap. This overview will cover everything that has occurred in the story in complete detail. All character and story development will be discussed. A lot has occurred in the past two years. From the grand struggle of the norn and charr of the north, to the epic finale in Lion's Arch and Scarlet's fate, this recap will get you prepared for season two and the following living story.

A note on footnotes: At times, the storyline relies on information that is not directly affected by the main plotline. The story may therefore require additional knowledge on races, kingdoms, technology, and characters. This extra information will be provided via footnotes at the bottom of each page.

A note on chronology: The events written in this overview follow the release schedule of Guild Wars 2. However, some information given by a release may not be in chronological order, and may be moved in this overview to give a better insight into the story of the Living World.
The Living World also includes other storylines and traditional celebrations, but this overview will only cover the integral storylines starting with the 2013 schedule. The following releases will not be included: Shadow of the Mad King, The Lost Shores, Wintersday: The Wondrous Workshop of Toymaker Tixx, Super Adventure Box, Super Adventure Box: Back to School, Tequatl Rising, Blood and Madness, and A Very Merry Wintersday.

Navigation

- Flame and Frost
- Secret of Southsun
- Last Stand at Southsun
- Dragon Bash
- Sky Pirates of Tyria
- Bazaar of the Four Winds
- Queen's Jubilee
- Clockwork Chaos
- Twilight Assault
- Tower of Nightmares
- The Nightmare Within
- Fractured
- The Origins of Madness
- Edge of the Mists
- Escape from Lion's Arch
- Battle for Lion's Arch
- Battle for Lion's Arch: Aftermath

Flame and Frost



In the Season of the Zephyr, 1326 AE[1], strange storms began to brew over the Shiverpeaks while charr and norn refugees crawled from the wreckage of their homes in the Wayfarer Foothills and Diessa Plateau, struggling to find shelter in the south. Refugees kept sprawling into the norn and charr capitals, Hoelbrak and the Black Citadel, respectively. The Wolfborn watch[2], and Adamant Guard[3] were unable to gather any information about the attacks from the traumatized refugees for weeks. As time went by, the information that could be gathered didn't make sense and was passed off as shock; many said that dredge were sighted in the attack, however they were seen using fire magic.[4] The unusual weather patterns were later understood to be caused by steam erupting from underground, wrecking havoc with the air temperature and humidity. However, the cause for the steam was still unknown.

After the influx of refugees, many seeked new shelter. A good number of refugees began to go towards Lion's Arch where a generous benefactor has been providing supplies within the city's walls.[5] Later on, the Consortium was discovered to be the generous benefactors, which caused some to distrust the trading company's generosity due to their previous records.[6] The Consortium was set to give them a new home in Southsun Cove.

After the initial attacks, the perpetrator's assaults started to become more brazen, causing regular sightings of Flame Legions charr and dredge. The Flame Legion were noticed using dredge technology causing speculation of an alliance. It was later confirmed by survivors that the Flame Legion and dredge were working together in the assaults. After their discovery, the Molten Alliance, as they were called, began spying on the locals to gather information. This caused the Black Citadel to convene a war council[7] to assess the situation and determine what action should be taken. Due to the publicity of the attacks, the Order of Whispers and the Vigil started to work against the alliance. The Order of Whispers sent a double agent to gather information from the inside while the Vigil chose to locate the hideout of this alliance.

During this time, a young norn traveled to the Black Citadel to request assistance for the defence of his homestead, Cragstead, which was recently captured by the alliance. However, he was denied as the charr were spread thin and couldn't spare any soldiers. But also because the young norn, Braham, claimed he was the son of the legendary Eir Stagelkin and the late Borge, the Sun Chaser. Rytlock Brimstone, not believing the norn, dismissed him as a liar as sent him to Hoelbrak.[8] When Braham arrived at the norn capital, he was also denied any aid by Knut Whitebear. The leader of the norn capital feared that the city will be the next target, choosing not to scatter the forces away from the city. Whitebear decided to reinforce the defenses of the city instead of sending men out in the field. Braham was later discovered to have resentment for his mother, Eir for reasons unknown. He chose to retake Cragstead with only a few allies on his quest. Braham was successful, however many were taken hostage[9] to an unknown location, but ultimately bolstered the homestead's morale.

While the Legions' war council was in session, a gladium charr who lost all of her warband[10] in a mining accident, Rox, was sent to retake Nolan Hatchery[11] as part of a test in her efforts to be accepted into Rytlock's warband, the Stone warband. The Nolan Hatchery was a strategic stronghold for the Legions as it was a main supply of siege devourers[12]. With aid, Rox was able to secure the Nolan Hatchery and befriend an albino baby devourer named Frostbite. However, they too were unable to save everyone.

The Order of Whispers was able to plant a double agent within the alliance and gathered valuable information. Agent Brandubh of the Order was able to discover that the alliance has begun to dig underground east, south, and west. Prisoners were being taken every day, some put in pens and others used for weapons testing the unstable, but undeniably powerful Flame and dredge technology combination. The dredge technology was altered to be used by the Flame Legion, and flame shamans have begun using transformations on the dredge.[13] However, cracks in the alliance were beginning to show as the charr did not like being so deep underground, away from the sun.[14] Reasons for the alliance are still unknown; something pushed these two factions together.[15]

After a few months, the Vigil were able to find the entrance to the Molten base and moved in. With the aid of Rox and Braham, united to combat their common enemy, the Vigil raided the weapon facilities. The cause for the steam was discovered to be the Alliance's use of fire technology to mine underground. They were able to cave in the facilities by detonating the caverns, crippling the Molten Alliance in the aftermath. In the final days of the war, dredge and Flame Legion captives who were interrogated revealed that the alliance had been run by a city dweller. This person's whereabouts and aliases were unknown at this time.

Secret of Southsun



The merchants and traders of the Consortium had given shelter to refugees driven from their lands by the Molten Alliance, but many of the new arrivals felt more like prisoners than guests. After the events of the Molten Alliance attacks settled down, many refugees took the Consortium's offer of a new life on Southsun Cove.[16] The Consortium was moving forward with turning the island into a resort,[17] and several tourists as well as nobles arrived on vacation. The settlers later discovered that they were bound to the island by law of contract and couldn't leave legally. Some refugees, mostly norn[18], accepted the home even through unfair circumstances as they saw they had no where left to go. However, most did not appreciate the trickery, as tension between the resettled refugees and their Consortium hosts started to boil over.

In response, Captain Magnus ordered Lionguard Inspector Ellen Keil to deal with the unrest before the upcoming festival in Lion's Arch. Even though Southsun Cove was under the jurisdiction of Lion's Arch, the Lionguard could not stop the forced settlers' pleas as the island was still owned by the Consortium and they had not acted in any criminal way by the laws of the pirate haven. This led to general discontent, as well as a steadily increasing number of riots. Therefore Kiel was ordered to keep the peace between the factions and did so by deputizing any able-bodied individuals.[19]

Subdirector Noll was assigned to oversee the work of the refugees and the establishment of the Consortium's Resort. With the help of his golem, Job-O-Tron, he berated and subjected the settlers continuously throughout the day. When arguments arose around the resort (which was common)[20], Noll used violent means to subdue and suppress the altercations. When signs of distress began to show, the subdirector was contacted by his superiors for 'confirmation of enthusiastic settler participation'. However when the unrest began to boil, Noll was directed by his superiors to immediately secure all refugee resettlement agreements and return them to the home office for safekeeping. Consortium Management concluded that the contracts were under threat of destruction and vandalism. When the riots began to escalate to deaths of Consortium members, Management expressed their extreme displeasure with Noll's handling of the 'resettlement operation.' In response, Noll was rejected passage off the island and directed to salvage what he could from their investment in the island resort.

Many nobles arrived on the island, enticed by the Consortium's promise of 'fun in the sun'. The nobles affected the Consortium's income, which affected the councillors who took money from them, which affected Magnus, so Ellen Kiel was tasked with keeping the nobles safe, one of which was Lady Kasmeer Meade of Divinity's Reach. Meade, who seemed to be a noble, arrived at the island to fact-find for Marjory Delaqua.[21]

This settler aggression was mirrored by numerous reports of wildlife attacking settlements. Researcher Levvi[22] began to investigate the wildlife and their sudden insurgent behaviour. The wildlife within the island had become more aggressive as of late. Later on, Levvi discovered that the wildlife had become riled up due to a flora's toxin being introduced into the ecosystem. She also concluded that the flora resembles the same kind that sylvari utilize. When the effects of the riots increased rapidly into savagery, a rioter met with Kiel to confess her part in the attacks. The settler, Henrika, wanted freedom and would get a chance when a mysterious sylvari enticed her into rioting for the contracts that bound her. Kiel was able to deduce that the sylvari was most likely someone who knows Southsun Cove and had a grudge against the Consortium: Canach.[23]

Last Stand at Southsun



After the death of the Ancient Karka in 1325 AE, Canach fled from the Lionguard, becoming a fugitive. Canach sojourned and continued to hide for half a year, becoming an expert on guerilla warfare. Throughout his flight, he was being hunted by the Consortium's 'decommission teams' for 'betraying' the company. Due to his grueling exposure in the wild and his hardships while being hunted down, Canach's appearance changed, becoming darker and grimmer.[24] During the events of the Molten Alliance, Canach felt sympathy for the refugees and aided the Vigil in raiding the weapon facilities in secret. He forged a gauntlet of fused technology that he now wears as a symbol, seeing himself now as a hero of the people. It was later discovered Subdirector Noll was the individual sending hitmen after Canach; Noll blamed the events of the past year solely on Canach and not the Consortium. These events caused Canach to grow deep hatred for the subdirector.

Former subdirector Blingg (who was downgraded[25] in the Consortium for revealing vital information to the Lionguard during the events of the past year), was visited by Canach. Canach demanded information on Noll so he may enact revenge on the asura who plagued him with assassins. Blingg explained that Noll was at Southsun, determined to make the island a profitable resort. Getting the information he needed, Canach left Blingg alive but stole his golem.[26]

After Canach was discovered to be on the island, a search went out and soon his hideout was located. After he was immobilised, Kiel wondered why a man would come back after he was free. Canach saw himself as a symbol of hope and truly saw himself as helping the settlers; albeit through violent means. He believed as long as the contracts were destroyed, it would be worth the sacrifices. However, Canach reasoned that he would get caught prematurely, and orchestrated the karka to attack the all possible Consortium record hotspots on the island.

In response to Canach's plan, Kiel gathered the contracts on the island to be sent to Lion's Arch. When the contracts where loaded onto the ship, Kiel set off a rigged explosion destroying all the contracts in the process. Kiel insists that the attack was Canach's doing however the settlers are now allowed off the island. The wildlife, still marked for the hot spots, are still a threat on the island. Until now there is no clear way to reverse the effects of the toxin, so the Lionguard sent the nobles off the island for their safety.

Dragon Bash



A few weeks after the conflict with Canach and Consortium on Southsun Cove, the first annual Dragon Bash festival was held to honor the defiant spirit of Tyria against the Elder Dragons. Dragon Bash was inspired by the old Canthan Dragon Festival, but with a twist to fit the modern-day realities. The Ship's Council hosted the event to celebrate the collective victories against the dragons—past, present, and future. The festival saw a decoration of the city, night time fireworks, and activities. However, some considered the celebration of dragons an insult, a disgrace to everyone fighting the dragons; they said the lives of those sacrificed should be acknowledged, not the collective thought of the Elder Dragons. Others protested this fancy celebration is an ineffective cost that is increasing the hardships of job insecurity since the karka invasion of the past year.

One of the main activities was Dragon Ball, a combat arena created by a sylvari named Finolla. She gathered the concept while studying the Bane of the Black Citadel where she met the gladium Volak Ironsnout. With Volak's help, Finolla was able to raise the gold to create the arena, which was later purchased by the Ship's Council to be part of the first annual Dragon Bash.

The main attraction of the festival is the effigy lighting ceremony. The ceremony is to represent the ferocious nature the races have shown against the Elder Dragons. Before the ceremony began, the Lionguard were notified by an individual named 'E' to be at the ceremony. 'E' said that there would be a threat to the council. They explained that they would intervene but circumstances prevent it. As the ceremony began, Captain Magnus the Bloody-Handed introduced the three members of the Ship's Council that would be present for the effigy lighting: Captain Anne Reid, Captain Tokk, and Captain Theo Ashford. Magnus then asked the cultural representatives, members of the races who have lost their kin to the hands of the Elder Dragons, to hand over the memorials of their kin to the pyre so the lighting may begin. When all the items had been placed, an unusual discharge of electrical energy ignited the pyre and exploded. The explosion injured the charr cultural representative, Garrot Ambercowl[27] and the three council members. The Lionguard were instantly on the scene, with Inspector Ellen Keil at the helm. As Keil was attempting to expel the chaos, a woman from the crowd volunteered to attempt to heal the wounded. As this was happening, the three council members were placed in a dolyak cart and were sent to Fort Marriner for healing. During the attack, many cultural representatives fled the scene.[28]

It was later announced that one of the council members did not survive the attack; Captain Theo Ashford was killed.[29] In response, Logan Thackeray located Marjory Delaqua in The Dead End bar, in the Eastern Commons of Divinity's Reach. Thackeray explained that Ashford was an old friend and wanted to know who was behind the attack. Logan paid her handsomely for the investigation.

It was later discovered that Marjory Delaqua was formerly part of the Ministry Guard[30], but during an investigation of a child's murder, she was grabbed by 'E' from behind[31] (she couldn't see 'E'). She is then told there are forces in this world that would take us all down unless we stop them together. After that encounter she sometimes gets contacted by the mystery person.

In Lion's Arch, Delaqua met up with Keil, offering her services towards the investigation. Marjory, after being accepted, uses a Tassi box (the same machine Tassi used in Halloween) to detect any energy fluctuations. It was revealed that the energy discharge was triggered and was not accidental, and that Ambercowl's body showed signs of arcane residue. The Tassi box was then used to detect if any individuals also had similar arcane residue. It was discovered that the women who attempted to heal the charr, Mai Trin, had the same energy. She explained her plan was to fill the empty seat after a council member was taken care of. When the Lionguard attempted to capture her, her Aetherblade Pirates appeared to even the odds. Ultimately, Mai Trin was able to get away.

Sky Pirates of Tyria



After the attack, Inspector Ellen Kiel spearheaded the investigation into the murder of the councillor Captain Theo Ashford and later with the escape of the fugitive, Mai Trin, the Lionguard began a search for her hideout. In response to these series of events, Captain Magnus the Bloody-Handed made a calculated decision to continue the Dragon Bash festival so fear and chaos would not escalate. During this time, Trin's aetherblade pirates began to raid nearby holographic projectors, which was created by the asura to be used to project holographic symbols of dragons for the ongoing festival.

Inspector Ellen Kiel successfully located the hideout of the runaway fugitive Mai Trin and her mysterious 'Aetherblade' pirates. Thereafter, the Lionguard raided the hideout located at Diverse Ledges in the outskirts of Lion's Arch. The hideout was using holographic technology to create an illusionary wall to deter intruders. Throughout the raid, the Lionguard were met with deadly resistance by the Aetherblades. The sewer system quickly turned into a shanty town created by the pirates within the mountain range as a base.[32] The hideout continued around, facing the Sea of Sorrows, but could not be detected from the outside due to the stolen holographic technology. Later, throughout the spiraling base, the Inquest started to appear alongside the pirates, defending them. At the top of the mountain, the Lionguard found Mai Trin with her First Mate, Horrik, discussing their fear of an individual named 'Scarlet' for unsuccessfully opening a council seat. The duo were attempting escape in airship vessels that resembled the Pact's airships. However, Kiel and the Lionguard were successful in stopping their escape and were able to destroy the vessels.

After the capture of Mai Trin, Kiel began the interrogation process but the Aetherblade Captain stayed tightlipped, however some information was gathered from the base. The Lion's Arch records had no information on the pirates, though the Lionguard were able to capture some of their low-ranking members for interrogation.[33] The Lionguard were able to discover that the Inquest were able to financially and scientifically back up the Aetherblade pirates. The Inquest were able to incorporate air magic in the pirates' arsenal allowing them access to the skies. The vessels the sky pirates used were also stolen from the Pact's base and later used to build their own designs. The Aetherblades were also able, with the help of the Inquest, two create new weaponry unseen in Tyria: a long and narrow blade that they called a rapier which had proven to be an effective weapon, and a handheld cannon used by Horrik. No other information was gathered about the mysterious individual they called 'Scarlet'.

Later on, a second Aetherblade base was discovered in Broadhollow Bluffs, outside Lion's Arch. The Lionguard set out to plunder the second hideout and learnt that it was the garage for another Aetherblade airship. This new information confirmed that the Aetherblade pirates are much bigger than one base within Lion's Arch. Meanwhile, in the city, Magnus discovered that Theo Ashford's second[34] was killed weeks prior in the events of the Molten Alliance. Because there would be an open council seat, the Ship's Council were forced to have a council election for a new captain. In reply, Magnus nominated Inspector Ellen Kiel for the position. However, as only captains can be nominated[35], Magnus commandeered the abandoned Aetherblade airship for Kiel, effectively making her eligible for the election.

Bazaar of the Four Winds



Due to the assassination of the councillor Captain Theo Ashford and his second in line, the Ship's Council was obliged to organize an election[36] for a new captain. Captain Magnus the Bloody-Handed nominated newly ranked Captain Ellen Kiel for the seat. However, Evon Gnashblade, owner of the Black Lion Trading Company, nominated himself for the council seat. This caused heavy friction and competition between the two nominees. Magnus informed Kiel that to get the edge on the election, she needs to get a signed trading agreement [37] with the Zephyrites. Gnashblade, overhearing the conversation, decides to barter the trade agreement himself.

The elusive Bazaar of the Four Winds had commenced. The Bazaar of the Four Winds is a black marketplace where many merchants trade in rare and unique goods at a lower price than that of many of the suppliers in the capital cities around the world, effectively undercutting their business. For this reason, the Bazaar is an illegal trade movement and many authorities, such as the Vigil, attempt to bring the events down. However, Lion's Arch, being a pirate haven, had gotten notice of when the bazaars commence, and the Bazaar is accepted publically. To avoid being caught the Bazaar is set up at different locations throughout Tyria, and the

notice is given very suddenly. The location of the 1326 AE Bazaar was located in the Labyrinthine Cliffs[38], a system of cliffs along the Deldrimor Front. Due to the nature of the deals, the Bazaar is notoriously known to be dangerous, especially if and when the Zephyr Sanctum docks.

