

Here to stay

"You know what says we are here to stay better than anything else?"

"Is it a city?"

"... maybe."

"You are so predictable, you Tamazi."

"Certainly mock if you like. But, even so, it really is a great way to say we are here to stay, and it's an even better way to say if we leave we are definitely coming back, because all our things are here."

Overview

During the Summer Solstice, the Imperial Senate commissioned Eilian Sweetwater to undertake an appraisal in the newly conquered territory of Mareave. He was asked to find ways to deal with the uncooperative inhabitants of the southern regions - Fleisardh, Clisearn and Eoradal.

The Navarr prognosticator spent much of his early career as part of the Department of Historical Research, and so began the appraisal by exploring historical precedents, looking at incidents where the Empire has achieved peaceful relations with orc communities, and reviewing documents such as Mareave and Urizen that deal with the history of the territory. He also visited the independent city of Beoraidh to speak to scholars there. At the end of the day, however, there is a limit to how much the past can help to shape the new future in this territory. Achieving a good outcome in southern Mareave will need diplomacy, and while that is not Eilian's strong suit, with the aid of the Imperial Orcs the first steps have been made

towards perhaps achieving that goal.

Uncooperative Quality

Any Imperial army stationed here has its upkeep increased by a tenth for every region that has the quality, and as long as any region has that quality the territory cannot support an Imperial army.

Recent developments in Ayereed have highlighted further difficulties due to the hostile environment in the northern part of the territory, and the difficulty of moving vital water supplies through Mareave in part thanks to the uncooperative groups in the south.

Thrace's Inspiration

The true liao consecration of the Legion's Rookery as an inspirational location dedicated to Thrace has major implications for these commissions, provided they are commissioned before the end of the Winter Solstice 386YE. The basic labour costs of anything built in Mareave before that time is paid entirely by Imperial Orc volunteers. This benefit is included in each of the descriptions below, but this advantage does not cover the extra funds needed due to the Under-developed quality, or extra funds required to secure the aid of the Eoradal orcs. Likewise, if the Legion Engineer commissions one of these projects, the amount of wains needed is reduced by a fifth.

Bonds and Bargains

- An Imperial enchantment has both helped Eilian with their appraisal, and stored up trouble for the future

Eilian spends most of his time working on finding common ground. He and his assistants are helped along their way by

Imperial Orcs - especially those of the Sannite and Tamazi septs - and by the efforts of Golden Pyramid magicians. There is another factor that both helps, and in some ways hinders, his appraisal: the influence of an enchantment of Autumn magic laid on the territory by Imperial magicians. The ritual is subtle, but noticeable by any magician capable of casting the detect magic spell. It draws the resonances of binding, bonds, travel, and communication to nudge coincidence and weave serendipity such that people seem to naturally come into contact with other people who share their attitudes and opinions, making it easier for them to make new friends.

Like all such magic, however, its influence is entirely indiscriminate and unpredictable. As Eilian points out, the effect cannot be directly guided by a conscious mind as it might be if a mandate were being undertaken, and so it is as likely to hinder efforts to strengthen the Imperial hold over Mareave as it is to support them. While it helps business owners find customers and investors, but it also helps bandits recruit new members for their bands. It helps Imperial Orcs find those amenable to joining the Empire, but also helps criminals and traitors strengthen their own organisations.

From Eilian's point of view the enchantment has been useful in allowing him to make contact with those who share his interest in finding ways to address the disputes of the recalcitrant orcs with the Empire. Unfortunately, it has also encouraged those resisting Imperial dominance to find those who share their interests and encouraged them to double-down on their position. As the Autumn equinox approaches, and the enchantment fades, those associations created through Autumnal coincidence do not go away; indeed they are likely to get stronger. In a way, the enchantment has accelerated sands that were already flowing through the hourglass, raising the

spectre of a possible rebellion if the three uncooperative factions continue to build bridges with one another - assuming the Empire does not build stronger bridges first.

The Problem of Peace

- Eilian believes the first step to resolving matters with the uncooperative groups in Mareave is to recognise all the people there as foreigners

Eilian looks at events in the Barrens and Ossium, considering things that went well and things that went poorly. All of his proposals are predicated on the understanding that the orcs of Mareave - all the orcs of Mareave - are foreigners. The Empire has already ratified a treaty with former Salt Lord Ehsan of Beoraidh in which the people of the city and of Sinfoyard are granted that status. In theory, all the other orcs of Mareave are still barbarians. They have no protection under Imperial law, it is illegal to trade with or offer succour to them, and they can be killed with impunity. This disparity helps drive the resentment in the south and it is surprising that the entire territory is not uncooperative.

