

# Salt Flats of Sanath Spy Network

## E4-2024

This physical report is an out-of-character briefing sheet, rather than an in-character report. We ask players not to share these briefings around until after the event at the earliest. It is intended to be used to create stories about what the characters involved have done since the Summer Solstice.

The total military strength of the scouts committed to the Salt Flats of Sanath totals three thousand, five hundred and sixty two strength. The fleets here are serving under Edmund Reaver, Theodore, Leonardo Reaver, Ursiel, Jack Oat, Seraphone De Sarroi, and Seidon Kendaii of Dawn; Godfrey of the Emberclad, Escon who was Elisha, and Keturah of Highguard; Dayus of the Imperial Orcs; J'zarr, Owain Farkas, Atlas Dagersbond, and Llandun Verdantvine of Navarr; Magari i Morata i Riqueza, Sahir i Projimo i Erigo, Sebastian i Fijidoz i Guerra, and Eduardo i Otono i Guerra of the Brass Coast; Marozia of Sarvos of the League; Maxwell, Evie Littleoow, Oslac Windrider, Briony of King's Stoke, and Peggy Cedar of the Marches; Thoedric Sandys, Lancel Vidir Gunnarson, Ryske, Magnar Wolfson, Wiglac Brunisson, Matthias Tzoref, and Aeschere of Wintermark.

## Overview

The Salt Flats of Sanath is part of the Mallum, controlled by the Druj, and ruled over by the many buruk tepel in Leen. It borders the Forest of Ulnak, the Barrens, Sarangrave, and an Axou territory to the south. It has similarities to several Imperial territories; the marshes of Bregasland and Kallavesa, the split city of Tassato, and the dead city in Necropolis. It has a similar climate to the Forest of Ulnak and Therunin but is significantly wetter. The northern regions suffer flooding every spring making it difficult to pass through.

The Salt Flats are broad plains criss-crossed by dark waterways. The ground is sodden, and the further east toward the sea one travels, the more marshy the land becomes. The largest settlement is Leen which covers much of the eastern part of the territory. There are settlements throughout the territory; larger and much more organised than elsewhere in the Mallum.

The Salt Flats have been under the effect of the Thunderous Tread of the Trees for almost a year; and the civilians have suffered. Each of the fortifications have been battered for

the duration. There is no doubt in the minds of the populace that this is a result of the Empire's actions.

## Armies and Fortifications

There are no Druj armies in the Salt Flats of Sanath this season.

There are three fortifications: The Witness, that stands at 9000 strength and causes any non-Druj army to break if it falls below 1,500 (2250 if large); the Spires of Rarckan, which stands at 6000 strength; and Beacon of Iskrid, which stands at 3000 strength. All of these fortifications would be dangerous to lay conquer, inflicting half as many casualties when attacked.

## Points of Interest

### Leen

Leen is the only true city in the Mallum. It is huge, equal in size - though not wealth - to the cities of Sarvos and Tassato combined. Iskrid, the northern half, is by far the poorer of the two with clans, bands, and other groups forced to fight amongst themselves for a chance to prove themselves to the warleaders of the Druj, a chance to escape the city and fight against the hated Empire. Rarckan is rich by contrast, where the *buruk-tepel* live in fortified towers that allow them to stay above the filth of the city - figuratively and literally.

### The Witness

In the centre of Ūrinth stands the Witness, an immense fortress of black basalt and granite. This ancient fortification has echoes of the Silent Sentinel - made even more grotesque by centuries of Druj "*improvements*". A dozen squat towers surround the central keep. Ghosts are a common sight around the fortification, and the garrison - each a veteran of half a dozen skirmishes against Imperials - have a deserved reputation for their stoic approach to the spirits.

As with many Druj fortifications, this massive castle would be very dangerous to assault. Casualties suffered when laying siege to or storming it would be increased by a half. The Witness - combined with the miasma in the territory - exudes an aura of fear; any non-Druj army will break if their strength falls below 1,500 (or below 2,250 if they are large).

The Witness is a rank three fortification.