The Zephyr Sanctum is the floating sanctuary built by the Zephyrites, a secluded, zen-like organization composed primarily of humans of Canthan or Elonian descent. The Zephyrites rarely docked on land and mostly did so to gather supplies, choosing to live in the air for years at a time. This caused many of the zephyrites to be disconnected with the world around[39], showing ignorance towards the sylvari race, the truce between the humans and charr, and other historical events. The Durmand Priory were able to discover more about the enigmatic organization during the Bazaar. They discovered that the Zephyrites were the successors of the Dwarven Brotherhood. After the transformation of the Dwarves to stone, Glint passed on the guardianship to a select few humans. When Glint was killed by the Elder Dragon Kralkatorrik in 1320 AE, her servants trekked to the location of her corpse to prevent the magic imbued within it from falling into the wrong hands. It was there they found the Aspects, and with them they decided to build a Zephyr Sanctum, where they could live above the clouds and study the Aspects in peace. During the Bazaar, some Zephyrites can be heard singing a song, a testament to Glint's legacy.

During the election Ellen Kiel's history as a child was revealed. It was revealed that Ellen lost her parents in a shipwreck as a child, and was saved by the hands of the Lionguard, specifically Magnus. This led to Kiel looking up to Magnus as a father figure and would not disappoint him. She owed her life to Magnus. Likewise, some of Gnashblade's history came to light. It was discovered that Evon came to Lion's Arch as a soldier of the Ash Legion at the age of twenty, with his warband's mission to extort the people under the banner of the Black Lion Trading Company. Evon believed the plan would not be fruitful[40], and so killed his war leader, Aria Gnashfang, in open combat and established the Black Lion Trading Company 'properly'.

The council seat was to be determined by whoever can get the Zephyrites to sign a trade agreement with Lion's Arch. The Council attempted such a feat many times before but was always rejected, therefore the notion was seen as a noteworthy characteristic of a captain to be on the Council. When both Kiel and Gnashblade met with the leader of the Zephyrites, Master of Peace, it was determined by him that a trade agreement would be needed and would be signed to the individual whom the people cared for.[41] Hence a pirate voting session was established, causing much theft, vandalism, numerous entries, but all being accepted under the nature of the election. In the conclusion, Kiel was able to get the majority vote and get the trade agreement signed.[42] She was then able to win the Council seat.

Queen's Jubilee



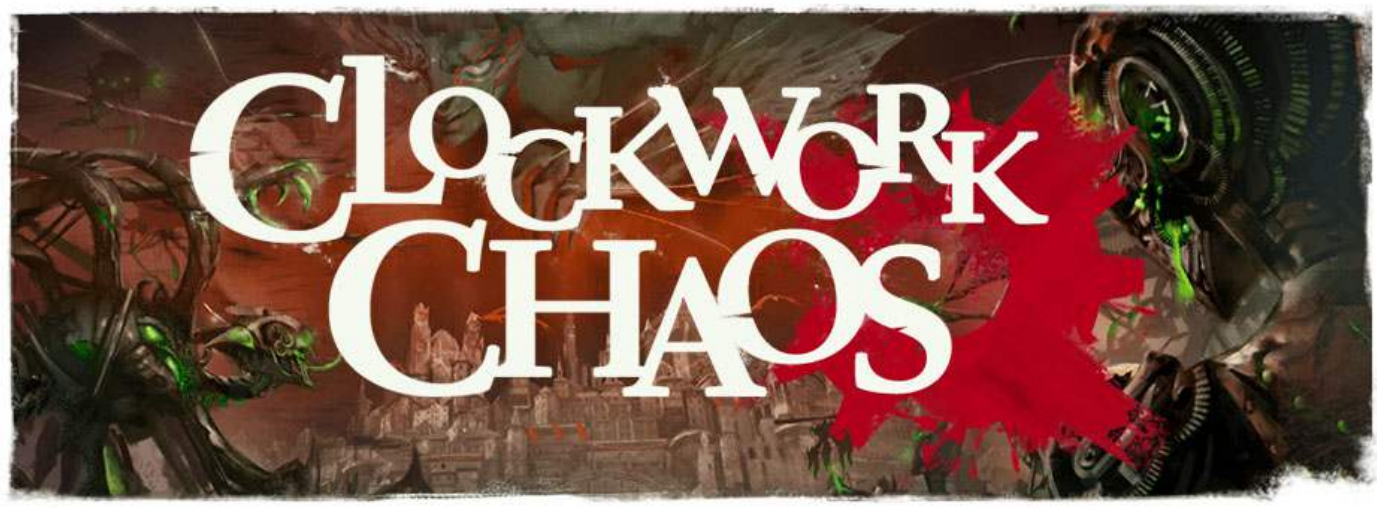
In 1316 AE, Queen Jennah had been coronated as the Krytan Queen, and adopted the throne. In 1326, on the anniversary of her coronation, Queen Jennah hosted a jubilee to celebrate her ten-year reign as the Krytan monarch. The Queen of Kryta reclaimed the Great Collapse within Divinity's Reach, and constructed a towering pavilion with the symbol of a griffon, the symbol on Kryta's crest.[43] Although the celebration was in the name of Jennah's tenth anniversary as queen, she also wanted to hold the jubilee to show to the other nations that humanity has not 'fallen'.[44] Emissaries from all the nations in Tyria were invited to marvel at the ingenuity of humanity's survival.

Along with the pavilion, the Crown also unveiled humanity's next leap into technology, the Watchknights.[45] The Watchknights resemble golems in the fact that they are sentient beings tailored for commands by their superior. Unlike the asuran golemancy techniques, the Watchknights use rotating cogs similar to that found in a watch, hence the name given to the sentinels. Where the golemancers use magitech to control their golems, Watchknights are control via verbal commands issued through mesmer magic. The creatures were used throughout the pavilion as guards—but just as much as attractions.

Under the pavilion sat the main attraction of the jubilee, a circular arena spoked into six separate areas, each defining a moment of hardships that the krytan nation has endured: Flame Legion, bandits, orges, Destroyers of Primordus, pirates, and centaurs. As it was dangerous (and immoral) to have such sentient creatures locked up for sport, the Watchknights were able to express their second functionality, an ability to change form into such creatures through mesmeric illusions.

As the majority of emissaries began to arrive, Queen Jennah commenced the Opening Ceremony. Jennah revealed the arena and its testament to the Krytan will to survive, as well as the Watchknights and its leap in technology for the human race. Within the opening ceremony, the Ministry Guard were not seen, as Jennah has forbade them from the pavilion, in response to their numerous scandals. Many champions of Kryta arrived to the ceremony at Jennah's call to test the Watchknights' strength, including Rytlock Brimstone. However, the Blood Legion Tribune outsourced the duty to Rox, who brought Braham along. Ultimately, the Queen chose her own personal champion, Captain Logan Thackeray of the Seraph Guards, to fight the Watchknights. With mesmer magic by Countess Anise of the Shining Blade, the Watchknight continuously changed forms, but Logan was able to hold off the sentinel. Nevertheless, the Watchknight returned to fight, now in the form of Rytlock, Logan's old friend.[46] When Anise attempted to shut down the Watchknight she found that the commands had been overridden. On queue, Aetherblades rained down on the ceremony causing general chaos around the arena. Throughout the fighting, Anise deduced that whoever overwrote the Watchknight's commands must be near by. She later noticed a mysterious figure perched on one of the columns. By order of the Queen, Rox attempted to shoot down the stranger with her bow, however the mysterious figure continued to teleport and toy with the young charr. Nevertheless, Rox was able to get a hit after several attempts, which caused the stranger to escape.

Clockwork Chaos



After the attack from the unknown perpetrator and the Aetherblades, the Seraph recommended the Queen cancel the celebration for fear of her safety. However, the Shining Blade insisted that the attacker desired to disrupt the jubilee. Ultimately, the Queen chose not to close the pavilion, believing that by shutting down the pavilion, humanity would be shown as weak and fallen (which was one of the primary reasons for the celebration). In response, the Seraph Guard[47], under orders of Logan Thackeray, began an investigation as well as doubled the patrolling men within the city.

Although the authorities were on high alert for a reappearance by the mysterious stranger, most of the jubilee was uneventful until the closing ceremony. The Closing Ceremony commenced with Queen Jennah taking the stage of the pavilion, giving her speech on humanity's resolve, unity, and strength. However, the queen's speech was quickly interrupted by the same fugitive; this time with her hood down and her face revealed to the world. The stranger was revealed to be a female sylvari naming herself Scarlet Briar. She laughed at the 'endurance' and 'trails' of the human race and began explaining how fragile the Krytan society truly is. To prove her point, the sylvari was somehow able to control the Krytan Watchknights and twist them into twisted, horrific machinery. As the horrors began to cause chaos around the pavilion, Scarlet declared that there were four bombs planted 'to keep things lively', and attempted to kidnap the queen. As the maniacal sylvari shot an explosive bullet onto the stage in an attempt to capture the queen, Lord Faren attempted to rescue her. It was later revealed that the queen on stage commencing the closing ceremony was actually a mesmeric illusion created by Anise in an attempt to bait the mysterious fugitive. The plan was successful, but as the knowledge of the plan was only limited to the queen and the Shining Blade; Lord Faren was rewarded with a fall into the arena level of the pavilion. During this time, the Seraph were able to successfully disarm the four bombs and Watchknights around the pavilion. Scarlet, however, did not seem phased by the progress of these events as she revealed the location of a fifth bomb located at the evacuation point for the Seraph and citizens alike. The Seraph failed to reach the disarm in time causing large amounts of civilian and Seraph casualties. After the bombing, Scarlet traveled to the secluded arena level of the pavilion[48], effectively locking her inside the arena with a number of hostages while she kept taunting and berating the queen's 'endurance' and 'trails'.

As the chaos continued, the Seraph were issued with finding a way into the arena, while the Shining Blade wanted to know more about the terrorist to better combat her unpredictable nature. An emissary from Rata Sum, Vorpp, was able to distinguish that the sylvari was able to travel into the pavilion through teleportation, similar to that seen by his own kind. The asura concluded that by reverse engineering her portals, the Seraph may gain access to the arena floor.

As time passed, more information about Scarlet and her history began to surface. It was discovered that upon waking from the Dream of Dreams, the sylvari was inundated by the 'complex systems of small, interlocking parts that affected one another in an ever changing dance' and fascinated by this life itself that she was now a part of. Upon awakening, the sylvari was given the name Ceara and was told of her purpose as the Pale Tree directed of her. Ceara almost felt offended by the linear lifestyle her people had to endure.[49] Choosing to follow her own path, the sylvari left the Grove after eight years of voracious study to explore the world and learn about the ever-changing mechanisms that define it. She became a solitary scholar, first learning the smith crafts of the norn in Hoelbrak that defined their culture. She was accepted as an apprentice to a norn named Beigarth who taught her the basics of smithing and metallurgy. Just like her study at the Grove, the lessons at the norn's capital were not a full meal capable of sating her hunger for knowledge. So she left Hoelbrak an a winter's time, even under Beigarth's insistence to teach her more advanced methods.[50] Next she continued her hermit-like lifestyle to charr lands where she learnt of projectiles and firearms from a gladium named Asagai, but just as before, the scholar abandoned her work, only learning basic and some intermediate skills. Ceara finally decided to travel to Rata Sum, hoping that the asura may sate her hunger.

Being accepted by the colleges of Rata Sum became a difficult obstacle for the non-asura. However, when the sylvari showed her skills with rudimentary golemancy, she was allowed a simple Dynamics course to assess her capabilities. Ceara believed she was being accepted for her knowledge, but this wasn't the case (although she was exceptionally intelligent for a sylvari); she was accepted because of the asura's curiosity to study the sentient plantlings since the race's awakening.[51] Within two years she was shown to be quite intelligent and completed the shortened course template[52] she was given for both Dynamics and Statics. When given the same opportunity in Synergetics, Ceara found the field as boundless as her interest. The Headmaster of Synergetics, Omadd, taught her the theories and basis of the Eternal Alchemy, that it was a metamagical engine or a transcendent equation to be solved. However, Ceara believed that the Eternal Alchemy was a key to 'access the basic fabric of reality itself'. Her thesis was not received well by the Arcane Council, nevertheless, Ceara did not care as she was separating herself from their rigid collegiate system. She then joined the Inquest, who allowed her more knowledge that the colleges were 'scared' or 'dangerous to explore'. Later Omadd was able to track her down when she studied with the Michotl tribe[53], backing her thesis and wanting to explore it further. They both studied and prepared an experiment that, Omadd predicted, will 'transcend the physical body and delve into the metaphysical vortex of reality'.

Ceara eagerly waited to set up the isolation chamber so she could she the inner mechanisms of this world. Inside the machine, she saw the universe stretched out before her, and then Tyria. But then the voice of the Pale Tree pleaded the sylvari not to go on, insisting that by seeking to comprehend the forces that shape them, she will unleash them. At that moment, Ceara's view changed to the Pale Tree in the Grove with red thorn vines[54] creeping around the bark of the tree. Ceara realised that the vines were her, understanding her purpose. The Pale Tree attempted to plead with her once more, telling her if she was not one with what she was born to be, she would be lost and dangerous.

Upon leaving the vision, the sylvari convulsed inside the machine. When she woke up she explained to Omadd that she saw 'everything'. She then declared to the asura that her name now was Scarlet Briar, (going against the conventions of the sylvari culture). Scarlet then killed Omadd.

After some time, Vorrp was able to reverse engineer a portal into the arena level by gathering information from the teleportation technology found in Broadhollow Bluffs. The asuran emissary was able to conclude that Scarlet used the same teleportation methods seen through the steam machines. How and why Scarlet was able to use this ability is still unanswered. When the portal was open, the Seraph were able to rescue some of the civilians, however Scarlet was prepared using Aetherblade ships to make a get away.

Twilight Assault



After learning of the supposed connection between the Aetherblades and Scarlet, the Lionguard began to list her as a high priority target. More than law enforcement, the pirate haven wanted vengeance for the late Councillor Theo Ashford. Intelligence was later gathered that the fugitive was located in Twilight Arbor within sylvari territory in the Tarnished Coast. By order of Magnus, Deputy Turma spearheaded a raid on the supposed stronghold of Scarlet Briar. However, Caithe, a firstborn of the sylvari, was also on the scene with her own agenda. Caithe revealed that before Ceara left the Grove, the firstborn met her and were not impressed. She explains that Scarlet sent a direct challenge to Caithe, claiming to know secrets of the secretive sylvari. At the time, the Lionguard was prepared with a large strike force to raid the stronghold, but the security system was impenetrable. Caithe decided to send a small Lionguard contingent into the Arbor, while she would attempt to undermine the fortress from the shadows.

The contingent was able to get past the diminished defences of the Nightmare Court[55] before being stopped by a holographic message. The hologram depicted Scarlet as she taunted the Lionguard and mainly Caithe. It didn't take long for the stronghold's security system to take note of the Lionguard contingent; however, Caithe was able to use the distraction to sneak past in the shadows.[56] The team was met with heavy resistance from Aetherblades and, curiously, steam creatures. Throughout the experience, the holograms[57] continued to jabe and berate the Lionguard, however, the group was able to pass through into the stronghold. It was discovered that the area was used by the Aetherblades to train and build airships. The Aetherblades also showed an unusual amount of loyalty for pirates. As the group reached the airship stations, a Hologram greeted Caithe with pre-recorded messages taunting her of secrets that not even Faolain knows.[58] They also learnt that the Aetherblades were able to reconfigure the hologram technology to be used as bombs. It was also discovered that the Aetherblades showed great fear for Scarlet. As the contingent attempted to fight against the holographic enemies, the real Aetherblades were able to capture Caithe, under Scarlet's suggestion of where she would attempt to access the stronghold. How she knew where Caithe would be is yet to be revealed.

Within the heart of the facility, Scarlet continued to berate the now incarcerated firstborn. As the Lionguard contingent got through the main room, they discovered Scarlet experimented on an oakheart with machinery and cogs, akin to the Watchknight sentinels. The small group was able to shut down the system, as the main Lionguard force swarmed into the stronghold easily. It was discovered Scarlet was not inside the Arbor; only communicating with her crew through holograms. Nevertheless, the Lionguard closed down the operations and did damage to the Aetherblade Pirates.

Tower of Nightmares



As Mad King's Thorn day continued on, the local Seraph documented a sudden change in the forestation around the Viathan Lake[59] in Kryta. Not long after, a veil appeared within the lake, hiding the workings within. The radical changes within the area attracted an agent from the Order of Whispers and scholars from the Durmand Priory and Divinity's Reach. The agent were able to notice increase of activity from the local krait. The veil was thought to be a mesmeric illusion, and as such, aid from Lady Kasmeer Meade called.

Eventually, in 1326 AE, Meade was able to conclude that a mesmer had formed the illusion. As such, proper preparations went into countering the spell. Thereafter, Kasmeer was able to crack the veil[60], dopping the curtains on a massive tower built of wood gathered from the forests around the area, guarding a enormous plant. During the time, Sergeant Walters of the Seraph was stationed to protect the duo, but was intercepted by a group of Nightmare Courtiers and local krait. The Toxic Alliance were able to cause a horrific hallucination on the Seraph contingent that cost most the ability to continue. After unveiling the tower, Meade and Delaqua were ambushed by the alliance, spearheaded by a krait Oratuss, for the disruption of their workings. After the ambush was fended off, Marjory expressed her distaste of the area and wanted to be back at Divinity's Reach, while Kasmeer showed intrigue in the tower and its mesmeric capabilities. Kasmeer surmised that the tower was guarding something valuable, something dangerous.

Later, a camp at Thunder Ridge was erected as a base point of operations for the Vigil, Order of Whispers, and the others involved. The Orders were quick to realise (with unfortunate results), that the tower spouted a destructive toxin that clouded the entire region, causing mass hallucinations and sickness.[61] When the tower was open a group of the Orders was sent into the tower for scouting, but they never returned. As the tower continued to affect the region, offshoot seedlings began to sprout throughout the province, affecting the wildlife and poisoning the areas. In response, The Vigil and the Order of Whispers were tasked with taking down the offshoots plantlings.

