

# A Historical Treatise on the life of Navarr

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### Abstract

This is a journal about the life of the creator of our nation, Navarr. As difficult as it may be it may be I will try to write this impartially so I can submit it to Phaleron. I realise that such is the nature of the library that where there is conjecture that I should mark it as such. To be clear there is very little information which can be checked on the life of Navarr. I have searched many records, and I can only find evidence on her life from the year after the fall of Terrunael to the completion of the Trod network. Most of the evidence I have is second hand records written up by historians earlier, but I hope that this will prove to be the most compressive report that I have promised Phaleron in return for his boon.

I will refer to Navarr by the feminine pronoun throughout this article since this is the most common assumption of her gender, although there is no evidence that I can find that she was female, it is just a commonly accepted myth, which is reinforced by preconceptions of scribes.

### Navarr's Role in the Great Ritual

The Great Ritual, as it referred to in contemporary texts, is the definitive point in the life of Navarr. There are three key theories about her role in this. The first is that she was involved in the casting of the ritual. The second is that she was part of a resistance who was arguing against the casting of the ritual. The third is that she was present at the casting of the ritual, but was not in any position of power to influence the ritual. The third theory could be because she was a child at the time, or because she was a servant or slave of the ruling caste of Terrunael. What is supported by several sources, is the fact that she was at the casting of the ritual, most probably in one of the Northern Cities of the Empire, so Seren, Hacynian or Emrys.

An extract from the diaries of Pyre Blackroot is one of the more detailed sources from the time. If genuine then the Blackroot diaries are only fifty years from the fall of Terunnael, and although I am yet to find a full copy, what extract I have are a good source.

*"I remember when my grandmother first told me -when she first met Navarr. It had been a year since the fall of the Great Empire and she had been walking from Tharunind for some time. I remember the stories that she told me of this journey, the strange growth of the plants that were overtaking all the outposts. Many thousands of people were slain, either by the strange plants ripping down the towers of the great cities or from the Druj, the foul Orcs that laid in wait for the refugees. I asked her to take me back to the clearing at Vale's Lament, where she met by one of the old boundary stones laid down by the mages of Terrunael, but the forests has grown too large in the years and it is seemingly impossible, even with the creation of the Trod network."*

*They were all there. Navarr was the centre of the attention of the crowd but around her were the most loyal of her of her disciples. Thorn, a skilled artificer and skilled tactician. Star, a powerful wizard skilled in the realms of Summer and Spring. Talon, a ferocious fighter who had slain many Orcs and finally Dusk, a healer and apothecary famed for their cures. My Grandmother told me that Navarr stood and spoke to the crowd, their voice carrying across the clearing so all of them could hear it clearly. I have heard some people say that Navarr's words were so powerful that the wind themselves carried them to each person's ears. I love this story although as a student of the Autumn realm, I could cast such a ritual myself for the same affect.*

*Navarr told of the casting of the great ritual, how they had helped place the boundary stones around the furthest points of the city. The ruling council had said that the stones would protect the city from the power of the ritual. My Grandmother says that she remembered Magister Naliath saying the same thing to the people of her city before the casting of ritual in Therunind. Navarr told the crowd how they had looked in horror as the ritual had been cast. That had they been braver that they would have drawn a knife and stopped the ritual. My Grandmother told me that she had the same feelings that she had abstained in the vote and had not been able to make the decisions at the time, that she had listened to the council of the others and had not been brave enough to speak out.*

*My Grandmother told that there was no explanation of than Navarr's words must be true, that they had been at the casting of a ritual the same as my grandmother. But there was no guilt from Navarr, the crowds were told of the Great Dance. I wish that I had been alive to hear that story, to hear about the Great Dance for the first time. We live only a short time in each life, but it is important that we find the correct place in the Great Dance to make the most of it.*

*It was there where my Grandmother took the name Nightshade. There were many who asked her why she took the name of a poisonous root, although she would never tell them. I am sure that it was because she thought that she had killed so many and took that guilt to her grave. "*

Pyre Blackroot. Grandson of Nightshade, she who was once Artificer Niryril of Hercyniand

Another account from the time is by Bradwr Gryphonstand. This account has been scribed several times and I have been unable to locate a copy of the original. There are obvious differences in different transcriptions and like many old texts the scribes have put their own interpretation on the words. The version I quote was written by the scribe Jestine Loststep.in 38YE, in the year of Empress Richilde.