## Spires of Rarckan

Dominating the centre of Leen Rarckan is a series of fortified towers, the Spires of Rarckan. These spires reach high into the sky, a dark reflection of the places of poise and arete in Urizen. Instead, they house the buruk-tepel and their apprentices. *Zorgat Venomtongue*, the leader of the garrison, is the veteran of a dozen engagements against the Empire and bears a heavy grudge against the Highborn. There is evidence of a recent expansion of the Spires; the fortification has been improved in the last year.

As with many Druj fortifications, the spires would be very dangerous to assault. Casualties suffered when laying siege to or storming it would be increased by a half. The Spires of Rarckan are a rank two fortification.

## Beacon of Iskrid

The Beacon of Iskrid is a somewhat plain fortification, by looks it has more in common with the Eastern Guard or the reinforced chapters of Necropolis than Cassad Ūln in the Forest of Ulnak or the Tower of the Skink in Sarangrave. The garrison appears to be made up entirely of humans, dressed in a mismatch of Marcher and Dawnish styles. Scattered discussions with the locals suggest that the leader of the garrison, *Prince Tristain the Golden*, is the descendant of some foreign monarch who bent the knee to the Druj rather than see their people destroyed. Now, the Beacon of Iskrid is the less-than-impressive seat of Prince Tristain in the poorest part of the city.

As with many Druj fortifications, the beacon would be very dangerous to assault. Casualties suffered when laying siege to or storming it would be increased by a half. The Beacon of Iskrid is a rank one fortification.

## Grove of Woe

There is a weirwood grove near the eastern edge of Upper Saarnath. There are indications that several orcs of the Great Forest are kept here, forced to tend the trees for their Druj masters. They live in dreadful conditions, clearly suffering punishment for the "treachery" of their families in the Barrens, but the Druj enjoy the fruits of their expertise enough that they keep them alive rather than make an example of them.

Estimates suggest that the Grove of Woe provides 26 wains of weirwood each season with the support of the treetenders. If that support was lost then production would be reduced to around 18 wains a season.

# Strategic Considerations

The Nameless River prevent easy movement from the Barrens into the Salt Flats of Sanath. It is only possible for an army to move between Saltmarsh and Sydathian Fens without an opportunity. The high mountains in the south-west mean that it is not possible for an army to move into the Axou territory to the south from Lower Saarnath, only Upper Saarnath. The high cliffs of Upper Saarnath mean that it is not possible to attack Leen Rarckan directly from the region, nor vice versa.

Sydathian Fens, Trisaquan Shore, Ilthackous, and Beladrarsh all suffer heavy flooding every spring. Movement within, into, and out of the territory is likely to be difficult after the Spring Equinox. Without adequate preparation farms in the territory will also suffer during that season.

## Druj Miasma

A heavy and oppressive aura of despair and fear hangs over the entire territory. Any attempt by non-Druj armies to attack a region that is covered in the Druj miasma will find it extremely difficult to conquer land.

# Regions

## Sydathian Fens

Quality: Marsh

The Sydathian Fens are a freshwater marsh that becomes increasingly salty as it runs along the river to the shores of the eastern sea. It is ruled over by the Razorbird clan of the Druj; cruel spear-fighters and archers who mark their territory with sinister wicker effigies of great long-legged marsh birds, their hollow bodies studded with barbs and spikes. Those who offend the clan are interred within and left to die of hunger, thirst, or sickness. They are cruel even by Druj standards.

## Trisaquan Shore

Quality: Marsh

Trisaquan Shore is a tidal flat with deep mud that kills all but the wariest traveller. It is ruled over by the Saltfish clan of the Druj; ruthless knife-wielders and battlemages who make extensive use of false paths in order to trick trespassers into a slow, agonising death in the mudflats. The Saltfish take their name from a roughly dog-sized amphibious fish that can remain still for days at a time as it waits for its prey to stumble and fall in the sucking mud.

## Ilthackous

Quality: Marsh

The bogs of Ilthackous are rich in life; huge swamplizards with great snapping jaws the size of oxen, rat-sized beetles that will spray a burning, glutinous mucus at anyone who disturbs them, and the dire mantises with chitin that blends into the trees and who stand as tall as the ice giants of Cathan Canae. These last are who the ruling clan of the region - the Hookstem - take their name. The Hookstem are ruled by a fearsome cicatrix, *the Wyvern*, who commands the clan with an iron fist.