During this time, a Durmand Priory Scholar, Ela Makkay, went to work at deducing a reason for the unlikely alliance of krait and Nightmare Courtiers. It was revealed that the krait were a powerful race that lived in pillared cities far out in the ocean, but recently moved into shallower waters. The krait were excited at the prospect of regaining their power, which Makkay theorizes, means the krait's lost prophets are finally returning. Ela was also able to conclude that the Nightmare sylvari that are currently aiding the krait are only an offshoot of the true factions, surmising the courtiers are a fringe group banished for their radical ideas. At the same time, Marjory Delaqua continued to work for an antitoxin that would counter the effects of the tower, while continuously showing fear for Kasmeer's safety

who showed interest in the toxic alliance's use of mesmeric abilities. By gathering samples from the offshoots, Marjory was able to create an effective antitoxin for the tower allowing relative safety into the heart of the fortress.

The Nightmare Within



Due to the antitoxin that was created by Marjory Delaqua, the three Orders were able to engineer air purifiers to stop the toxins from getting into their systems, effectively making the entrance to the nightmare tower relatively safe.[62] Within the tower, the collective force of the Seraph, the Vigil, the Order of Whispers, and the Durmand Priory were able to chart the tower's defences, however, the losses were severe. Meanwhile, the toxin continued to spread throughout the region, lingering longer in the air and causing the hallucinations to become even more severe. Broken pasts and increased anxiety came to resurface within the minds of the victims. The tower continued the effects on all inhaled the toxin.

While traversing the tower, illusions and hallucinations continued to blur the minds of its victims, leading them astray. Lady Kasmeer Meade took the lead, knowing the effects of illusions better than the average soldier.[63] The tower was discovered not to be a fortified location, but a wall covering the huge toxic plant on all sides. The tower was created to defend the plant as its full purpose came to fruition, which at the time was unknown. It was revealed that the tower was defending not only by the newly created Toxic Alliance, but also Aetherblade Pirates, Molten Alliance, and Clockwork Minions. In the meantime, Durmand Priory Scholar Ela Makkay was able to conclude that the krait joined with the Nightmare Court fringe group because they were given obelisk shards as proof of the returned prophets. She further analyzed that the obelisk shards have similar magical radiation to that of The Bloodstones.

Finally, Marjory and Kasmeer, as well as a small contingent that survived the raid, were able to reach the top of the tower. Marjory theorizes that Scarlet might be behind the tower, given that her other creations have been sighted during their ascension. Upon reaching the top of the tower, the duo entered the heart of the tower keen on injecting the antitoxin and ending its effects on the province. Within the tower, it was discovered that Scarlet went to the splintered Nightmare Court faction first. It was also discovered that the Oratuss[64] of the Krait allied only to bring the prophets back into this world. Upon reaching the heart of the tower, the Oratuss was overheard fighting with a Courtier about infidels being in the presence of their prophets. When Marjory and Delaqua were exposed, Scarlet Briar appeared via teleportation. The crazed sylvari began to berate the allies as she took a sample of the toxic seeds. Before any action could be taken, a swollen cocoon began to open. Scarlet made an escape will a young krait sprouted from the cocoon. The alliance, believing this to be the prophet, protected it at all costs. It was noted that the krait began to age and grow at an alarming rate, becoming an adult in a matter of minutes. The 'hybrid' was also noted to have sylvari-like leaves and thorns. However, the contingent was able to kill the creature as it shouted,"No! I cannot be the last of my kind!". Whether this creature was truly a prophet of the krait is yet to be realised.

After the creature's death, Marjory injected the antitoxin; however, as more antitoxin was used it became clear that the tower began to react, learning to counter the effects and to become stronger. Marjory was able to search the heart and locate a hidden passage that led to a chamber. Inside the chamber, they found technology from all the alliances Scarlet created: Molten, Aetherblade, Watchknights, and now Toxic. It was discovered that the toxic seedlings are immune to heat and that the Watchknights at the jubilee were set to be controlled by audio commands. When pieces of all the creations were thrown into a forge, a ball of energy was created, which Marjory used in combination with the antitoxin to get through the new barriers. When the improved antitoxin was injected, the tower began to groan as if it was alive. As the final toxin reached the plants system, it began to crumble, forcing the whole tower to collapse.

In the aftermath of the tower, many of the wildlife became displaced[65], becoming refugees and needing new homes. Some Consortium members were spotted attempting to negotiate with the refugees but were always turned down by the Lionguard taking care of them. At the Thunder Ridge campsite, Marjory and Kasmeer met Rox and Braham (who were part of the assault force into the tower) for the first time. The effects of the tower still continue to linger within the province, albeit in a weakened state.

Fractured



As the Tower of Nightmares was being filled with antitoxin, newly elected Council member Ellen Kiel was at work delivering one of her promises[66] to the people. Kiel, under the authority of the Lionguard and the Captain's Council, took control of the Mistlock Observatory for research into the Thaumanova Disaster. While Ellen commanded Dessa to calibrate the machine to the event, the mysterious asura honestly believed that no such disaster ever occurred in the reactor site. When the asura was threatened to be taken to Lion's Arch, Dessa[67] expressed complete adamancy to stay with her work. Ellen discerned that Dessa was unusually loyal to her superiors and her work. She looked like her world was ending when told to leave the Observatory, Kiel observed.

When the event had been isolated, a group of Lionguard went in to investigate the fractal with Ellen Kiel staying in the Observatory to observe from the outside. Within the fractal, the Lionguard were turned into an Inquest contingent. The fractal took place minutes before the reactor exploded, and as such the fractal showed off the charts, energy readings, and random teleportations. Upon finding two dead asura, Dessa explains that they used to be part of her former krewe. The group's task was to reach the reactor core and take a sample, however, the reactor was too hot to retrieve the sample so there were tasks first to cool it down. They disabled the colliders in the adjacent labs to lower the temperature.

As minutes passed, the reactor began to overheat drastically. Scarlet Briar was observed within the reactor site. She explains that she warned the Inquest that chaos magic was a misnomer. She was also able to discover a breakthrough in magic, identifying a network of magical channels that crisscrossed the globe. Briar was able to conclude that the type of research the Thaumanova Reactor was used for shouldn't have been done on an intersection of those channels.

When Scarlet disappeared, Dessa observed the energies with the site becoming something of an anomaly. She surmised that the full meltdown was only moments away. The anomaly was observed to be a creature of magical energy that was not seen in Tyria before. Not Dessa nor Kiel were able identify the anomaly. Thereafter, the Thamanova Reactor reached critical mass and exploded.

Later, within the Mistlock Observatory, Kiel gathered the information to take back to Lion's Arch and also asked Dessa to come back with her.[68] Dessa refused explaining she cannot, but Kiel was adamant about not leaving the Observatory is Consortium hands. However, when Dessa attempted to walk through the portal to Lion's Arch, she reappeared back in the Observatory seemingly not remembering any of the events that have transpired. Back in Lion's Arch, Ellen gathered the information on the disaster. She concluded that the Thuamanova Reactor was intended to study chaos magic, however the Inquest drove things in dangerous new directions. The Inquest claimed there was a link between chaos energy and Elder Dragon energy, but they ramped things up past the point of safe operations and caused the meltdown. They were also able to identify channels that this magical energy follows as it courses around and through the globe.

The Origins of Madness



In the new year of 1327 AE, in the Season of the Zephyr, The Vigil began documenting many mysterious probes[69] that were found throughout Tyria, their purpose remaining in secrecy. Within False River Valley in the Shiverpeaks, a grand flying object was sighted portalling in a twisted monstrosity. The giant marionette, resembling a Watchknight, was chained to the flying object. The Durmand Priory surmised that it was a weapon of sorts and were tasked with shutting it down.

It was revealed that the marionette was created by Scarlet Briar, using it as a weapons test for unknown reasons. It was also discovered that the marionette needed clockwork horrors to charge up the weapon so it could be powerful enough to engulf a whole region. Portals were created for the clockwork to reach the power regulators so that they could power the machine. The Priory were able to configure the portal to allow allied access to the power regulators. When the regulators were destroyed, the chains anchoring the marionette were severed and the machine was stalled, albeit will substantial losses to the allies.

Joining the fight against the machine was Marjory, Kasmeer, Rox, and Braham who had all been affected by Scarlet's schemes, as well as a young asuran prodigy named Taimi with her golem Scruffy. Taimi showed extreme admiration for Scarlet and her work, explaining that being a homicidal maniac does not make you any less of a genius in the eyes of the young prodigy.

After the defeat of the marionette, Rox theorized that Scarlet doesn't care whether she wins or loses against them. She explains that she might just be fighting to 'cull the herd'. When the group expressed their concern over the mysterious probes, Taimi reassured them that they are not offensive, but are only used to search for something. Later, Logan Thackeray arrived on the scene only to run into Taimi. The Captain of the Seraph expressed his concern of a child being alone on the battlefield, which Taimi responded by saying that her parents were dead. Logan then agreed to take the small asura to Lion's Arch. Meanwhile Rytlock Brimstone and a group of charr had been studying the probes, deducing that the probes were searching for something magical and huge.

In Lion's Arch, Scholar Ela Makkay of the Durmand Priory began to inform all able bodies of the outlaw Scarlet Briar. The scholar explained the history of the sylvari, explaining what she saw beyond this world broke her mind. She also revealed that the Priory located one of Scarlet's labs[70] under the Durmand Priory. During this time, Rox met up with Rytlock Brimstone about her trial into the Tribune's famous Stone warband. Rytlock explained that Rox would definitely get into the warband if she killed Scarlet Briar. Later, Braham met up with Rox explaining his concern that if she does get into the warband, she will become as tied up as the rest in the secretive warband are. Braham left Rox to ponder only to be interrupted by Logan and Taimi. Logan expressed his distaste that a child was on the battlefield, believing that Braham was her guardian. However, Taimi continued to berate the norn and convinced Logan that they both know each other. Later, Logan met with Marjory Delaqua about concern for how Kasmeer was feeling. Marjory also asked the Captain if he knew anyone by the name of 'E', which Logan didn't. It was also revealed that the Shining Blade have been keeping the Queen tightly close due to the recent events and leaving Logan far away from her. Later, it was discovered that Kasmeer was a former noble of Divinity's Reach whose family went into bankruptcy after Kyle, her brother, gambled all the money. After being bankrupt, her father took the blame for Kyle being taken to prison. Their house and belongings were repossessed, but a ministry guard took pity on the now poor noble. He was allowed to keep any one item so Kasmeer took a stuffed bear that was sentimentally valuable but not financially. Later, her father died in debtor's prison.

The Durmand Priory later went to Scarlet's lair to find information on the sylvari. Many notable things were found within the lair. Many drawings were shown of the pale tree being wrapped by thorns, and a lineup of attempted alliance created by the sylvari.[71] Tables were lined up of equipment such as a miniature probe, clockwork schematics, and an antitoxin injector. There was also found a portrait of Omadd, Scarlet's mentor, on the wall with knives and rips throughout. The most notable item found was a journal written by the sylvari herself. The journal documented the sylvari as she was continuously tormented by an entity in her nightmares. The entity communicated to the sylvari through images of death, destruction, and destiny. Scarlet later was consumed by the entity and was no longer scared. The Durmand Priory set out to find when this journal was written.

Edge of the Mists



At the same time the Twisted Marionette threatened Lornar's Pass, during one night, Aetherblade pirates were able to free their Captain, Mai Trin. During the escape, former vigilante Canach was free to escape with them but chose not to.[72] After Trin's escape, a message was played to the Aetherblade Captain from Scarlet, telling her that she has work for her in the Mists. Thereafter, the Aetherblades were able to create a portal to the Mists for escape. In the commotion, Taimi ran after the captain through the portal, in hopes of getting close to Scarlet with Braham reluctantly behind. The following day, the Lionguard questioned Canach on his nonintervention in the matter. Canach explained that he and Scarlet may share a similar fixation on self-determination but considers himself above it. He seeks to define his role in the world while Scarlets seeks to define the world for her roles. It was revealed that the sylvari did not wish to escape, accepting his punishment. Later, the probe under Lion's Arch turned green, foreboding something unknown.

In the Dead End Bar, Divinity's Reach, Marjory, Kasmeer, and Rox took note of the green probe. They decided they must gather information on the crazed sylvari to better understanding what is in store for the future. Marjory, who is revealed to be in good standing with the Durmand Priory, issued help gathering all the evidence to conduct an investigation. It was also revealed that Marjory and Kasmeer met each other six months ago after Meade's bankruptcy. They have also been a couple for quite some time. Also, Rox was discovered to have a mate, however, he was killed in the mining accident that also took her whole warband.

In a new part of the Mists, Braham and Taimi followed Mai Trin but Taimi's golem was quickly damaged. It was revealed that Taimi has a critical condition that took the ability from her legs. She also assumes that the condition will soon take the rest of her body. It is also revealed that she is a ward of Zojja and Vorrp. She explains that she admires Scarlet's stance on freedom, going beyond the realms of what should be capable for her kind. She also surmises that the probes are after 'transcendent magic channels' that span the globe, or leylines as they are more commonly referred to. She surmises that the leylines are analogous to ocean currents or weather patterns, but with magic instead of water or air. The leylines are paths that magic chooses to follow. In normal situations, they cannot be seen or touched, but they're real.

After Marjory has called in her favors from the Durmand Priory, she, with the help of Vorrp and Kasmeer, begin an investigation on the past year. A piece of Omadd's machine was scavenged, which Vorrp surmised was what broke Scarlet's mind; her madness was an already existing part of her psyche and was simply exposed through the machine. It was also revealed, after studying Molten Alliance technology, that the probes follow the same technology and were used to create them, and that they are probably searching for the leylines beneath Lion's Arch. The attack on the Captain's Council was revealed to be an attempt of Scarlet's to get a puppet on the Council to weaken its defenses from the inside. The Aetherblades were also discovered to be used as air superiority in a war. It was also discovered that the Steam creatures that were found resemble similarities to Scarlet's clockwork machines, explaining how she could take control of them. When studying the toxin from the Tower of Nightmares, Marjory discovered that it was resistant to the antitoxin that was used beforehand. It was revealed that Scarlet wanted them to create an antitoxin so she can create a more potent mix, capable of taking out an entire city. Scarlet's Journal was also revealed to have timestamps dating the entries from 1322 AE to 1323 AE. It was discovered that something is taking control of her partially. Scarlet believing that this is all for her, while the entity believes to be the cause of the plan.

With this information, the three were able to conclude that Scarlet is planning an unstoppable raid on Lion's Arch. Information was sent to Kiel to push for air defenses, but the other Captain's Council members denied it believing that they have stopped her ploys before and they can do so again.

Escape from Lion's Arch



Then came the fateful day to Lion's Arch that would be known to all who called it home. During this time, Aetherblade airships snuck into Lion's Arch from above and began the assault on the free city, destroying the asura gates to stop reinforcements. After the surprise attack from the skies, Molten and Toxic Alliance infantry began to swarm the city, the molten borrowing up through the ground and the toxic arriving by sea. As the invasion continued, a grand flying platform entered Sanctum Harbor from the skies. The machine began to drill unto the same exact position of the probe in Lion's Arch.

A few hours passed as the factions continued to overwhelm the Lionguard. They decided to desperately hold rally points within the city as citizens escaped to nearby refugee camps. Rox and Braham, alongside others, held Trader's Forum as civilians attempted to escape. The factions were noted not to have much way in organization or strategy, but were made up for in numbers. They surmised that these factions group are securing the city only to keep the Lionguard distracted from the machine in the harbor.

As the invasion continued, the factions began to unleash a miasma[73] into the air that slowly engulfed the region. Kasmeer and Marjory held a rally point in the Postern Ward as an emergency asura gate was activated to the Durmand Priory. The Lionguard held their main force in the south, in Fort Marriner.

Some citizens were able to flee the city, including Evon Gnashblade. The merchant of the Black Lion Trading Company attempted to flee the city herding his valuable merchant doylaks with him. The main gates of the city were destroyed in the beginning assault except one. The gate was reconfigured and protected by

Captain Shud. Gnashblade went through the remaining gate and was somehow able to close the gate behind him, effectively trapping Shud and the citizens within the city.

The workers at the lighthouse also attempted to flee except Priest Graidy, the keeper of the place. The lighthouse, which was stationed to ferry ships into the harbor, was used to warn approaching vessels about the danger in the city. Despite the protest by his daughter, Ellyna Graidy, Priest Graidy stayed in the lighthouse while the others escaped. His fate is unknown at this time.

Captain Magnus the Bloody-Handed spearheaded the Lionguard defense in Fort Marriner. During a skirmish with the Molten Alliance, Captain Magnus was injured, losing an eye. The attack was repelled as Captain Ellen Kiel was able to get to the city via her previously owned Aetherblade airship. The miasma soon reached critical levels and forced the Lionguard to escape under Kiel's orders. Magnus, determined to hold the fort, which was never lost in all his time alive, denied the order. However, Kiel stood up to her now equal and forced Magnus on the airship along with Canach and Lawson Marriner. The remaining Lionguard and the others that survived fled the city.

As the result of the attack many camps were erected surrounding the city, the most prominent being in Vigil Keep, Bouldermouth Vale, and Stormbluff Isle. In response to the attack, Divinity's Reach was able to send their hot air balloons to aid in the relief effort[74]. The Vigil chose to aid the wounded and opened up their doors to the refugees. Within the camp, the healers were swamped with dealing with the wounded from force trauma, combat wounds, and most of all, the miasma gas. They concluded that the gas was able to kill one out of every two patients[75]. The gas was also observed to be highly caustic; most expire in agony when inhaled. The field hospital was stationed in the open air (to the dismay of the healing squad), due to the Vigil's infirmary being packed with wounded.

Within the field hospital, Heal-O-Tron (formally Ho-Ho-Tron[76]) willingly volunteered to the help the wounded.[77] Heal-O-Tron was able to observe that the infection appeared to be counteracted by 'subaether harmonics in a localized energy field'. Later on, The Seraph appeared within the camp looking for the golem, demanding that it was aiding and abetting Scarlet Briar. When the Seraph attempted to capture the golem, it escaped to the Vigil Keep.

Within the Vigil Keep, Evon Gnashblade continued to show strong resentment towards Ellen Kiel and Magnus, determined that if they heeded his warnings, the city would've been saved. Later on, the charr merchant was conscripted into Lionguard services under emergency law.[78] Since failure to cooperate would result in execution, Evon begrudgingly accepted, being upgraded to Quartermaster. It was later revealed that Evon's deputizing was Captain Ellen Kiel's idea. Meanwhile, Heal-O-Tron met up with Gnashblade and requested upgrades to his defensive unit (the golem asked for no weapons). Heal-O-Tron explained that he was going to aid in the assault against Scarlet to earn to goodwill of the Seraph. The golem, offering no gold for Evon's service, was going to be denied. However, Gnashblade theorised that this act might gain some attention of the Captain Council, and so agreed to help.