After consultation with the Civil Service, they have agreed to present an administrative motion on Friday evening during the Autumn Equinox, asking the Imperial Senate if the people of Mareave should be considered foreigners. The majority of the folk there are not fighting the Empire, and any who take up arms to do so would be treated as criminals under Imperial law. In his petition, he points out that while the Empire finds it easy to declare war against its enemies, its ability to stop being at war is barely developed. Historically, this was because until a handful of decades ago the idea that conquered people - conquered orcs - might be able to live peacefully alongside Imperial citizens was inconceivable. Even as little as sixty years

ago, the Empire would simply have killed, enslaved, or driven out everyone in Mareave as part-and-parcel of conquering the territory. Today, thanks to advances such as the Doctrine of Enlightenment and the efforts of people in all walks of like, that approach is widely seen as unacceptable.

Solving the problem of peace is not part of Eilian's remit (his casual suggestion is that assignment explicitly declare peace with anyone in the territory, and let the law sort out people who keep fighting, causes several members of the Constitutional Court to sputter into their morning tea). If the Imperial Senate does not wish to pass the proposed administrative motion, they would still be able to declare individual orcs in Mareave to be foreigners, of course, with individual motions, but one of the challenges is that the three main groups are not part of the same faction. It would take up to three motions to declare them foreigners individually (or even more if the Empire wanted to stop treating any people of the northern regions who have not bonded to an Imperial egregore as barbarians).

Uncooperative and Recalcitrant

- Three regions have the uncooperative quality reflecting low-key opposition, resentment, and resistance from the population

The first thing Eilian does when he reaches Mareave – apart from to have a hot bath and sleep for a day to shake the last echoes of Spiral from his head – is to cement his understanding of what the problem actually is. There are plenty of people in Mareave who are not averse to the new regime; some are even interested in becoming Imperial citizens, especially those with existing ties to those who now compose the Sannite sept. Most of them live in the north however.

In the south there are three large “problem groups” resisting the Imperial Orcs and the Empire. For the most part they simply refuse to cooperate – refuse to share their knowledge of the land or their resources, or to offer any support whatsoever. A small number are resisting more actively; forming small bandit groups to prey on newcomers, to threaten supply lines or orcs who are deemed to be "too friendly" to the Imperials, and perform low-key sabotage of roads, bridges, and the like. At the moment these gangs are still in their infancy, but they may become a thorn in the side of the Imperial Orcs if the situation goes unaddressed.

Eilian believes that there are three main groups of people in Mareave who, if they could be convinced of the benefits of cooperation with the Empire, could bring an end to the problems in the south. They are formerly wealthy Grendel in Clisearn; cynical chancers of Eoradal who believe Imperial presence here is a temporary inconvenience; and the powerful Brine Turtles sept of Fleisardh.

Throughout their report, Eilian uses the words "people" and "orcs" interchangeably, but in an afterword points out that this is not entirely factual. There are also a few scattered human communities in Mareave, just as there apparently are throughout the Broken Shore. The Grendel have been observed using human mercenaries in their armies for years, and there are uncorroborated stories that some of the other territories of Attar might contain actual human septs similar to, but less powerful than, those of the orcs of the Broken Shore. None of these people feel any more connection to the Empire than their orc neighbours do; they are however a problem for another time. Eilian notes wryly that there is a certain symmetry in the idea of the Imperial Orcs having to decide what to do about the truculent humans they have conquered, for a change.

Selfishness

- The orcs of Clisearn resent their loss of status, and the 'favouritism' shown to the city of Beoraidh
- A great work build in Clisearn could play on Grendel selfishness, and to show the benefits of cooperation with the Empire

Many of the orcs who remain in Clisearn were wealthy Grendel; valued miners and engineers, privileged artisans and magicians, rich landowners or farmers. They resent the loss of status they have experienced with the Imperial conquest. A number retreated to Beoraidh, or fled the territory entirely, and those who remain look forward to the return of the Grendel because they see it as the only way to restore their lost prestige.

Eilian is able to ascertain that the core of opposition here is centred around the leaders of three families of orcs, forced to work together by the conquest of the territory. They are: Devan Adahr, a talented engineer who received a grant of land for himself and his family after leading enhancements to the Fundindelve mine; Savurn Marr, a diviner and practitioner of Day magic exiled from Beoraidh due to Wind Lord politics; and Regan Tholdie, a formerly prosperous farm owner whose fortunes have been devastated due to the loss of all his slaves. Like all those who remain in Clisearn, they are no friends of the former Salt Lord and his cronies; for whatever reason they are unwilling, or unable, to join Ehsan's city state.

The main problem facing the Empire here is that under Grendel domination the people here were important, wealthy, and felt privileged. Their estates are among some of the most fertile in the territory – water is abundant here, and so the region is rich with farms and beautiful gardens, as well as well-developed mines in the mountains. The Clisearn orcs have effectively been

knocked down to the status of second-class citizens. They resent the Empire and the Imperial Orcs for spoiling their comfortable lives, and in their selfishness lies opportunity.

