

FOR STANDING

This report is for Anvil Standing from Miela Thornvoice, Vate and Brand of Thornvoice Striding, in case the Butchers of Temeschwar cannot be trusted to tell you good-morning without lying twice.

I allowed myself to be hired as a consultant on the course of the Red Roads, in order to watch them. To my surprise they truly listened when I cut down half of their stupid ideas. Everything was about speed - but they listened when I said that trying to pave a Trod was the stupidest thing I ever heard.

When they are finished, every Trod from West to East in the Empire will cross a Red Road. By the time I was done with their maps, none will ever have to cross one more than once, nor spend any more time near one than it has to.

So far, precisely one Trod has been crossed with white granite. It was crossed six weeks ago. I was there, watching and advising, as they did it. Thornvoice Striding spent all the mana we had on observing the interaction of the Trod and the Road. This is what we found.

Nothing. Absolutely nothing. The Trod's energies pass into one side of the Road, cross the Road, and pass out the other side as if the white granite were not there at all. Not walking across it singly or in groups, nor taking a traditional oxcart across it, nor taking a new and massive Leaguish contraption over it, does a single thing to the Trod. The digging did nothing: the placing of the stone did nothing: there has been no change to the site in six weeks. The Trod is perfectly healthy, whole and undamaged to the Bright Lantern and to our cantrips, and the Road is perfectly fine.

The Butchers' people have taken this as a sign to move on - they want the Roads finished as fast as is safe. The whole project has about it an air that different groups are competing to finish their bit of Road before anyone else: the Dawnish started it. I have advised caution, because we have not exhausted all avenues of magical investigation. My Striding does not have the art to perform the Shadowed Glass or the Clear Lens, and because I have no evidence that such divinations would yield anything more than the Bright Lantern, the Butchers' people refused to fund them.

If you want this sort of investigation done, and have the magicians and the mana, I can find you places to do it - there will be a big wave of Trod crossings in three months, at the spring equinox. Talk to the Butchers - or the Synod Assembly for anywhere the Roads pass, if the Butchers will not agree - and get them to agree to host some observers next season, and I'm sure the Gate will oblige you.

Miela Thornvoice

Vate and Brand