Within the camp, Taimi continued to question the refugees about whether Scarlet was sighted in the attack of Lion's Arch. She explained that she no longer wants to work with the mass murderer but only to observe her. It is also revealed the Zojja, her ward, does not know she is at the Vigil Keep.

In the Bouldermouth Vale camp in Lornar's Pass, Kasmeer and Marjory waited until the miasma dissipated. They expressed their concern for the outcome, explaining for every person they evacuate, three more die. More was revealed about Marjory's history. She joined the Ministry Guard as soon as she was able. It was revealed that she regularly sees her mother and her sisters but not her father. She explained to Kasmeer that her father 'isn't like yours was'. Shortly after she quit the guard, she joined the Durmand Priory, knowing she could tap into a good source of information to be a detective. She expressed that the Order of Whispers were too secretive for her taste.

Within the same camp, the Priory observed that the gas weapon isn't the same as the nightmare pollen from the Tower of Nightmares. They also concluded that it doesn't correspond to any known antitoxin. They also discovered, through the hylek, that the poison can work its way out of a person's system—if in small doses. Later on, the Priory began to question the refugees, however they showed classic signs of mental trauma.

Battle of Lion's Arch



As the days passed by, the miasma was pushed out into the Sea of Sorrows by the wind. The Lionguard were able to regroup with the three orders to storm into Lion's Arch to establish rally points and take the fight to Scarlet. The first group to re-enter the battlefield was the 14th Lionguard Security Force[79] as they attempted to establish a foothold in the battered remains of their city. They were able to breach the city and hold Trader's Forum until reinforcements arrived.

When reinforcements arrived on the scene, Scarlet sent out her main assault knights, twisted forms of clockwork that made a mockery of the Rata Sum colleges. Magnus, now without his left eye, led the attack against the machines. Without the miasma the allies were able to gain ground closer to Scarlet's drill mechanism, The Breachmaker. However, with Scarlet still alive, Magnus theorised they will soon reach a stalemate. He ordered a Lionguard contingent, including Ellen Kiel, to board the airship and kill Scarlet once and for all. Rox, Braham, Kasmeer, and Marjory volunteered to enter the airship, as well as Heal-O-Tron (who was outfitted with defensive capabilities now).

Getting into the Breachmaker was difficult, however, the allies were able to reconfigure teleportation machines used by the assault knights to reach the airship.[80] When the contingent arrived on the drill, Scarlet used a powerful hologram of herself against them. As the battle raged, the hologram began taxing on Scarlet's energy, so she opted to fight herself refusing to let the contingent disassemble her last line of defense. When the fighting continued beyond what Scarlet anticipated, she rerouted the power from the drilling mechanism to increase the Breachmaker's capacity to multitask. However, energy expulsion continued to be an issue for the sylvari as the contingent held their ground. She then resorted to fragmenting the hologram to lower its power usage. Finally, Scarlet ran out of patience, as opted to used all her energy[81] into clearing the contingent. But ultimately the hologram was disassembled and Scarlet was injured in its process. She screamed as she escaped into the Breachmaker's lower levels, determined not to let the drilling fail.

In the disassembling, Kiel was injured and chose to retreat through the portal. Heal-O-Tron followed the captain choosing to heal the Lionguard instead of running after Scarlet. Rox, Braham, Kasmeer, and Marjory followed Scarlet to the lower depths of the Breachmaker, only to find the crazed sylvari on the ground attempting to hold her own. Braham told Rox to finish the job so she could finally get into the Stone Warband. When they caught up to Scarlet, she began to ask if any of them wondered why she began all the chaos and destruction. Braham denied the sylvari, choosing not to give her any fleeting satisfaction. She began to explain that

‘Tyria will bow before a new master’. When she questioned what her fate was, Marjory drew her dagger and began to walk towards the downed engineer. Before Marjory could get the job done, Scarlet set of an explosion that threw all of them back.

In the explosion, Braham broke his leg while Rox was far enough behind to survive without fatal wounds. The norn told Rox to go after Scarlet for the Stone Warband, but she chose to stay with her injured friend instead. Kasmeer went to check on Marjory (who took the brunt of the blast). However, she was unmoving and unresponsive to Kasmeer. The mesmer believed her to be dead.

Kasmeer, enraged over the apparent death of her lover, began to attack Scarlet, ready to avenge Marjory Delaqua. Kasmeer continued to try to get near Scarlet, but the sylvari used all manner of grenades and explosives to keep the mesmer at bay. She expressed that she won't let anyone spoil what was inevitable. With illusions, Kasmeer was successful is finishing off Scarlet Briar. In her dying breath, the sylvari explained that they were all fools in thinking her death saved them. During this time, Rox was able to check on Marjory. The charr was able to save the human from certain death. Braham explained that it was a good thing Rox stayed behind.

Over Scarlet’s decaying body, the machine turned blue as the drill struck the leylines. Under the Breachmaker, blue light poured into Lion’s Arch as a line of light was seen moving into the outlying regions. The line of light continued to the Thaumanova Reactor and beyond. The light continued downwards as a pair of enormous teeth began to open. Mordremoth has awakened!

Battle for Lion's Arch: Aftermath



The Breachmaker reached critical mass. It soon spiraled out of control and exploded. Fragments of the airship were sent through the ruined city of Lion’s Arch, changing the very landscape and razing the ground itself.

As the battle ended and the invaders were driven out, a somber mood fell over the ruins. Squatters began to take to the former city looking for a place to stay, even after the advice from the Lionguard[82] that the city is currently uninhabitable. Soon after, looters[83] began to pick apart the city for anything they could find.[84]

Within the ruins, three memorials were erected for those who had died in the battle of Lion’s Arch, those who have gone missing in the attack, and finally those who showed great prowess and heroic attributes during the invasion. The first wall is a monument that displays the names of those citizens, Lionguard, and brave volunteers who fell[85] during Scarlet’s siege of Lion’s Arch.[86] The second wall showed all who perished in the attack. Near the wall is Ellyna Graidy, daughter of the late Priest Graidy. The priest was confirmed to have died in the attack when he chose to use the lighthouse to warn ships to stay away. The wall with the missing persons is filled with fliers[87] and crude pictures[88] inquiring about missing Lion’s Arch citizens, some simple drawings by children who lost their parents. The last wall bears a list of names and an inscription that reads, “Let it be known that these brave souls saved Lion’s Arch in its darkest hour. May history regard them as heroes. “

Among the looters and gawkers, the Pact[89] made an official appearance through the sylvari member Laranthir of the Wild. In Lion’s Arch, he was there representing the Pact and, by extension, the orders. Laranthir explains that the reason the pact did not officially help save Lion’s Arch is because that is not the mission of the orders.[90] They have been tasked with slaying the Elder Dragons. Defending a city from an attack falls outside their charter. However when a dragon’s cry was heard throughout the realm, the Pact decided to make an appearance. The Pact believes that Scarlet’s drilling roused a dragon. Laranthir explains that if they had known that was her plan, they could have justified getting involved in the affairs of the independent city.[91]

Meanwhile within the Dead End bar, in the Eastern Commons of Divinity’s Reach, Kasmeer, Marjory, Rox, and Braham had a celebration of their victory over Scarlet Briar. Braham is limping from his broken leg throughout the celebration. Later on, Taimi enters the bar to join the group. She explains that what heard throughout Tyria was a dragon’s cry. They surmise that the leylines were an ocean of magic and Scarlet threw a giant rock in the ocean, sending ripples out to the dragon. After a while, Seraph Belinda Delaqua entered the bar looking for little sister, Marjory.[92] She explains that she was sent by her mother to check up on her wellbeing. It was revealed that Marjory was very snooty growing up, as she often ordered all the other kids around even if she was the youngest.[93] Belinda later left the bar, explaining she will be sent on a long expedition into the Brisban Wildlands in a week. A group of black-market traders have been disrupting the economy within Divinity’s Reach, and reports state they are located in the wildlands. After she left, Taimi explains that Zojja was furious with her roaming the campsites. However the asura believes that Zojja does not care about her, but only about her record. If Taimi does well, it reflects positively on Zojja as her college mentor. Rox explains that she is hiding in the human bar from Rytlock Brimstone. She is afraid to report to the Tribune since she technically failed to kill Scarlet.[94] So she has been ignoring his summons. So there the group sat, enjoying each other’s company in this fragile time.

To be continued...

---

1. The main context is written in the Mouvelian Calendar which starts with the Exodus of the Six Human Gods.↩
2. The Wolfborn are a nomadic group controlled by Sigfast and Skart, sons of Knut Whitebear.↩
3. The Adamant Guard is a subdivision of the Iron Legion, issued with the safety of the Black Citadel.↩
4. Many similar reports were made about the Sons of Svanir, Flame Legion, other groups. The accounts were dismissed for their obscurity.↩
5. Lionguard reports state that the Consortium set up the shelter without the approval of the Ship’s Council.↩
6. Previous records state that the Consortium were directly the cause of the Karka Invasion of 1325 AE.↩
7. The war council was convened by Smoder the Unflinching and housed many of the Tribunes available.↩
8. Braham chose to go to the Black Citadel for aid first due to his resentment towards his mother in Hoelbrak.↩
9. Including Ottilia, a crush of Braham, which ultimately gave him reason to strike the weapon facilities.↩
10. Her warband the, the Pick warband, was killed while Rox was away.↩
11. The training facility is operated by a Blood Legion warband, the Whip warband.↩
12. Siege Devourers are a special breed used in military warfare.↩
13. Those that deny giving fire magic to the Dredge are killed unmercilessly.↩

14. The charr have been performing Baelfire rituals more regularly.↩
15. Records show that Primordus was discounted as the reason for the alliance.↩
16. The refugees had to sign a contract which most denied to read, legally binding them to the island.↩
17. The Consortium are determined into making a profit from the island, refusing to waste any opportunity.↩
18. Norn were more likely to be passive, due to their history of running from Jormag.↩
19. Some Lionguards, such as Turma, disliked the need for deputization of outsiders, and saw no need for such action.↩
20. One account found in Lionguard reports was the attack of Aggren Vicegrip, who took on three Consortium agents.↩
21. Whether Meade was on the island for business or pleasure cannot be said for certain; certain information might suggest she escaped her family's scandals.↩
22. Levvi was able to stop the Karka Invasion in 1325 AE, by creating a solvent that can penetrate their shells.↩
23. Canach was incarcerated in 1325 AE due to provoking the karka which started the following karka invasion on the pirate city of Lion's Arch.↩
24. The change, according to the sylvari anatomy, can be caused by hardships, temperature, stress, or can be changed willingly, though rare.↩
25. The Consortium use passive-aggressive means that stay within the confines of the law unless the agent must be eliminated such as the case of Canach.↩
26. Under Canach, the golem was renamed NULL and was used as a defense mechanism against the Lionguard.↩
27. Garrot was killed instantly in the attack as he was the closest to the discharge.↩
28. Reports state Trembling Song, Astorra, Vorrk, Morraloo, and Kasparak were the individuals that fled the scene, but they were later discounted as suspects.↩
29. The other two captains suffered major inflictions but survived as they were the furthest away from the discharge.↩
30. She left the Ministry Guard after a conspiracy against a Minister caused the death of a young child named Mendel.↩
31. Records say she was grabbed so intimately that her fighting instincts never kicked in.↩
32. The area was created to be used permanently. Evidence states they stayed hidden in the mountain for quite some time.↩
33. The interrogation were mostly unfruitful. The pirates showed unusual loyalty and laughed maniacally when questioned.↩
34. Lion's Arch law demands every captain to have a 'second' to take the place of the Captain if anything so happened to them, as life on the pirate city is almost short lived.↩
35. Lion's Arch law states that only a captain can be on the council. A captain was defined as one who had a vessel as well as a crew to use the ship.↩
36. Originally, Lion's Arch law dictates that to get into the Council, the captain must get a majority vote and can buy their way into the seat. However if a majority cannot be formed, an election is used.↩
37. Due to the nomadic lifestyle of the Zephyrites, a trading agreement would benefit both parties but they stayed reluctant due to the pirate's selfish lifestyle.↩
38. The Labyrinthine Cliffs is mostly uninhabited except for a few krait offshore, making it an ideal area for the illegal marketplace.↩
39. Regardless of their suspicions of others around them, they will sometimes accept those who choose to abandon their old lifestyle for the Zephyrites.↩
40. Aria Gnashfang, the war leader, chose to extort the city through force which was thought to be too simple for the pirate city.↩
41. The Zephyrites, being suspicious of the pirates, chose to invest into the captain who showed loyalty, a trait they thought was hard to find in pirates.↩
42. Kiel was able to get 52% of the votes.↩
43. The symbol was used because the griffon is a very common creature in Kryta, later becoming synonymous with the kingdom.↩
44. After the fall of Ascalon and the destruction of Orr, Kryta become the only human kingdom left in the Tyrian continent. This led to many to consider that humanity had fallen.↩
45. The Watchknights were shaped in female forms to represent Queen Jennah's defence of the city and the kingdom.↩
46. Rytlock used the same insult he used in 1325 AE, "I could say the same about YOU, human. Crawling back for forgiveness, Logan?"↩
47. The guards that were put on patrol were royally titled "Honor Guards" as it was seen so to guard the Queen.↩
48. The arena level is controlled with a metallic mechanism that closes the area when the festivities are not in effect. Scarlet was able to tamper with this and used portals to go in and out whenever she pleased.↩
49. This is in reference to the lifecycle of the sylvari: awakening, learning, exploring, and ultimately death.↩
50. Scarlet only learned the most basic metalsmithing seen in her crafts, but she never expanding her knowledge to create more advanced metals.↩
51. The first contact the asura had with the sylvari was with one of their firstborn, Melomedies, where they kidnapped him and tested on him. The event left a sour taste but ultimately left the asura with a heightened sense of curiosity towards the plantlings.↩
52. Records show that she learnt only rudimentary college course, grasping the basics of both Statics and Dynamics before moving on to Synergetics.↩
53. She learnt alchemy and poisons from the hylek tribe, later using the knowledge in her clockwork horrors.↩
54. It is theorised by the Priory that this is where she got her namesake; Scarlet Briar.↩
55. The Arbor continued to uphold its natural defense, which Scarlet used to her advantage.↩
56. Caithe followed a different path to the Lionguard, choosing to stay hidden.↩
57. The holograms, stolen technology from Dragon Bash, depicted the Aetherblades and are recorded to explode upon impact.↩
58. Faolain, a former lover of Caithe, was a firstborn sylvari that was taken by the Nightmare while Caithe stayed loyal to the Dream.↩
59. Auld Red Wharf, a former town near the lake, was also razed to the ground in the process.↩
60. She was able to do by searching for a magical 'weak spot' in the gigantic veil.↩
61. Member of note was Katterik, a skritt who died to the effects, as well as Kari, an Arcanist who was trapped by the krait for weeks.↩
62. While it made the toxic air safer, the enemies continued to be a threat, not be mention the scout force that attempted to erect purifies within the structure.↩
63. However, she was known to be uncoordinated in the ways of battle, becoming seemingly clumsy.↩
64. The Oratuss are the religious leaders of the krait. Since there are no written language with the serpentine race, the words of the Oratuss are followed as dogma.↩
65. Notable examples include Bloomanoo, Peneloopee, and Eereesh of the quaggan race.↩
66. To stay in the running with the financially secure Evon, she had to promise research which both Levvi and Magnus were going to back up no matter the outcome.↩
67. This asura still to this day is an enigma to most. Not much is known about her except she works for the Consortium.↩
68. Kiel was determined not to let such powerful research to stay in the hands of the Consortium but unforeseen circumstances left Kiel unwilling to do so.↩
69. The probes were noted to electrify you when you make contact with them as well as disturb underground creatures, making them aggressive.↩
70. The lab used the same holographic technology the Aetherblades used to hide their airports and training facilities.↩
71. It is important to note Scarlet also attempted to make alliances (unsuccessfully) between different races and organizations in Tyria.↩
72. Lion's Arch law states that a prisoner may carry out his sentence in the brig or can have his/her billet payed so the sentence can be carried out in the service of their buyer.↩
73. Reports from the Second Medical Response Squad state that the miasma felt like being scraped from the inside out. Many being infected with coughs and blindness for life.↩
74. Captain Hao Luen, who was in control of the Xunlai Bank in Lion's Arch, expressed his resentment towards the human capital for only sending balloons.↩
75. Those that inhaled too much of the gas were beyond aid.↩
76. The golem was first issued as Job-O-Tron on Southsun Cove as a Consortium 'Job Consultant'. After the attack on the island, the golem became Hobo-Tron begging in the Jubilee of Queen Jennah in Kryta. After the golem was accused of involvement with Scarlet Briar, Ho-Ho-Tron was committed to volunteer work in Lion's Arch during Wintersday 1326 A.E.↩
77. During his time with the Consortium, the golem was programmed with an extensive medical and biological database.↩
78. The law, stated under General Emergency Statute 14, allows for the Lionguard to take control of any mercantile groups to act as deputy quartermasters outfitting all active personnel. Failure to do so would result in confiscation of the users wares and a summary execution by firing squad.↩
79. The 14th Lionguard Security Force's motto is 'Marriner's Might'.↩
80. This was done by using the same energy frequencies the Assault Knights used, thus 'tricking' the mechanism into giving access.↩
81. Notes from the battle state she used some sort of 'dark energy' to power her holograms.↩
82. Only those with a working permit (which can only be permitted by the Captain's Council), or those visiting the memorials are legally allowed within the premises.↩
83. Grave robbers have also been sighted in the ruins.↩
84. After the defeat of the infamous Scarlet Briar, the city has also begun to get tourists who want to gape at the ruin of the once great city.↩
85. The exact number is not known but it is believed that Scarlet had killed thousands in the attack.↩

86. Confirmed to be dead are: Dashiel Howeet, Robert Trinitie, Doc Halvern, Jaf Radlay, Rella, Jikk, Melinna, and Syniad. ↩