*"It was on that day I met the famous Navarr for the first time, outside the ruins of Beantal Dol. There she stood with her followers behind her. They were bloodied from the battles with the Druj tribe. We had been fighting them for the last six years and we knew their ways, although we had lost many in this time. We guarded her as her coven cast the ritual, calling the powers of spring to leech the corruption from the land. The sight moved me in a way I did not know was possible, she surely stood apart from others.*

*When the ritual was complete I told her of our plan. The remaining members of the Bronze Gryphon were to head to the Mountains of Urizen. They would not welcome us at first, especially after years of war, but we would petition to join their nation and create a citadel, to offer to protect their people as we had protected our own for so many years. We offered Navarr protection, to stay with us and avoid the horrors that were starting to come out of the ruins of the city. To protect her and her people from the Orcs that attack us daily. She did not accept.*

*That was the last I saw of Navarr. It is interesting that having only met someone twice, would have such a major effect on your life but such was her strength and purpose, especially from one so young."*

General Brawdwr Gryphonstand, transcribed by Jestine Loststep (38YE)

Of all the records that I can find , their most common feature is the mentions of her age and it is most likely that she was around fourteen to sixteen when Terruneal fell. There is a chance that she was just past her twentieth year, and therefore had some influence in the council, but records show that the Terrunael cities were ruled by a council. Two Ministers, Two Generals, Two Artisans – each representing different parts of their culture. It is unlikely that Navarr was

on this council, and therefore could not have been involved in the decision to cast the ritual. That having been said, we are aware that Navarr was a powerful Spring mage and it is possible that she was involved in the casting of one of the rituals.

I find it unlikely that to cast the ritual of the magnitude that the Great Ritual was, that they did not combine all the Spring mages in their Empire to cast the ritual.

The obvious conclusion from this is that she was either of one of the powerful families of the Terrunael or she was a servant or slave. If she was a member of the families then it is likely that she was involved in the casting, but if she was a servant or slave then she may well have known the plan to cast the Great ritual but with no ability to stop it. What is implied in various records is her obvious dislike of Terunael society. She, at no point, wanted to recover the Terunael Empire, but instead wanted to make sure that a society like that would not happen again.

## The Building of the Trod Network

Although it is believed by many romantics that the Trod network was created by Navarr over a few years, the texts I have seen find this to be unlikely. The ritual text of the Dance of Navarr and Thorn explains that to cast the ritual is not enough, but instead a large number of Navarr have to walk the Trods to grow the spring magics.

*"When Terunael was overrun, the orcs came as a great tempest and drove us apart. We could not walk the trods where the orcs sought us out. The coming of other people created its own problems as each sought to claim their own land and would not let us move across it freely. Only with the founding of the Empire were we able to walk the trods safely in numbers, further than ever before, and see in the distance a world where our ancestors' great mistake might finally be erased..."*

*... While it could be performed in a territory that is not part of the Empire, doing so is of limited use because stridings simply cannot move freely enough in large enough numbers through the territory to bind the new trods into place. More so, without the freedom to move, the freedom to follow the trods where they wind, the trods are without purpose.*

*The trods could be traced across a territory controlled by an allied power, but only if that power were prepared to allow unrestricted access to large numbers of Navarr. There has been no time when a foreign power was prepared to offer such unfettered access to their lands, and certainly not on the kind of time-scales that would be needed to make newly forged trods effective."*

## The Ritual Text of The Dance of Navarr and Thorn

I believe that Navarr's greatest ability was not the ability to cast the Dance of Navarr and Thorn, but was to convince the refugees from Terrunael that they should change their life style and dedicate their life to walking the Trods, making amends to the acts of their parents and sacrificing their future to destroy what they created. Navarr created the binding of Thorns, the oath that binds all that follow her teachings. Thorn herself was the first that swore this oath and I surmise that this is why she took that name.