## Beladrarsh

Quality: Marsh

Beladrash is a vast marsh across the Nameless River from the Plains of Teeth. It is ruled over by the Skinweavers; a reclusive clan - even by Druj standards - who have half a dozen subject septs toiling for them to provide food that is in high demand across the rest of the territory. The Dripping Market is hosted each month by the Skinweavers which encourages the trade of delicacies, precious goods, and rarities in the west of the Salt Flats of Sanath.

## Lower Saarnath

Quality: Forest

Lower Saarnath is the valley that leads to the plateau of Upper Saarnath and lies across the border from Turan Flats and Kroll in Sarangrave. In the north-east of the region, deep within the woods and distinctly off the path, stands the Dripping Tor. *Graknuz Acidtouch*, a callous and fearsome ghulai who has some connection to the rocky outcrop is served by the Vileshrikes. This clan of Druj are wholly devoted to the ghulai and serve at their beck and call.

## Upper Saarnath

Quality: Forest

The plateau of Upper Saarnath reaches the mountains of Kabanja, the north-western territory of the Axou. There is evidence that there was once a path through the mountains to Axos - the Broken Stone Pass - but it is clear that the pass has been destroyed in some manner. There is no easy route down from the forested heights to Leen Rarckan, a few brave Druj are able to make the journey down the chalky grey cliffs, but the majority need to travel north through Ûrinth if they wish to enter the city. In the centre of the region is the Grove of Woe; a stand of weirwood trees that fuels both the Druj war effort and in trade with the Grendel.

# Ûrinth

Quality: Haunted

Ûrinth is home to the Witness, an incredibly old fortification of black basalt and granite. The region is probably the most haunted area in the Mallum and the few who live here must deal with weekly sightings of ghosts, spirits, and other ephemeral and ethereal phenomena. Ûrinth has been claimed by the Black Wind sept, recently escorted out of the Barrens by the army of the same name. It is still unclear what the status of the sept is amongst the larger Druj population, but they have created a settlement amongst ruins on the path north-west of the Witness - on the path towards the Barrens.

## Leen Iskrid

Quality: City

The northern part of the city - Leen Iskrid - is sprawling. Rather than build up or improve on existing buildings the inhabitants have simply expanded. The city is larger - in area - than the twin cities of Tassato combined. It is also the site of much suffering; there are dozens of clans and familial groups here all clawing at each other to rise from the bottom. The human garrison of the Beacon of Iskrid is just one example of the groups that live in the northern city. To the north of the region lies the barrow mounds of the first Arkad lodge; a depiction of a beetle - filled in with chalk - watches over the mounds from a nearby hill.

To the north-east, as a sentinel over the coast, stands the Tower of the Scarred; a towering spire with gothic architecture. The Seers of the Wasteland are a sept of the Druj with a penchant for Night and Winter magic. They serve as watchers over Leen Iskrid, interjecting when things go too far between the clans and families. They are one of only a few of the Druj septs who accept others in their sept; a sick and painful "Test" that needs to be overcome before they accept an orc as one of the sept.

## Leen Rarckan

Quality: City, Coastal

The southern part of the city - Leen Rarckan - is significantly richer than the rest of the territory, indeed richer than any other part of the Mallum. Leen Rarckan is divided amongst the buruk-tepel; expansive workshops, vast stores of apothecary supplies, and decadent manors built of sandstone flecked with black quartz. The largest part of the port is given over to the opulent embassy of the Grendel. Crates of arms and armour are traded between the two nations, along with wains of mithril, weirwood, and white granite. There is clearly no real trust between the Druj and the Grendel, but as long as both benefit enough from the trade it will continue.

The "*Keepers of Roles*" have a large estate here; with a vast library of the names and deeds of historic, notable Druj "heroes". These archivists offer the ancient raiment and monikers of the long-dead to Druj who have proven themselves worthy. Here are names given and taken, ready to be bestowed on those who show promise.

Dominating the centre are the Spires of Rarckan, a set of fortified towers garrisoned by the elite Guardians of the Spires.