87. Once such example is Neomi. 28, Krytan, brown hair. Last seen near the Huntsman's Station. ↩

88. Another is Voppa. 8, red hair, brown eyes. Last seen in the Trading Forum.↩

89. The Pact is an alliance between the three orders. It was founded to battle and slay the Elder Dragons.↩

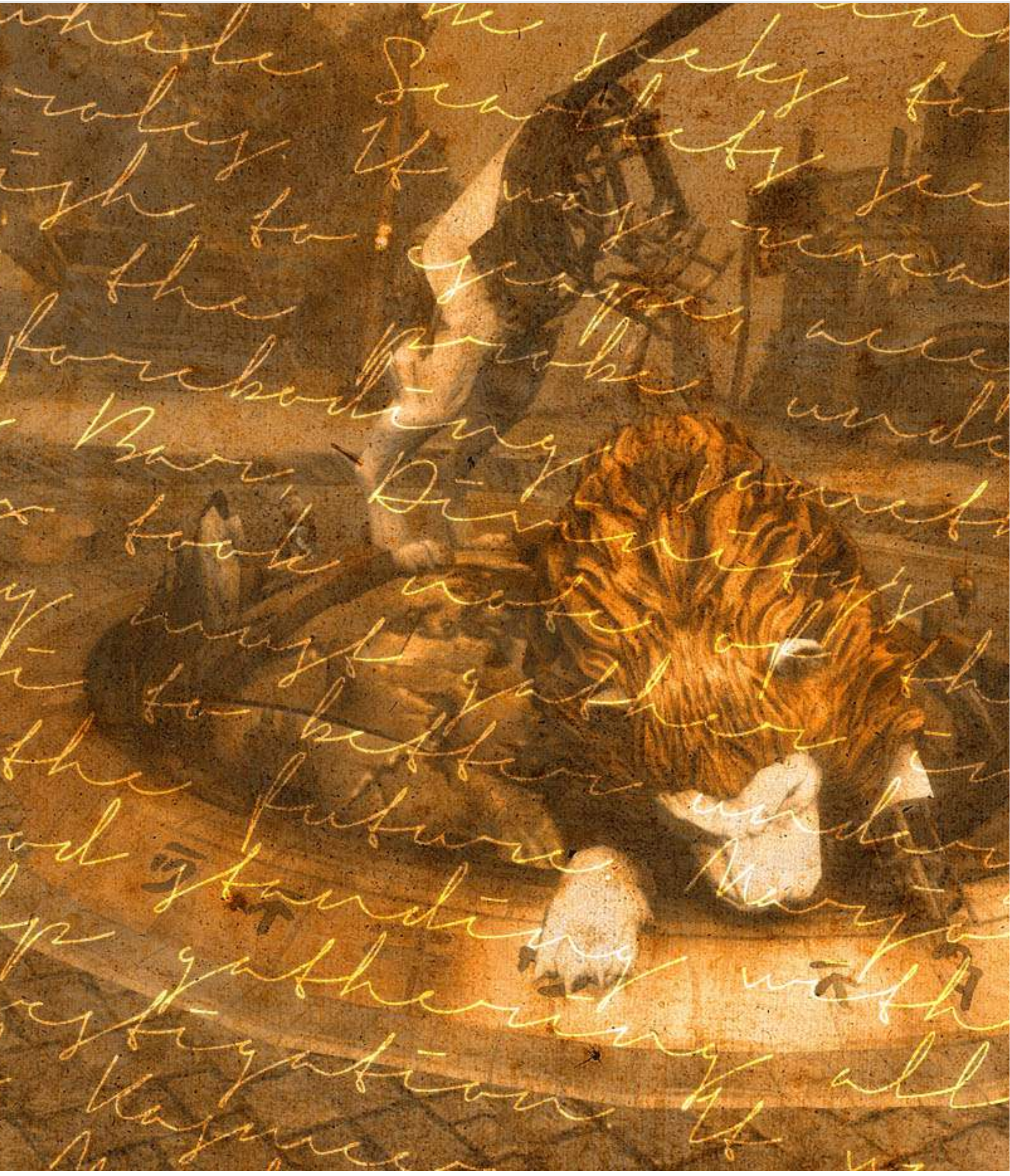
90. Please note that although the Pact was not officially involved, the three orders (which make the pact) all had a hand in the defense of the city.↩

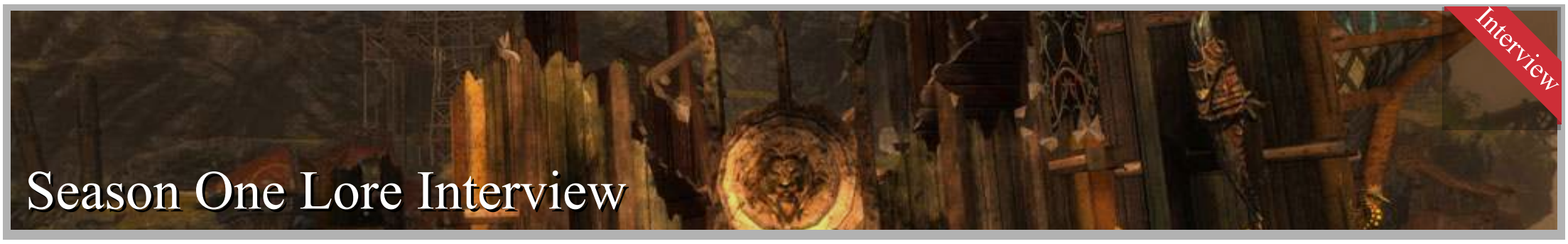
91. By law, the Pact has no obligation (legal, militaristic, or otherwise) to get involved in the attack. Their jurisdiction falls only on the affairs of the Elder Dragons. Scarlet's attack was thought to be (by many, not only the Pact) an independent attack on an independent city that the Pact had no ties to.↩

92. They both had nicknames for each other; Big Beli and Little Miss Marjie.↩

93. By her sister's words, she describes Marjory as always been such a loner.↩

94. In charr society, choosing to not kill a target (regardless of technicalities) is going against your superior, which gives them the right to kill the criminal on the spot for their actions.↩





Season One Lore Interview

Questions by the GuildMag Team, answered by Angel McCoy and Scott McGough

With the first season of the Living World over and done with, many of us were still left with several lore-related questions unanswered. In search of some answers, we've taken these lingering questions to Angel McCoy and Scott McGough; two of ArenaNet's finest lore buffs, and members of the narrative team. With topics ranging from the karka and the Toxic Hybrid, to Scarlet's alliances and Mai Trin, you're sure to learn more about what's been happening over the last year and a half.

GuildMag: During The Lost Shores, Zommoros hints at the age of the aquatic races mentioned (Hylek, Quaggan, and Largos) – calling at least one of them ancient; and he makes mention of knowing the karka from a time when the continents were a different shape. Furthermore Matthew Medina in a forum post around the time of the release stated that the karka had experienced dragon corruption before. Just how old are these five races and where any around during the previous Elder Dragon awakening?

Zommoros was speaking in typically grand and poetic fashion when he called out that the karka have been around for a long time. Zommoros suggests players interview "the aquatics, those that swim and have swum since ancient times" to find out more about the karka, but that doesn't necessarily mean those races (hylek, quaggan, largos) are old enough to have experienced dragon corruption first-hand. There's ancient, and there's *ancient.*

As the karka aren't capable of speech, it's very difficult to accurately gauge how long they've existed, or if they have any Elder Dragon experience. Zommoros is powerful and wise, but he's not always a reliable source. Levvi and others will have to dig deeper into the karka's history before Tyria can declaratively state exactly how long they've been around.

GuildMag: In The Secret of Southsun and Last Stand at Southsun, some strange tentacles were added to the Karka Hive. On top of that, there was the Sclerite Backpack featuring similar tentacles. The only bit about the deep sea dragon is that it twists water into tentacle minions; are these tentacles tied to the deep sea dragon, or to the karka? Neither? Both?

Short answer: neither. Long answer: only to the karka, and only kind of. The tentacles on the karka hive and the Sclerite Backpack are meant to be evocative of the effect Canach's Fervid Censer toxin had on the island's inhabitants, especially the karka.



GuildMag: While most of the other members of Scarlet's alliances were known beforehand, the Aetherblades have been a completely new entity. Before Scarlet linked them with the inquest to give them stolen airship and lightning-based technology, just who were the Aetherblades? Were they a single pirate group under Mai Trin or some other leader even before Scarlet approached them? Were they recruited as individuals from the pirate and outlaw community in general, or formed through the amalgamation of several smaller bands? Or is their background something else, possibly even one that is a total mystery to the inhabitants of Tyria as well as us players looking in on the game world through our limited filter?

The Aetherblades started out as a particularly greedy and bloodthirsty pirate crew in which Mai Trin held high rank; when Scarlet found them and presented them with Inquest magitech, they became far more dangerous and far more successful at the business of pirating. Officers like Mai kept the Aetherblades organized and active, and their ranks swelled as more and more unaffiliated pirates and pirate bands signed on, lured by the promise of easy money and power. Once they were in they found it problematic to get out again, as Scarlet had plenty of work for them to do and kept them hard at it or they'd face her wrath.

GuildMag: It's never revealed - yet at least - why the Nightmare Court splinter group joined Scarlet; this is a bit weird since Scarlet has expressed distaste for both Dreamers and Courtiers, though it's clear she went to them for their knowledge in plant altering magic. But why did they agree to work with her?

The splinter group of Nightmare Courtiers that worked with Scarlet did so to further the main objective of their organization: adding more Nightmare to the Dream. What a better opportunity to do so than to join with Scarlet and spread terror, destruction, and death?

GuildMag: In The Nightmare Ends instance prior to the fall of the Tower of Nightmares, we find a note indicating that Scarlet has a particular dislike for humans for "getting in the way". Is this simply referring to the Shining Blade preventing her from nabbing Jennah during the Jubilee, or is there something deeper there?

This line is an expression of Scarlet's superiority complex and her habit of treating anyone that isn't part of her plan as an annoyance. She also has a long-standing disdain for humans, who collectively (in her view) have not made the kind of magi-mechanical advances the asura or charr have (evidenced by the fact that as Ceara, she never studied or sought to study with human engineers before she became Scarlet).

That said, yes, it's also in part due to the Shining Blade interfering with her plan to take Jennah hostage (and winding up with Lord Faren instead).

GuildMag: What, exactly, is the Toxic Hybrid? Also on the Toxic Hybrid – during the fight, the Hybrid says “No! I cannot be the last of my kind” and yet by all appearances, it is the first. What exactly did he mean?

The Toxic Hybrid started out as a regular krait that was transformed while inside the tower. It thought it was being transformed into a Prophet. Perhaps it was. Perhaps it wasn't. We may never know, but the krait believed it was. Not only did players stop them from creating any more of these monsters, but they killed the one that had been made.

The Toxic Hybrid spoke those words because it is the first and last of its kind. It's expressing shock and dismay as it dies, as it expected to be the first of many such monsters to emerge from the tower.

GuildMag: What was the point of Scarlet's many invasions? Just general chaos, or something more? They weren't even touched upon as of late.

Scarlet's invasions were a series of tactical plays, each leading toward the eventual assault on Lion's Arch. She tested her armies and devices, confiscated materials, and built fear in the hearts of Tyrians. In her grand finale, she invaded Lion's Arch in order to gain unhindered access to the ley lines beneath the city, so that she could poke the dragons with it. The repercussions of her actions have not yet fully played out.

GuildMag: We don't seem to see Mai Trin in the invasion of Lion's Arch. Nor do we ever see any named leader of Scarlet's other alliances. Where were they during this time?

Mai Trin remained in the Edge of the Mists map, mustering, staging, and sending out Aetherblades for the big attack on Lion's Arch. It remains to be seen if she will stay there now that Scarlet's out of the picture.

Leaders of the other alliances were in similar situations, and tasked with making sure their followers showed up to crush Lion's Arch in overwhelming numbers. The only reason people know Mai Trin's name is because she got caught. None of the other leaders have been caught, and thus, they remain a mystery.





Fire from the Ground: The Molten Alliance

Written by Konig

In the northern lands of the Shiverpeaks and Ascalon, the weather unleashed itself uncontrollably. Snowstorms raged and dust storms bellowed, and steam erupted from the ground. What many thought to be the activities of the Elder Dragon Primordus turned out to be something far more mundane, and yet far less predictable: the Molten Alliance.

The Molten Alliance is the combined forces of dredge and Flame Legion, utilizing sonic technology and fire magic to create devastating new weaponry. They appeared suddenly, capable of working behind the scenes and gather forces and weaponry due to the Orders' preoccupation with the Elder Dragons and the Pact's invasion of Orr, and struck disastrous blows against both norn and charr. Though Wayfarer Foothills and Diessa Plateau took the brunt of the assaults, the Molten Alliance's attacks spread even into Snowden Drifts, Plains of Ashford, and Iron Marches.

Though stopped before they could succeed in their ultimate plan, the Molten Alliance had enslaved charr and norn alike to mine out the newly discovered azurite gemstones, and melt them down into new magic-conducting metal ingots. They mixed flame magic with sound-inducing technologies to create weapons capable of sending whirls of flame to devastate their foes. All of this in the hopes of lying siege to Hoelbrak and the Black Citadel, the largest homes of their native foes.

Oppressed People of the Depths

The known history of the dredge is one of only 250 years of age, approximately. At the beginning of our records on the race of bipedal mole-like beings, they lived underground and enslaved to the Stone Summit, a faction of dwarves led by Dagnar Stonepate. When the Stone Summit's civil war with Deldrimor ended in their defeat in 1072 AE, many dredge gained freedom, though others were taken north by the exiled Stone Summit, where they gained said freedom six years later. In time, the dredge took the Stone Summit's main base of operations, Sorrow's Furnace, as their own and renamed it Sorrow's Embrace – and they took many other dwarven ruins as they expanded their growing civilization.

In recent years, however, while preaching the freedom of the dredge race and marching ever more into the surface lands – as well as deeper below, becoming dangerously close to the destroyers of Primordus – their government underwent a covered up coup d'état as War Minister Shukov and his promoted generals took control of the moletariate (the government of the dredge formed by the leaders of the revolution that freed them). And Shukov's first move was enlisting the aid of the Inquest, and enslaving his people through statements of "patriotism through labor," while harnessing the destroyers' power. This led to another revolt – one that killed Shukov and many of his generals, with the intent of the moletariate being reborn.



However, whether the revolution ended or not, is unknown. And then Scarlet Briar came, convincing the moletariate (new or old is unclear) to join forces with the Flame Legion – and they agreed.

The Charr Who Seek Godhood

The history of the Flame Legion is far larger, but only the past 450 years is of importance. Until roughly around 870 AE, charr were seeking out gods to call their own in hopes of reclaiming Ascalon; this stopped when the Burnt Warband of the Flame Legion discovered the titans at the volcano Hrangmer, and the shaman caste (comprised of all legions but Flame held the most numbers) adopted them as their much-desired gods. In 1070 AE, Ascalon burned in the Searing, but two years later their so-called gods were slaughtered before the charr's very eyes, and a revolt began a year later, led by Pyre Fierceshot. This revolt ended with the act of his grandchild, Kalla Scorchrazor, by uniting enslaved females, Iron Legion, and Blood Legion, and defeating the Flame Legion on the Plains of Golghein. A battle that would cost Kalla's life in the aftermath. But the Flame Legion were beaten, and forced into the Blazeridge to lick their wounds – surviving only by the other three legions turning on themselves for control of the lands.



In recent years, the Flame Legion returned led by Imperator Gaheron Baelfire, who had discovered magic to make him nearly invincible as well as having the Eternal Flame (which allows resurrection of the dead, an art long lost) in his possession, and thus obtaining the near-god-like status that the Flame Legion, and perhaps all charr in the distant past, desired. But even then, with the combined forces of Priory, Whispers, and Vigil, led by Pact Commanders and the Destiny's Edge members Logan Thackeray and Rytlock Brimstone, Gaheron was toppled, and the Flame Legion fell into civil war amongst the Tribunes and those attempting to resurrect Gaheron about who would take leadership.

And with their backs to the wall, fighting themselves and enemy alike, Scarlet Briar came, offering a faction of the Flame Legion technology to crush their foes. They accepted, with their own ulterior motives in mind.

From the Depths of Deception

The exact details of how Scarlet appeared before the dredge and Flame Legion are still unknown. She appeared before a faction of both groups, rather than the whole, and offered to them what they needed.

To the Flame Legion, she promised the sound technology of the dredge, claiming that the dredge had already agreed to work for her – and seeing that the dredge agreed, the Flame Legion agreed as well. Many would think that due to the Flame Legion's subjugation of female charr, that they would not agree to work with Scarlet due to her gender. However, the Flame Legion viewed her as a tool – a tool to regain their lost glory, just as they viewed the dredge. They held every intention to later enslave the dredge once the Flame had obtained all the dredge's secret – an act that never came to be. What they intended to do to Scarlet afterwards, if anything, is unknown.

Scarlet Briar had approached the dredge in a similar manner. She knew that they required fire magic, and had promised the Flame Legion's magic, claiming that they worked for her already. The dredge, desperate for power, agreed. Though typically the dredge are xenophobic, they view the sylvari in higher regard than other races (asura and sylvari are the only races hinted at being viewed nicely by the dredge), and it was their faction's desperation that led them to agree to work with the suppressing Flame Legion. What, if any, plans they had for after getting their worth from the alliance remains unknown.

To both groups, Scarlet had lied. She promised each side that the other had already agreed, though they did not. After the Molten Alliance was formed, they realized they were betrayed, but as they were already working together, they did not let the issue last. Though other issues, the two groups' dislike for each other amongst them, did not settle so easily. As the two groups continued working together, ties stressed and individuals on both sides disagreed with giving their secrets – from the Flame Legion, the Baelfire ritual; from the dredge, the sonic technology – to the other side. Those dissenters were all killed swiftly.

With Sonic Flame, They Came



The first appearance of the Molten Alliance was in the beginning of the Season of the Zephyr in 1326 AE, months after the defeat of The Elder Dragon Zhaitan. They have been working together underground after the deaths of War Minister Shukov and Imperator Gaheron Baelfire. The first evidence of their existence came in the altered weather if Diessa Plateau and Wayfarer Foothills, where Ridgefield and blizzards formed from increased temperatures underground, followed by the eruptions of geysers. Then the Alliance struck with fury, slaughtering and enslaving the inhabitants of the assaulted areas.

Of the assaulted places were fahrars, slaughtered mercilessly, charr ranches, norn homesteads, and even the Sons of Svanir were assaulted, though none of them were known to be enslaved. Of the many places assaulted were the second larges norn homestead of the Shiverpeaks, Cragstead, and the largest devoured hatchery of the Iron Legions, North Nolan Hatchery. These assaults led to many refugees fleeing to Hoelbrak and the Black Citadel, until the cities couldn't hold anymore, forcing new refugees to head to Lion's Arch, where they were offered aid and a promised home on Southsun Cove by the Consortium.