From the records that I can find, Navarr's journey was a long one, and took about thirty years. It is also well known that her Trods were not that effective. At the formation of the Empire, the Navarr were able to move in large numbers due to the safety of the Empire. It was this surge of power of so many walking the trods that allowed for the destruction of the Vallorn in Miaren.

Many people claim Navarr was a visionary; that she was building the Trod network in preparation for the coming of a new Empire. So when the Empire was formed then the Navarr would be able to walk it and to once again destroy the Vallorn. The followers of Navarr definitely walked the Trods, but it was a dangerous time and it was mainly protecting them from the Orcs that controlled the land. There would have been enough Navarr to tend to the Trods and stop them from breaking, for we know that if the Trods are not walked and cared for then they will surely cease working. It is hard to find out why Navarr wanted to create a Trod network that did not have the power to drain the power, although it is possible (although cynical) to believe that there is some other purpose for the ritual.

Since the formation of the Empire, the Conclave has requested for the Dance of Navarr and Thorn to be placed into Imperial lore twice. The Vate's council has both times attended on mass and explained that it will never happen. It is the sworn duty of all Vates to make sure that only they have the knowledge of the Dance. Should other nations get hold of it, then they would be able to use it for other purposes – to channel the Sprig magic to help their armies and to use the power of Spring as a weapon, maybe even awaking the Vallorn. The conclave is now aware that the ritual will never be in Imperial lore whilst the Vate oath is sworn.

## Navarr and Thorn

There are many songs and poems that romanticise the relationship between the two. There is no evidence from any of the reliable sources that there was any romantic involvement between the two. Navarr is believed to have taken several partners during her life, and there are stories of children born of that union (although if this is the case she did not take any of the children on her journey with her.) The stories about Thorn speak of her loyalty to a single person, and although many believe that it was her loyalty to Navarr, the writings of Ffion Firstdance shed a different light up on it.

*"Thorn's loyalty to Navarr knew no bounds. They were rarely separated and when Navarr wished council it was Thorn who would deliver it. Of the two, Navarr was the more outgoing. People*

*would flock to listen to Navarr's words, and who in return would take the time to speak to all those they could, to tell of the mistakes of the Empire and the follies of the Great ritual and how people could make amends.*

Navarr would oft wake in the night and Thorn would leave the bed letting their babe lie in arms to go and give Navarr council. But, Thorn would make sure he would return in morning for love is a powerful emotion, almost as powerful as loyalty itself."

Ffion Firstdance, pre Imperial Writings

## The Great Journey

It is possible to map the creation of the Trod network and from the records approximate the age of Navarr and therefore judge how long was spent in each place. We also know how which Trods have been created since the formation of the Empire, although there seems to be something about losing the land to the Orcs that means that after thirty years the ritual must be recast.

The records that speak of Navarr being young are from those around Miaren. There are several records of Navarr spending time around the Pool of Silver Clouds, and using their waters to guide herself or to guide others. There are some stories from Varushka from the time that tell of a young woman who could speak words and make the waters show people what she wished. It tells that she used this power to gain the loyalty of others and enlist them to give up their lives and walk in sorrow until they fell. In the Varushkan tales these are cautionary and speak of the woman as if she was a Sovereign, however, it is possible that their stories tell of Navarr and there are large parallels.