In response to the initial assaults on Cragstead, Braham Eirsson sought aid from Rytlock Brimstone and Knut Whitebear, both refusing to assist him defend his home; upon returning to which he and adventurers who agreed to assist him found the place overran by the Molten Alliance, taking all survivors as prisoners. At a similar time, Rytlock (after refusing Braham) had ordered the gladium Rox Pickheart to head to North Nolan Hatchery to assist the stationed warbands against the Molten Alliance, arriving to see the Molten Alliance having already taken all but one survivor as prisoners.



Later on, the Molten Alliance began using Sonic Periscopes (enchanted with fire magic for self defense) to listen on many havens, homesteads, and Iron Legion stations, while beginning to unleash stronger troops formed from their alliance - charr equipped with strengthened steel suits and dredge infused with the same magic as the Flame Legion shamans. And at this time, the Vigil began an offensive against the Molten Alliance as they searched for their hidden bases. Soon enough, Molten Facilities were found connecting to Azurite mines, where the prisoners where enslaved to mine the newly discovered crystals. The Vigil, joined by Braham, Rox, and other adventurers - even the fugitive at the time Canach in separate occasions - assaulted these facilities where even more weaponry was being developed, and freed the prisoners, defeating the Molten Berserkers and Firestorms that led each facility in doing so. With the destruction of their facilities, the threat of the Molten Alliance ended.

For a time...

Under Scarlet

Many thought the Molten Alliance was gone after the destruction of their many Molten Facilities and their ever-diminishing influence on the lands became non-existent. Then just as ubruptly as they appeared the first time, they surfaced once more. This time, they did so with Scarlet Briar's Aetherblades and newly-gained Twisted Clockwork minions during the Queen's Jubilee in Kryta. This was the first known link between the Molten Alliance and Scarlet, as they appeared in her assaults on the lands from Divinity's Reach to Ebonhawke.

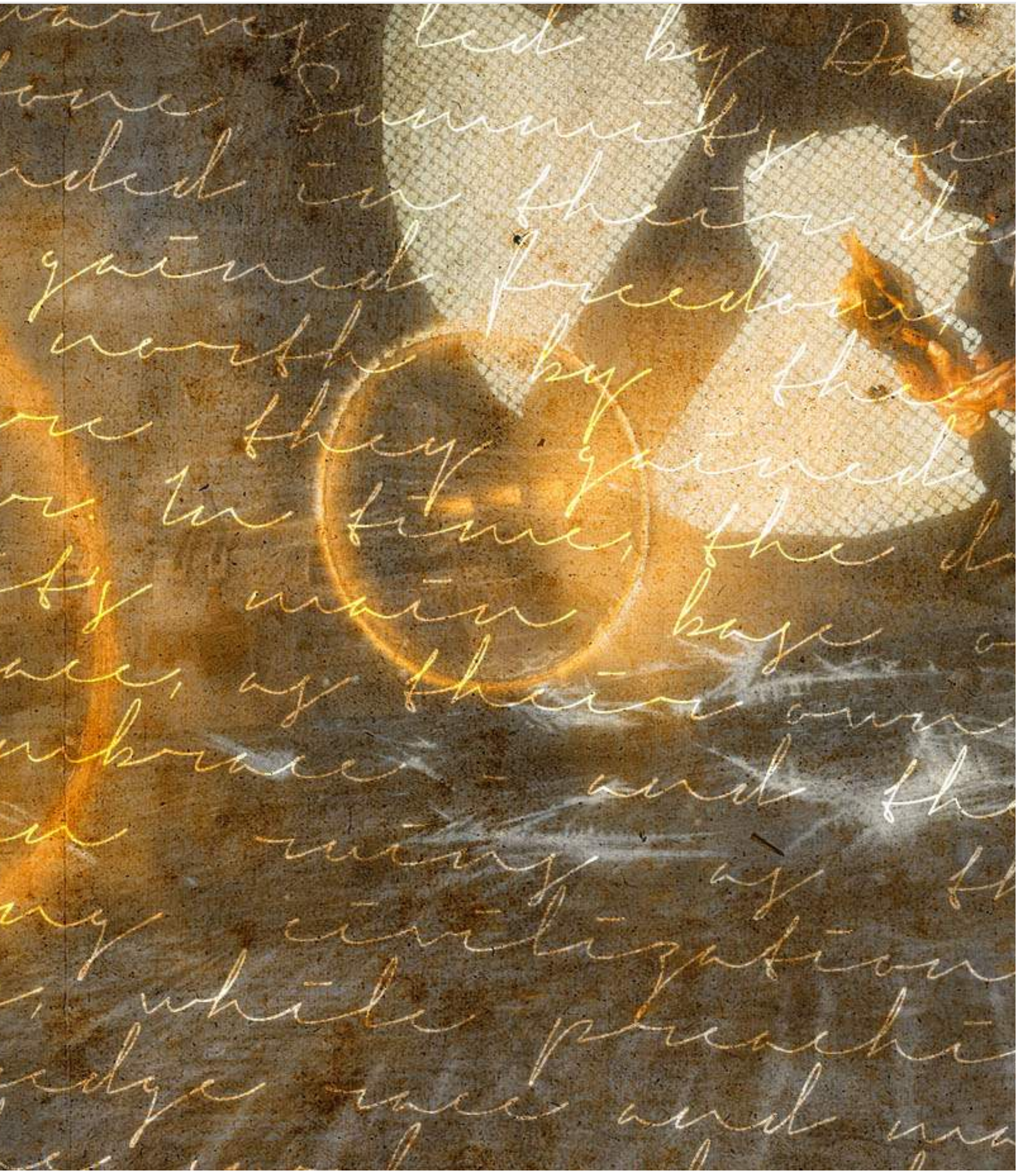
The Molten Alliance showed again in the beginning of 1327 AE, when Scarlet had unleashed her supposed new weapon testing of the Twisted Marionette, working with Aetherblade and Toxic Alliance to defend the Twisted Clockwork minions as the machines sacrificed themselves to power the Marionette's self-detonation device, though it failed in the end.



And most recently, when Scarlet assaulted Lion's Arch, the Molten Alliance were used as shock troops, invading the southern portions of the city from beneath the ground and cutting out crevices around Fort Marriner, burning the crops on Postern Ward, and assaulting Lion's Gate; all the while establishing Sonic Periscopes along Gunnery Range, directed at Scarlet's flying drill, The Breachmaker.

One may find it odd that the alliance continues to work for Scarlet, and it may be true for the dredge faction that joined, whom only join in because of the opportunities it presents: more technology, and the chance to ransack Lion's Arch. The Flame Legion, however, continue to aid in a far more dire situation. The faction that had agreed with Scarlet's terms had faced defeat and survived, which is frowned upon in charr society – especially with the Flame Legion, as they have been known to strike Imperators' names from records for great failures. These Flame Legion charr are forced between two options: win big and go home as heroes, or face death should they return as failures still.

Whether or not the alliance will survive the downfall of Scarlet is yet to be seen.





Lightning Strikes: The Rise of the Aetherblades

LORE

Written by Archaes8

The bells first tolled for Lion's Arch when the telltale magic-infused airships descended from the skies. Unfortunately for its citizens, the efforts of lone Captain, Ellen Kiel, to secure the city were either never completed or just not substantial enough to withstand the preemptive aerial assault that brought the city to its knees. Out of every facet in Scarlet Briar's master plan, the Aetherblade pirates are, by far, one of the more intriguing mysteries of the Living Story so far.

The origin of the Aetherblade pirates is a bit of a puzzle. We know the name "Aetherblade" describes their affinity for air magic and the fact that they're pirates. They also appear to follow the same command structure as other pirate gangs with ranks such as Admiral, Captain, First-mate, and Foreman, We also know that they "jumped at the chance" to be hired by Scarlet Briar (probably at gunpoint), and that they procured their rides from the Pact. Of course, the Pact didn't have a substantial fleet of airships until before the invasion of Orr, so there was a good chance that the Aetherblades captured only a few, studied them, and built their own with the help of the Inquest. The Inquest's involvement was less of a surprise, what with Scarlet playing "super evil team matchmaker" all over Tyria.

In addition, the pirates' upgraded airships, armor, and weapons are a product of Inquest magitech and Scarlet's clockwork engineering. Aesthetically, the Aetherblades sport blue and brown colored clothes, coats, and armor adorned with decorative gears, bolts, and plugs. As with most steampunk fashion designs, most of their headgear is accessorized with a pair of aviation goggles to protect their eyes from harsh winds while flying. Their ability to teleport down from their airships also allows the Aetherblades to make precision kills with little effort. Their heavy dependence on their newly acquired technology suggests that these pirates would not have been nearly as successful (or even exist) without Scarlet's "creative" direction.



As far as engaging these pirates , an Aetherblade is relatively harmless in groups of less than three. However, a group of three or four is worth a cautious approach. Their various combat roles mesh together to form a deadly line-up of skills that cause long-term confusion, crippling, knock-back, knockdown, and dazing.

The Aetherblade roles as described on the "Who are the Aetherblades?" article.

- *Aetherblade Thugs:* These slow-moving power hitter can immobilize and knock down their opponents.
- *Aetherblade Thumpers:* These hearty pirates have a three-hit combo and protective shields.
- *Aetherblade Swashbucklers:* These pirates deal bleeding and crippling, and throws daggers to opponents beyond the reach of their rapiers.
- *Aetherblade Taskmasters:* What these brutes lack in speed they make up for in applying conditions.
- *Aetherblade Strikers:* These casters can channel a lightning attack and a dazing aura.
- *Aetherblade Grenadiers:* Like the name implies, these scoundrels throw grenades that pack a wallop.

Their attacks have been immediate and well-coordinated; players witnessed Aetherblade brutality firsthand during the Dragon Bash celebration in 1326 AE. Their anonymity allowed them to successfully do away with Captain Theo Ashford and almost infiltrate the Captain's Council unhindered. If it hadn't have been for the ties that the deceased Mr. Ashford had with Captain Logan Thackeray, the top-notching sleuthing of a certain Marjory Delaqua (and friends), and the persistence of Pre-Captain Ellen Kiel, Lion's Arch could have been worse off come Scarlet's invasion (I know, it's difficult to imagine). Their efforts eventually paid-off and the Aetherblade leader, Mai Trin, was captured and First-mate Horrik, killed. However, Aetherblade activity only increased after their initial throwdown with the Lionguard and they continued to aid Scarlet in her hit-and-giggle tactics across the continent. Later, players eventually joined Caithe and the stalwart Lionguard Turma in Twilight Arbor to raid an Aetherblade shipyard, an act that would naturally slow the growth of their airship fleet.

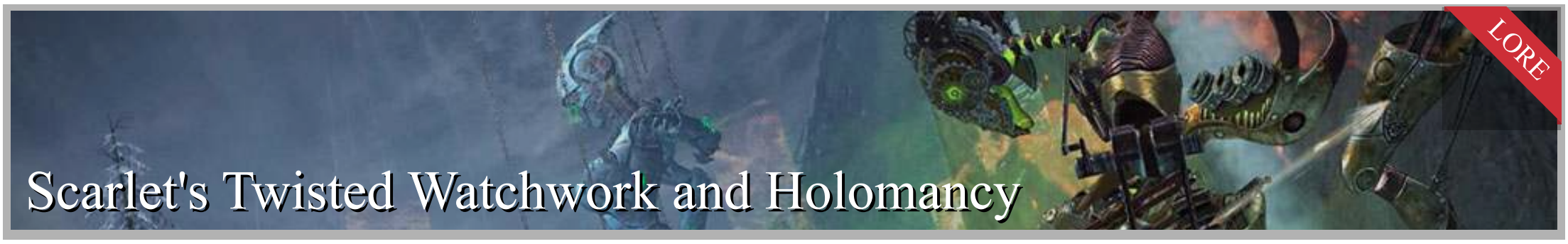


Tyria's heroes continued to whittle away at the pirate's fighting force as they clashed during Scarlet's massive laser weapon test. Afterwards, the Aetherblades sprung Mai Trin from her prison cell and fled with her pirates into the Edge of the Mists. Players, one again, pitted themselves against the pirates guarding portals to the Edge of the Mists that had spawned from the wastes of Brisban Wildlands to the valleys of Timberline Falls.

In recent events, the Aetherblades spearheaded Scarlet's second attack on Lion's Arch, causing massive structural damage to the city within minutes of their arrival while killing and injuring dozens of citizens in the process. Now, Aetherblade pirates patrol Canal Ward, Trader's Forum, and the Grand Piazza, hindering heroes searching for survivors.



This dastardly and deadly band of cloud-kissing scallywags and cutthroats have been one of the deadlier thorns in Scarlet's arsenal. Unfortunately, there are still many unanswered questions about the group's origin, such as: Who were the Aetherblades before they stole their first airship? Was Scarlet directly involved in the formation of the Aetherblades? Was Mai Trin always the leader? And, dare I ask, now that Scarlet has been defeated, what will become of our sky-pirating foes?



Scarlet's Twisted Watchwork and Holomancy

Written by Konig

Of all of Scarlet Briar's minions, the most deadly is perhaps not the alliances she forged but the reverse-engineered inventions she had unleashed upon the world. From steam creature technology to Watchknights and even the Pact's Holomancy, Scarlet had stolen and re-designed dozens of technological revolutions into monstrosities and weapons of horror.

Born from Steam and Made to Defend



In the valleys of Lornar's Pass, an odd occurence runs rampant. Biomechanical creatures of steel and steam come forth from portals looking of electricity and created by steam. These 'steam creatures' are of unknown origin, purpose, and creator. Reports, however, do claim that they twice appeared from windows into the potential future created by an asuran device known as the Infinity Ball, meant to foretell the possible futures, and that the second time they did so, their creator – a "Grand High Sovereign" asura that conquered Tyria in this very potential future – stepped through as well to conquer the past.

Whether that holds true for these other steam creatures remains unknown. But study of the killed steam creatures have held interesting results. Human engineers had reverse engineered them to further humanity's own technology, and the result was the Watchknights. Though their being made from studying the steam creatures was kept secret until recently, this was the very beginning of the calamity at the Queen's Jubilee.

Clockwork Chaos



The theme of the Queen's Jubilee was 'humanity can withstand any test'. This brought about the attention of the sylvari known as Scarlet Briar – formerly Ceara. Being an engineer herself, she was obsessed with testing things, and saw the theme as a taunt, thus deciding to test them herself. And she did this by hijacking the Watchknights.

Having studied and reverse engineered the steam creatures' technologies herself – the source for her teleportation technologies – she was easily able to figure out that the Watchknights responded to voice commands, and in turn how to alter the commands. And from this, she stole the Watchknights, deconstructing and

reconstructing them into monstrosities dubbed Twisted Watchworks. Scarlet then used these Twisted Watchworks as the main fighting force to assault the continent of Tyria from Divinity's Reach to Ebonhawke, accompanied by groups of her own steam creatures, Molten Alliance, and Aethrblade forces.

Puppets and Knights

After the attack on the Jubilee and unleashing her Twisted Watchworks on the continent, Scarlet Briar improved her machines once more in the beginning of 1327 AE. Returning to the original design of the Watchknights in mockery of Queen Jennah, Scarlet Briar unleashed her Twisted Marionette – a giant female-human-shaped machine that towered above the peaks of Lornar's Pass. Dangling from five large chains controlled by a circular airship with a portal in the center (what would later become her drill known as the Breachmaker), the Marionette was announced to be a weapon testing of a powerful Aethercannon capable of wiping out the entire area.



Despite Scarlet's claims, however, the Marionette does not seem to have been a weapon test. Not fully, at least. This "aethercannon" never appeared, even if the Marionette succeeded in charging, the Marionette simply self-destructed - and indeed killing individuals in a large area but not as large as threatened by Scarlet or the aethercannon (on a side: it should be noted that the Marionette was fought only once, and defeated in said confrontation, from a lore standpoint). Rox presented the theory that Scarlet's goal was to simply thin the herd – the herd being the heroes of Tyria. And given that the Marionette has not returned either, this very well may be.

The last advancement of the Twisted Watchworks and other machines on Scarlet's side comes in the form of the Assault Knights. This, perhaps, may be the results of the "weapon test" with the Marionette if there ever truly was such a test, for they appear much like the Watchknights and Marionette, though a side in-between the two and with modifications. Perhaps to help support the weight of the Assault Knights' bodies instead of with chains, Scarlet had equipped each of the three Assault Knights with a jetpack and bladed "wing" set. They are fully capable of flying – and hovering for extended periods of times – on these jetpacks, and the blades coming from it shift in their movement, folding into themselves or spreading like wings. And lastly, they were equipped with aetherized hammers to pummel their opponents down.

Creations of Light Made Physical



Like many of her inventions, Scarlet did not create combative holograms. Being a master of reverse engineering and modifying, she stole the usage of holograms from others. The first recorded use of a hologram in combat originates in the Pact's offensive in Orr, where former arena announcer Elli utilized a hologram program originally designed for ampliphying her voice and showing an enlarged version of herself was modified by Whispers Agent Zott to be capable of affecting corporeal entities – and thus fight Risen with minimal risk of corruption and injury.

Similar technology was used by Lion's Arch during the festival of Dragon Bash (which originates from the ancient Canthan holiday of Dragon Festival and altered to be about fighting Elder Dragons rather than revering the Celestial Dragon) where the Captain's Council employed holoprojectors to create false dragon minions across the continent. It is unknown if these holograms were based off of Elli and Zott's hologram devices, or someone else's invention in the same direction. When the Aetherblades assaulted the dragon effigy ceremony and killed Captain Theo Ashford, they also began ransacking these holograms, stealing the projectors for unknown purposes at the time.

The purposes became revealed months later when an Aetherblade Shipyard constructing their airships was discovered, and within were holographic projectors, creating holograms of the very Aetherblades that inhabited the complex. Like all of Scarlet's stolen inventions, these holograms were also altered: where the Dragon Bash holograms would simply disappear when 'killed', these holograms were far more violent in that they self-destructed, damaging all nearby.

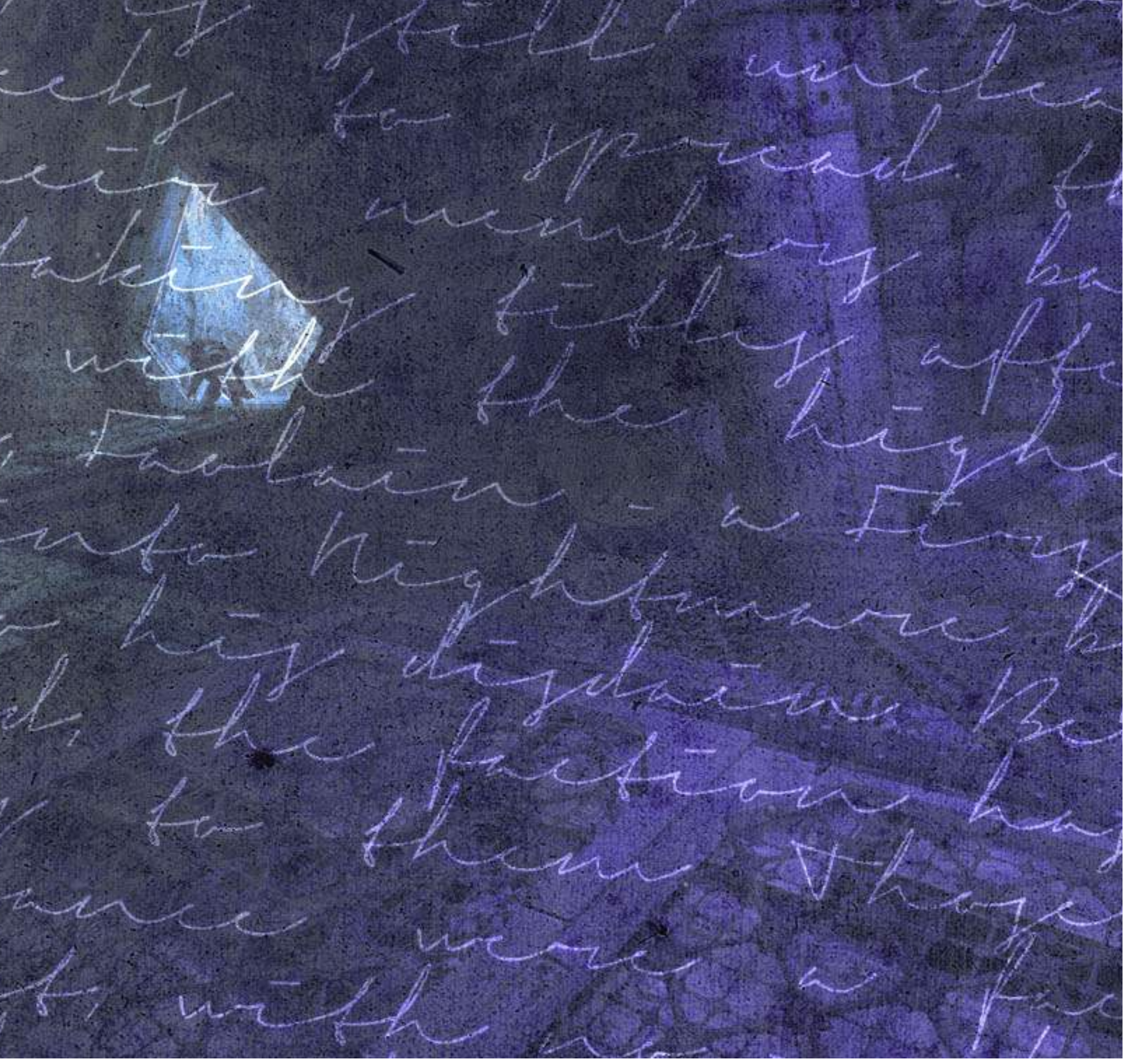
However, other than Scarlet utilizing a hologram of herself as a recording device – something hinted that she had even before Dragon Bash and used both as a journal and as a means to taunt her enemies – she showed no further means of utilizing holomancy (as it is dubbed) until her final assault.

Prime Hologram



On top of the airship drill, The Breachmaker, Scarlet's final defenses are perhaps her strongest invention yet. Claimed by Scarlet to be the best of holomancy, the Breachmaker was defended by the Prime Hologram – a gargantuan white hologram of herself equipped with a powerful energy cannon. The Prime Hologram was also capable of dividing into three smaller holograms – one named after each of the asuran colleges – and from there, capable of dividing again into more microholograms. Furthermore, if recombined it became ultraviolet, capable of producing microholograms while retaining its own form, and was equipped with a variation of the aethercannon that was far more powerful than the standard (perhaps this derived from the Marionette testing as well as the Assault Knights). To boot, the hologram appears to have been powered by both light energy and dark energy – though what either of these actually are remains unclear.

The one drawback of the Prime Hologram was that it was forced to be stationary – though, interestingly enough, the microholograms were not. And once the Prime Hologram's final ultraviolet form was defeated, the whiplash struck Scarlet Briar herself, crippling her and forcing her to retreat into The Breachmaker, where she met her ultimate end.





Towering Nightmares: The Toxic Alliance

Written by Konig

When the fabled Mad King's Day rolled around, something stirred in Kessex Hills of Kryta. A veil of invisibility was erected in the center of Viathan Lake, preventing all who swam too close to the veil from coming close. When the veil was shattered, the massive Tower of Nightmares was revealed and poison covered the land. Thus the Toxic Alliance became known, formed by krait and Nightmare Court.

Of Nightmare…



The Nightmare Court is a faction of the sylvari race that takes up about 10-15% of their population in full. Originally made by the first of the Secondborn, Cadeyrn, to make a stance against the Ventari Tablet and be listened to by the Pale Tree, the faction fell to the force which they get their name: the Nightmare. What the Nightmare is, or where it originates, is still unclear. The Nightmare Court seeks to spread the Nightmare, and ranks their members based on their cruel deeds – taking titles after knighthood and gentries, with the highest being the Grand Dutchess, Faolain – a Firstborn who was brought fully into Nightmare by Cadeyrn and usurped him to his disdain. Being less than twenty years old, the faction has little to no notable history to them.

Those that joined the Toxic Alliance were a faction of the Nightmare Court, with no ranked members to the faction other than an unnamed baron and baroness who were killed at the Heart of the Tower of Nightmare. What they sought to gain from the alliance with the krait and Scarlet Briar is still unknown. What is known is that Scarlet made a deal with them to gain access to Twilight Arbor to build her Aetherblade fleet, and that they were sent with a seed and krait obelisk shards to the serpentine race with the threat that if the krait killed or enslaved the Courtiers, their own deal with Scarlet would end.

…and Abyss



The krait is an old and mysterious race from the deepest depths of the Unending Ocean. Before roughly fifty years ago, they were seen only as raiders on the shores near them, stealing whatever supplies and slaves they needed and could not get from assailing ships traveling the ocean. For as long as their history – or at least our knowledge of their history – has recorded, they have believed in greater beings they call Prophets, and have revered black, smooth obelisks of single stones along the ocean floor as the places where their Prophets rose to a higher plane, where they gather armies from the krait's sacrifices until they return to the world, flooding it and claiming it all for the krait race.

But their livelihood all changed when the unnamed Elder Dragon slumbering in the deepest parts of the ocean rose and forced the krait into shallower waters. If records of the Priory are correct, then this Elder Dragon rose directly where the krait lived, and forced them first into quaggan territory, then the shores of Tyria. Until this point of time, the krait were undefeated in their known history. They never felt bitter defeat as a civilization and had felt themselves superior to all. Since arriving on the surface they have suffered various defeats throughout in the new land, though still not enough to diminish their morale and fanatic beliefs.

In recent times, Scarlet Briar had sent a missive to the krait, stating she had obtained shards of one of their obelisks and offered them in exchange for allegiance. At first, the krait refused, disbelieving her. When she sent a small shard as proof, they threatened her to bring them all of it else they would kill her; but her fleet of

airships prevented this. With rage soon subsided, Scarlet sent the Nightmare Court with more shards (with the premise of their death meaning the deal is off) and promises to make them a Prophet and even more shards; in turn, the krait would plant a seed and guard it as well as mix their magic with that of the Nightmare Court's.

The result was the Tower of Nightmares.

Tower of Nightmares

Witnessed by the local quaggan, Scarlet had given the krait a single seed to plant and guard in exchange for their obelisk shards. They nursed this plant and it grew under the waters of Viathan Lake. When it grew too large to conceal by themselves, the Nightmare Court covered it with an illusion of invisibility. All the while as it continued to grow, the krait harvested the trees along the shores; this is when what was later called the Tower of Nightmares became known.

This illusion that prevented people from moving into the center of the lake was accompanied by higher humidity in the area, and the stripping of Auld Red Warlf. Scholars and adventurers alike were drawn to the curious changes, including the detective Marjory Delaqua and her assistant, Kasmeer Meade. After studying the illusion, it was Kasmeer Meade who unveiled the Tower of Nightmares.



The Tower of Nightmares was a gargantuan plant, its origins still unknown, that had toxic pollen that brought forth hallucinations. The plant was fortified and reinforced by the wood harvested by the krait, creating a structure like their Deeps made from shipwrecks. Planks were laid across the lake for their Courtier allies, who in turn filled the Tower with soil and their deadly spider and wurm pets. Furthermore, the krait within the Toxic Alliance became altered, their skins now glowing a greenish-yellow that dulls out when they die.

From the tower's blossoming flower, spores fell out into the world, planting into the ground as offshoots which were immediately defended by the Toxic Alliance, but because it was smaller, it was weaker and more easily destroyed by the Orders fighting against the Tower. From the roots, too, offshoots and stalks sprouted to further spread the toxins.

Inside the Tower, each level appeared differently, with three main levels. The center was hollow except for the plant itself, and throughout the tower were chambers full of hallucinations. The first level was full of the stalks that came from the roots, including a kind of stalk altered by the Courtiers to explode and spread its pollen in a short but strong burst when others get near. The second level was where the Courtiers put their tortured pets, mostly spiders but some wurms as well, and the ultimate fate of prisoners not sacrificed by the krait. The third and highest level was the most dangerous, as being so close to the plant's pollen it was constantly full of the toxins, and in turn hallucinations - not just the standard hallucinations, either but hallucinations of the Molten Alliance and Aetherblades.

This event was the most peculiar to those invading the Tower, leading some to believe Scarlet Briar or the Toxic Alliance was capable of controlling the hallucinations, and specifically tailored them to the invaders, and to Scarlet, who's voice was heard by the invaders, but the voice never shared.



At the very heart of the tower, in the top-most reaches, laid Scarlet's lab where she stayed, hooded again like at the Queen's Jubilee, and out of sight of most – if not all – krait. There were also a multitude of glowing pods dangling from the plant, and within the pods was what Scarlet had promised her serpentine allies: beings to call their Prophets. The Toxic Hybrid, the first and only amongst the so-called "prophets" to be birthed by the plant, was a large krait-shaped creature, its skin and appearance much akin to a sylvari. Whether it was a krait-turned-plant, or a sylvari-turned-krait-looking, or even a newly born entity from the plant itself was left unanswered, but it evolved at immense speeds, being born with barely the ability to crawl and make the most primitive of vocal sounds. But within mere minutes, it learned to stand upright, wield weapons – and use them effectively, speak formally, and even cast magic and manipulate the plants of the Tower of Nightmares. It was even aware enough to know that it was the krait's prophet, and to make perhaps the most confusing proclamation of all within the Tower of Nightmares: that it was the last of its kind.

What that means, if anything, remains just as unknown as what exactly the Toxic Hybrid was.

With the Toxic Hybrid dead, Marjory and Kasmeer had pumped anti-toxins into the tower's plant, hoping to kill it and end the Toxic Alliance. But a barrier prevented the toxins from taking any powerful effect. But when the key to the barrier was found within Scarlet's lab, the tower shuddered as its final layer of protection fell, and the two heroines wondered if the plant was sentient, knowing what was about to happen. But with its final defenses down, and the Toxic Alliance's final attempt to defend the tower failed, the tower shuddered as the anti-toxins flowed throughout its stem, creating a volatile reaction within the plant and utterly destroying the Tower of Nightmares.

The Aftermath

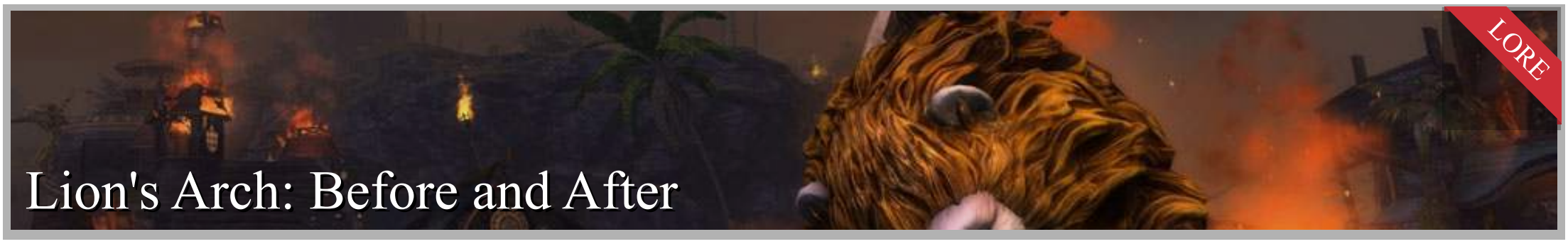


After the destruction of their Tower of Nightmares, the Toxic Alliance still remained in the area yet greatly weakened, continuing their experimentation with the toxins and continuing to protect any offshoots that spawned. With the destruction of their Tower, however, the creatures housed within got loose and still survives amongst the wreckage. The poisons still spread in Kessex Hills, but the Seraph and a handful of stationed members of the Orders are working to contain the threat. Do as they might, however, the waters remain toxic and the fish from Viathan Lake and Viathan's Arm are inedible.

While one may question why the krait continue to serve Scarlet, given that her promise of a krait prophet failed, but the answer lies in the alteration they took to their body. Not just their bodies, however, were altered in whatever made their scales and eyes glow but their mind as well, altered to be less hating of other races, and they hold the mentality of: 'if Scarlet could make a prophet once, she can do so again.' However, this change, and acceptance of other races, had led them to become exiled by their people.

Since the Tower's fall, the Toxic Alliance were seen when the Twisted Marionette was unleashed in Lornar's Pass, and accompanied Scarlet Briar during her invasion of Lion's Arch, attacking from the waters and maintaining control of the shores and fields, poisoning the land and killing crops. And in their forces they brought a krait warlock to lead them, along with more spider and wurm queens, though seemingly those are the only pets of the Nightmare Court.

What will become of the Toxic Alliance after the invasion, and what will become of the remains of the Tower of Nightmares, only time will tell.



Lion's Arch: Before and After

Written by Darryshan

Scarlet has done it. All her previous invasions were merely practice sessions for the big attack. Lion's Arch has been destroyed. This article explores Lion's Arch both before and after the update, and shows you how it has changed in different areas.

The Map





Lion's Arch's new map shows the extent of the destruction, caused by Scarlet's assault. The miasma that threatend the city during the attack has been blow away towards the sea. The remains of the massive drill above Sanctum Harbour can be seen spread across the map. Lastly, the shores have again been redrawn as a result of the awakening of a dragon.

The Gendarran Fields Entrance





Once a great monument, a testament to the willpower of the founders of new Lion's Arch, this gateway now lies in ruins, its ruined husk slowly burning away. The great ship that once held pride of place here has almost completely fallen in on itself. The destruction as a result of Scarlet's attack limited itself to Lion's Arch while mostly sparing its surrounding areas.

The Lion's Court





Once again, the Lion's Court is destroyed. However, this time, it seems it will be like this for a long time. The lion itself, no longer looking proudly upon the city, now looks to be cowering from the destruction. A great symbol for the city, it has been a representation of the state of Lion's Arch. Now both the statue and the city are

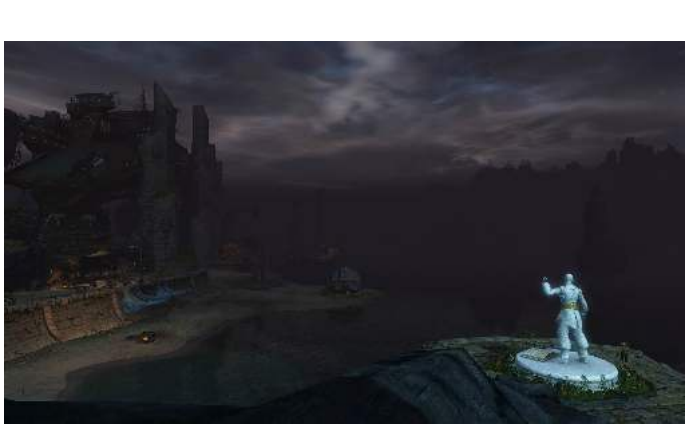
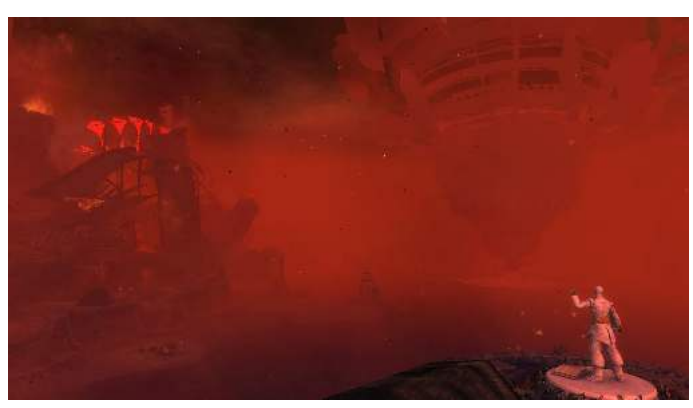
crippled beyond repair.

The Mystic Plaza




The mystic forge has been wrenched from its surrounding structure, and placed in the Vigil Keep. The plaza it once rested in, now defunct of colour, served as a rally point for the Lionguard evacuating civilians. Zommoros, the powerful Djinn who lends his power to the forge, still remains imprisoned inside. What would've happened if he had been freed is a mystery.

Sanctum Harbour


Cobiah Marriner's great statue almost escaped this catastrophe unharmed. Intact until the destruction of the ship which waged war on this city, it now lies fallen, blown back by the force of the explosion. As a boy growing up in poverty who became a wealthy leader, Marriner's great city was once a symbol of how the different races can coexist. Now destroyed, it is almost as if Tyria itself will be torn apart.