The Trods were then formed through Astolat and to Brocéliande. It is likely that this took almost ten years to create those Trods and to make sure that she had enough followers to defend them from the Orcs. It was in Brocéliande that there are stories of a major offensive on the Druj, pushing them back into the Barrens and forming the fortified steading of Carnstead there. Although there are several reports of the battles that took place in the Barrens, it is thought that Navarr did not go straight to Therunin and instead formed Trods through Reikos to hold Therunin.

From the writings that remain, it implies that Navarr was around the age of forty when she reached Therunin. It is interesting to note that if she was indeed sixteen at the fall of Terunnael, then this journey took her twenty four years. I believe this was the harsh reality of what many people have romanticised. It was a life time's work that involved collecting refugees from Terunnael, fighting Orcs, building fortifications that could be guarded, and moving forwards. It is important to note that in many stories there are tales that the forests would form fortresses to stop the Orc's advances or the trees would attack the Orc armies before Navarr would move into a region. From reading sources from other nations from around this time, there are many who believed that Navarr knew the secrets of the Vallorn and had the ability to control the forest to do her bidding. Although this is possible, it is not probable. It is more likely that she had several Spring covens who she had taught and they used Spring rituals to create forests or to control the trees.

These rituals are unfortunately lost and do not seem to be in Imperial Lore, but there are many who are cautious about using Spring magic for anything other than its restorative properties that could possibly bring about the creation of a second Vallorn. My personal view is that this is driven by fear rather than understanding, but I can empathise why people may believe this.

It is thought that Navarr and Thorn then returned to Miaren, through Reikos and Casinea making sure that fortified wayhouses were placed upon the way. One of the stories tells that Navarr and Thorn took an old friend back to Miaren, to live their final days near their home. This tale implies credence to two facts, the first is that Navarr was younger than many of her companions, and the second was that she was not from Seren and from somewhere further north, since the stories tell of her wishing that she could one day return home.

The next part of the Journey seems to be quicker, although as Navarr was gaining in strength it is likely that more force and more covens were joining to her banner. Trods were created through Upwold, Mitwold, Mournwold and Bregasland. These Trods were the first to fall into disrepair after the offensive of the Jotun, destroyed many of the steadings in these lands and forced the Navarr to forests of Liathaven or Miaren.

It is important to note, that Military victory was difficult outside forested areas. It was the creation of large amounts of fortresses using the power of Spring that seemed to allow Navarr and her covens to protect themselves from the Orcs aggression and where the trods were created after this then there was less protection.

Some stories tell of a large citadel being formed in Reikos to stop Orc aggression, but there is no other mention of this magic and it is unlikely that this was due to the intervention of a powerful Summer mage and an Eternal, maybe King Adamant or Cathan Canae. There are no mentions of any such castle in the lands between Miaren and Liathaven however, and this is the likely reason why those lands were lost.

It is likely that Navarr was in her late forties or maybe early fifties by the time she reached Liathaven. There are many stories of her time here, and especially around the earth trails of Liaven's Dance. What is interesting is there are no stories of her travels past this point, although we can speculate that she may have tried to travel northwards to Hercynia and onwards to Emrys, there are no stories that she ever reached them.

It was at the creation of the Empire that the great creation of the Trod network started, to all the reaches of the Empire. It is important to note that although Navarr is credited with the creation of the Trod network, this does not mean that she cast ever ritual. There are several rituals that were cast well after her death and I hope that if our Empire expands to take new territories then we shall see it cast in those as well.

## Conclusion

The majority of Navarr's life is conjecture and myth. What scant sources we have are unreliable at best, and like many historical figures may acts performed later have been attributed to them. It is likely that Navarr was around at the time of the fall of the Terunael Empire and was instrumental at collecting together one prominent group of refugees, getting them to work

together to defend territory from the Barbarian Orcs that controlled most of the land after the fall.

What is also interesting is although there are several mentions to the later lives of many of the other members of Navarr's entourage, there are no mentions or stories of Navarr and Thorn in their later lives and no mentions of their deaths. What happened to them, and how they met their demise seems to be a highly guarded mystery.