The Docks





The colourful ship that once docked here has gradually been destroyed during the attack on Lion's Arch, first it sank to the bottom of Sanctum Harbor, after which the destruction of the Breachmaker completely leveled it. The coastal shores near the docks have also been redrawn as a result of the debris that came loose from the Breachmaster. This once lively part of Lion's Arch served as a meeting point for the alliances of Scarlet. The trade that took place here has been replaced with memories of death and destruction, a situation that mirrors that of the city as a whole. Osh Moran's memorial still stands, but is joined by other memorials across the city, memorizing the recent losses and victories of Lion's Arch during its fatal destruction.

The Lighthouses





Unlike its older neighbour during the Karka attack, the new Lion's Arch lighthouse has escaped relatively unscathed, except for a tilt brought on by the force of the drill's explosion. From here, you can view the the destruction of Lion's Arch. Just as the original Lion's Gate (which has now vanished) remained after the Great Tsunami, if Lion's Arch is to be rebuilt, this newer lighthouse will remain untouched.

Fort Marriner





Now ruined, with a huge chunk of debris impaled in the centre of it, Fort Marriner is past its use. Once a testament to the great military power of Lion's Arch, it now shows how an intelligent individual managed to destroy so much.



Alliance Forming 101

Written by Darryshan

The current antagonist of the Living Story, Scarlet, seems to have a penchant for forming alliances. In this article I will explore her considered and successful alliances, explaining why they did or did not succeed, and suggesting some alliances of my own.

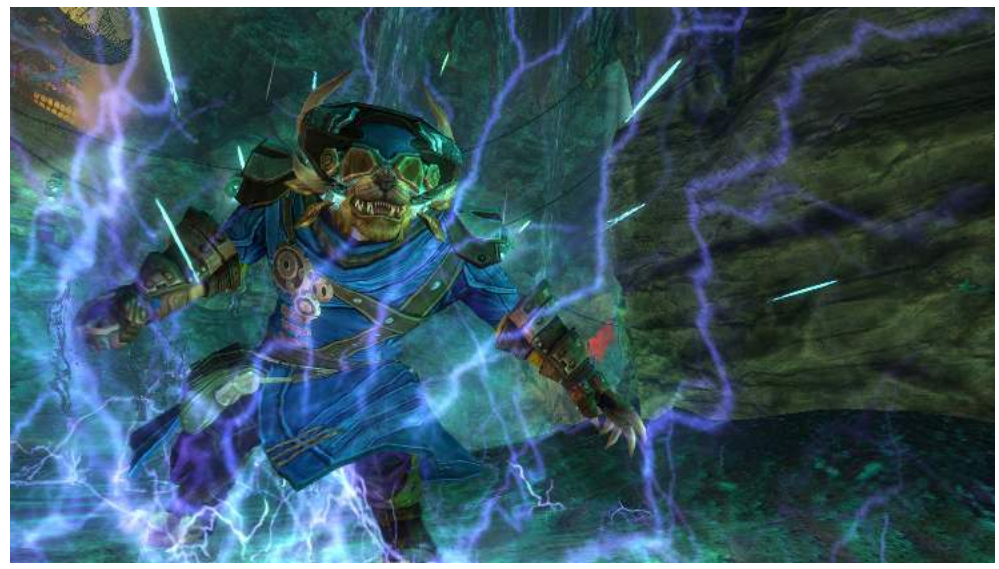
Successes

The Molten Alliance



This joining of the Flame Legion and the Dredge has lead to mass evacuation of parts of Ascalon and the Shiverpeaks. The sonic abilities of the Dredge, and the pyromanical obsession of the Flame Legion has been one of the most successful joinings that Scarlet has ever come up with. The combined technologies of sound and flame resulted in amazingly strong weapons which almost prevailed. However, they were eventually defeated. They still exist, but in much fewer numbers.

The Aetherblades



In contrast with the brute strength of the Molten Alliance, this group consisting of the Sky Pirates and the Inquest is by a long stretch, the most intelligent of Scarlet's alliances; first appearing to assassinate Captain Theo Ashford of the Captain's Council in Lion's Arch and replace him with Mai Trin, the Aetherblade leader. With large numbers based in a mountain located in Gendarran Fields and in a secret base near Lion's Arch, they were well posed to attack Lion's Arch. Now located mainly in their base in Gendarran Fields, they have slowly tried to regain power. They have recently allied with the Nightmare Court, with another secret base being located in the Twilight Arbor.

The Toxic Alliance



A joining of the freedom-seeking Nightmare Court and the prophecy-led Krait, this is one of the more surprising unions. The Nightmare Court despise the Pale Tree for it's control over the Sylvari, but the actions of the Krait are almost always in accordance with prophecy. Nevertheless, Scarlet managed to facilitate this alliance. Together, this Alliance built the Tower of Nightmares; a way for the Nightmare Court to spread toxins across Tyria, and for the Krait, a way to summon their prophets. The Tower was eventually destroyed, but the Alliance still exists in some corners of Tyria.

Considered

The Alliances in this section do not have names, so I have taken the liberty to come up with some.

The Stealthbear Alliance



An alliance consisting of the Kodan and the Largos. There are a whole host of reasons this never came to being. The Largos, who mostly stay underwater and are often so stealthy they appear invisible, would never agree on ways to attack with the Kodan, who are much less stealthy than the Largos. The Largos rarely interact with other races, preferring to remain independent. The same can be said for the Kodan, who are more focused on escaping the ever-increasing influence of the Elder Dragon Jormag.

The Skrettins



The Skritt are, as individuals, no cleverer than the Ettins. However, the moment you increase the population, their intelligence increases exponentially. In large numbers, Skritt have been known to create well-structured societies, and have exceeded more developed races in technology. The Skritt were as capable as the Norn, or Humans, before Primordus awoke. Now spread out, they rarely reach these levels of intelligence. On the other hand, the Ettins almost work the other way round. In large groups, they become less intelligent. However, they start off with low intelligence. Therefore, joining a large group of Skritt with a large group of Ettins, is like joining an amoeba with an Asuran Councillor.

Alliance Suggestions

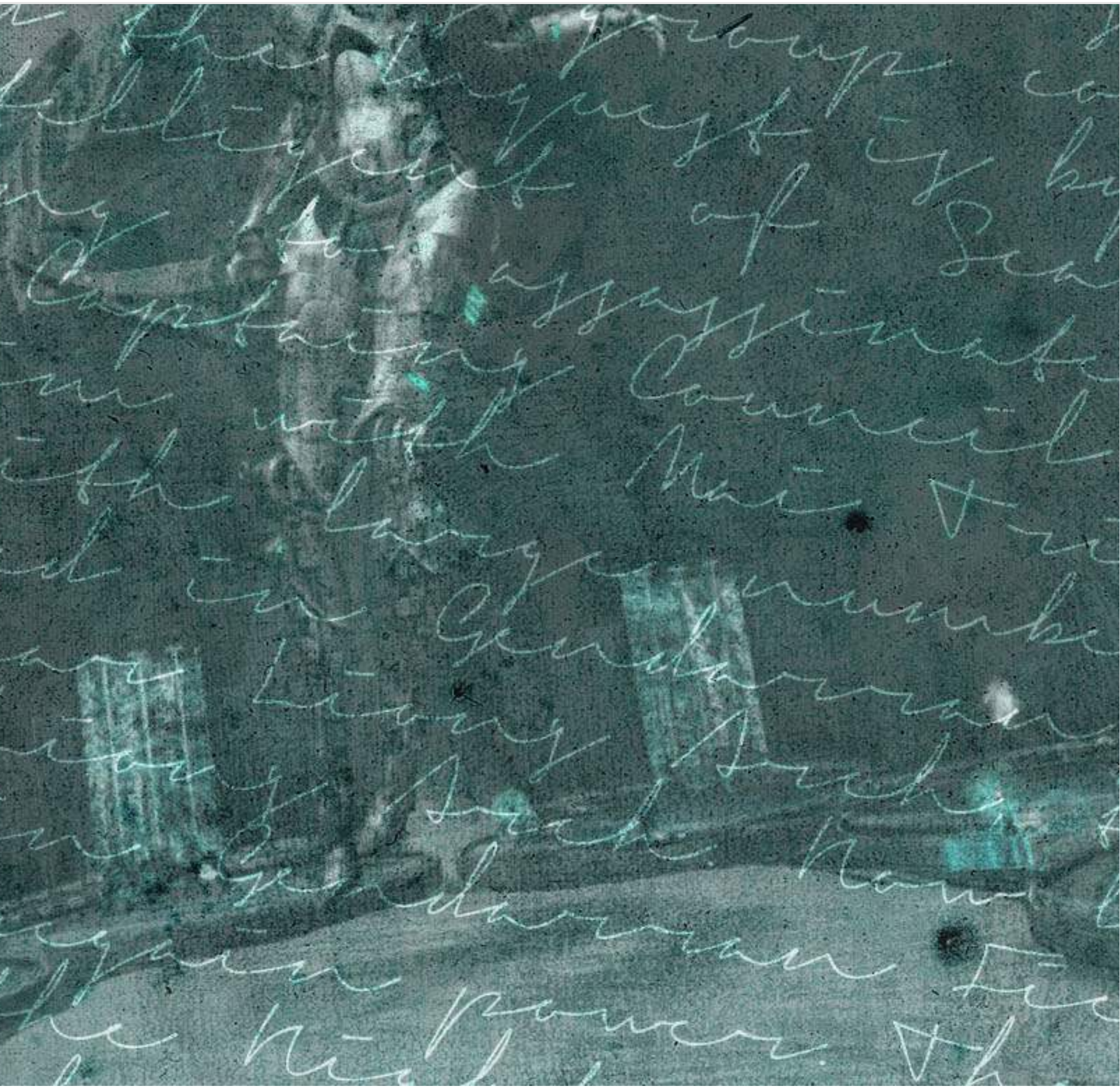
The Skrinquest

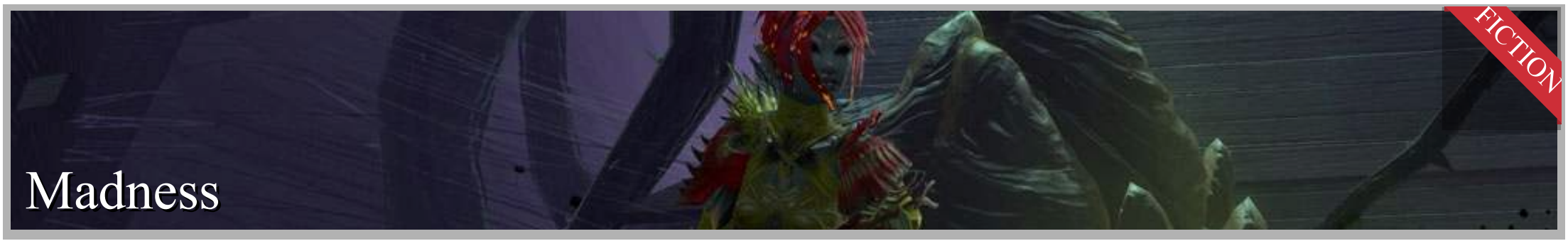


As mentioned previously, the Skritt can actually reach considerable levels of intelligence. Actually, there are cases of the Inquest doing work on the Skritt, and perhaps this work would lead to an alliance forming. The Inquest would provide weapons, and the Skritt would do the field work. However, being in much smaller groups could cause the Skritt to be unable to carry out complicated tasks.



Throughout the Shiverpeaks, the Sons of Svanir have forced the Grawl into worshipping Jormag. Scarlet could have used this to her advantage in facilitating an alliance between the two. The Grawl who worship Jormag would welcome this, as it would 'bring them closer to Jormag', while the more intelligent Sons of Svanir could use this relationship as a way of getting what they wanted. This is the most plausible of my two suggestions, since it would only require a slight push from Scarlet to become a reality.





Madness

Written by Chase I

This is madness, pure madness.

That's what came through my mind while I sat at the top of a hill, staring over yonder, gazing at the creation that was crumbling into nothingness. Lion's Arch was in flames now, the ashes were swept away by the wind giving the surrounding areas a blanket of black snow. Never had I expected a turn of events such as this. In all honesty I was glad to not be a part of the army that was attacking the city at this very moment. My job was simply to scout, and to watch in the cloak of the shadows. I rounded once I heard a large mass sliding through the patch of grass right next to me. I was met with the gaze of a serpent-like creature, its skin glowing with a vibrant green. It radiated with power, but at the same time it looked so... unnatural. Krait were never supposed to look like this. I could respect my partner's decision to become more powerful, but I couldn't help but feel that the price was too great. Then again, it was not like I was better off at this point.

"See anything?" said the krait with a barely noticeable hiss.
"...It's been the same for the past few hours," I said. "They've just been getting as many survivors out as they can." The Krait circled over to my other side and coiled up to get himself more comfortable.
"This assignment is such a bore," he said as he rested his head on the ground. "Just have us watching from afar, not letting us enjoy the battle." I grunted in response, hoping that it was taken as agreeing.

I never took a liking to this "Toxic Alliance", it never sat well with me. The court was meant to act on its own, and for the longest time it did, until Scarlet came with her promises of victory and power. How could the Nightmare Court resist? I didn't agree at all with their decision, but who was I to question my superiors?

After that everything changed. Groups now comprised at least one sylvari and one krait. It wasn't all bad; my partner turned out to be pleasant company. We were both ambitious, dedicated to our cause, and simply wanted the best for our own factions. I had heard that other groups were not so lucky, there was this nearly palpable air of tension whenever one would bring up the status of their squad. So for now I was happy to be able to carry a decent conversation with Argyros.

I decided to sit down and take a break. We had been scouting the area all day and there was no change whatsoever. Mostly everyone was focused on watching the burned city in the distance and no one was paying attention to us. For a moment I thought about Lion's Arch, I used to go there on a regular basis, in disguise of course. That's all a memory now, though, much like the city.

"What do you think is next?" I asked the krait that was resting next to me.
"Hm?" Argyros slightly raised his head and only opened one eye.
"After this, what do you think Scarlet will have us do?" My partner returned to resting as he gave a shrug.
"You've read the orders," he said. "You know what nefarious plan we have in store for them."
"Yeah, but what happens after that? And then after that? Surely something big is happening soon." I was answered with another shrug.
"What can be bigger than leveling Lion's Arch?"
"That's what concerns me..."

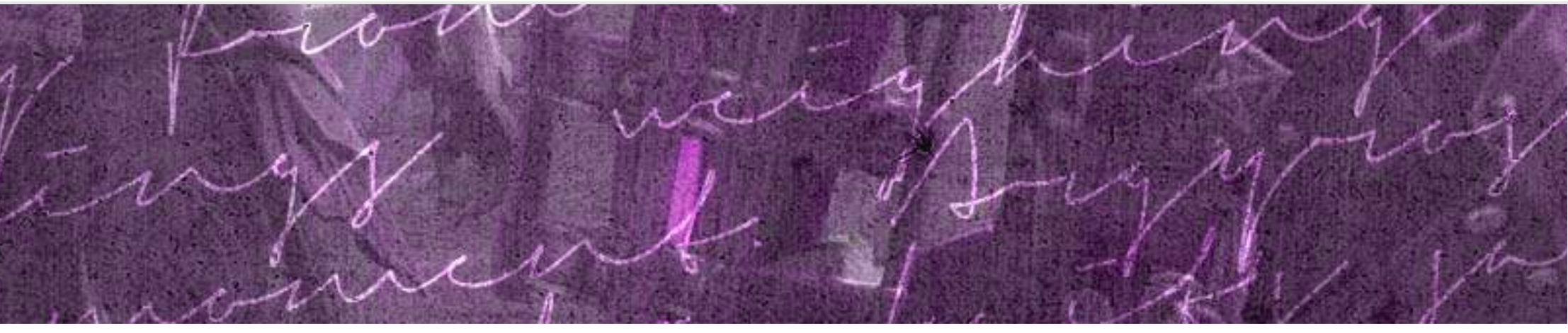
That was when I saw a group of wandering citizens by the road that our hill overlooked. They had a worried expression about them; one of them seemed vigilant however. My mind immediately thought that it was a handful of survivors being guarded by one of the many adventurers that rushed into the city. My usual smile did not creep up my face, no usual necessity to feed my dagger blood, only that I knew what must be done.
"Time to go to work," I said as I drew my dagger.

The fight was bittersweet to say the least; normally my heart would be pounding in my chest as my blade slid through flesh. A euphoric feeling would intoxicate me with every little bit of life force that I siphoned and would normally encourage me to take my time with such activities. This time, however, there was no excitement, no euphoria or sense of satisfaction once I pulled my knife out of the adventurer's skull. All I received was praise from my partner for a job well done and a scenery of bodies around me. It was all very... stale.
"That was fun," I did not share the krait's joy from this slaughter, there were too many things weighing heavily in my mind at the moment.
"Argyros," I said glancing at my partner. "I think it's safe to say that the rest of the day won't be very eventful. I'll leave the rest of the watch to you." I began to make my way down the road.

"Wait, Deus!" I heard his large serpent body slither towards me, his hand fell on my shoulder. "Where are you going?" I couldn't give him the full truth, not like could even if I wanted to. Lying was in my nature - it was instinct at this point. Regardless, I couldn't tell him that I had to mull through my thoughts because I was having doubts about everything. The Nightmare Court wasn't the same force of beauty that I saw it as when I was a newborn. As much of a genius that Scarlet is, it was obvious (to me at least) that she did not have any love for the Court. She had her own priorities; it would be only a matter of time before the Court would suffer.

"...I just need to go for a walk," I offered a smile to Argyros. "Don't think too much about it, I just have some things I need to think about." As the krait drew his hand back he gave me a puzzled look, but he knew to keep his distance. Turns out we know each other better than we thought.
This entire series of events was happening far too quickly, not a few months ago I was having a dinner with my brother in the same city that was now in ashes.
What is she playing at? I wondered. The more I thought about it the more I realized that it would only lead to one place for the Court...

Madness, pure madness.





The Back Pages

Our Social Media

Submit your work to the magazine

Interested in submitting content for the next magazine issue? Visit www.guildmag.com/submit for all the info!

Join the GuildMag team

GuildMag relies on a team of dedicated volunteer gamers to keep producing awesome content; and you could be part of this team! For all the details, visit www.guildmag.com/join

Contributors

- Ollannach - *Project Lead & Graphic Design*
- Valiant - *Magazine Development*
- LittleBoat - *Editor*
- Tauz - *Editor & Writer*
- StormShard - *Editor*
- Konig - *Writer*
- Miko Riel - *Writer*
- Chase I - *Writer*
- Darryshan - *Writer*
- Plagiarised - *Writer*
- Archaes8 - *Writer*
- Siwel - *Cover Concept Design*