Hollow Prestige

Clisearn Grand Market

Commission Type: Great Work

Location: Ohwinn Dell, Clisearn

Cost: 50 wains of mithril, 30 Crowns, three months

Special: Base labour costs would normally be 150 crowns, but are reduced to 0 by the inspiration of Thrace; the remaining 30 crowns are due to the Under Developed quality and are not reduced by that opportunity

Effect: Increases the level of investment for mines in the territory by one, providing 2 ingots or 36 rings to every mine in Mareave

Effect: Removes the uncooperative quality from Clisearn if the orcs are also made foreigners

Steward of Works

Type: Imperial

Appointment: Steward of Works

Powers: Oversee the Clisearn Grand Market

Responsibilities: Oversee the Clisearn Grand Market, liaise with the families of Clisearn, support Mareave miners

- Eilian believes that the orcs of Clisearn could be won over by a demonstration that the Empire recognises their former privilege
- Clisearn Grand Market provides benefits to the Imperial orcs,

but also shows the Clisearn families the benefits of cooperating with the Empire

With all the groups of recalcitrant orcs, the first step to bringing the Clisearn families round is to recognise them as foreigners. For some of the Clisearn, the fact Esahn and his supporters have been recognised as independents rankles; they would ideally want the entire region conceded to them. Eilian doubts there is any political will for that to happen, and anyway there's no reason at all to think it would be a good idea. It could easily solve as many problems as it causes.

In Clisearn Eilian proposes that the Empire employ a “carrot” to encourage the orcs to get over their resentment, and see the benefits of cooperating with the Empire. The Imperial Orcs, especially the Sunstorm sept, have a cultural opposition to working in mines, and some of the other septs accept their prohibition. Yet as the Golden Pyramid pointed out last season the mountains of Mareave are packed full of valuable ore ripe for the taking. After studying the history of the Steward of the Mines of Gulhule, and following discussions with the Golden Pyramid and members of the Sunstorm, Eilian develops a plan that would help mollify Clisearn, and also help the Imperial Orcs.

The Clisearn Grand Market would serve as a place to buy and sell goods, and as a gathering place for workers, engineers, and miners. It would attract those looking for good wages across both Mareave and the wider Empire. Built near the Fundindelve, it would focus on mining, but farm labourers and other workers could be recruited here as well. It would also present a convenient way for Clisearn landowners to find employees to work their mines and their farms.

The hills and mountains of Mareave are very rich in metal; recognising that Eilian proposes that an Imperial Orc be

appointed to oversee the Grand Market. The Steward of Works would be an Imperial Orcs national position appointed each year by Tally of the Votes. They would be responsible for looking after the Grand Market, but they would also be responsible for liaising with the families of Clisearn. As part of their role, they would be able to encourage the mines of Mareave to focus their efforts on metals useful to artisans, or precious metals such as gold, silver, or iron. (OOC

Note: During downtime after an event, the Steward could email plot@profounddecisions.co.uk and shift the benefit provided to mines by the great work to be either 2 ingots of their base type, or 36 rings representing investment in precious metals. The benefit would remain set to one or the other until the Steward chose to change them again).

While the work to bring prosperity to the territory would be valuable, the real benefit of the Great Work and related title would be the effect it would have on the Clisearn families. Having an "Imperial official" specifically to address their concerns would help restore their lost sense of prestige and importance, giving them the impression they are at least as significant as the court of former Salt Lord Ehsan. A great work helps everyone in a territory, so the Clisearn families would be able to find workers for their own mines and farms, but crucially they would find it easier to employ such workers if they were Imperial citizens - their own self-interest may start to incline them towards considering joining the Empire.

The Grendel as a whole do not build great works. There is a strong thread of selfishness in the Grendel psyche, reinforced by their particular understanding of Grendel Prosperity and Grendel Ambition. A Salt Lord would invariably choose to create things the Empire would recognise as sinecures or perhaps ministries rather than a great work. Partly because having something that one person has control of

builds their prestige and plays into Grendel political games, and partly because of the fear that "undeserving" people might benefit for the "foolish" largesse of the great work builder. This investment would help the Clisearn families see the benefits of working with the Empire rather than opposing them. They would not automatically become friends to the Empire, but their own self interest would see them cease their open opposition.

Once foreigners, and once the Grand Market is complete, it may be possible to bring the Clisearn families into the Empire. Getting them to listen, to see how cooperation might benefit them, would be the first step.

Cynicism

- The people of Eoradal believe the Empire are here only for the short term and the Grendel will soon be back in charge

The people of Eoradal are mostly orcs who did well out of offering service to the Grendel; rewarded with land and privileges for serving the Salt Lords. For the most part, though, they have little actual affection for the Grendel. Rather the problem here is that they expect the Salt Lords to return at any moment, and anticipate both great rewards for staying "true" to their former masters (Fidelity), and punishment if they throw their lot in with the Empire too readily (Retribution). Foremost among the Eoradal orcs resisting the Empire are the Uthni, a widely extended family native to Eoradal who claim a strong connection to the Grendel ancestor Rucraic the Storm Lord.

The people of Eoradal did well out of the Grendel, but didn't actually have that much love for them. Eilian found the warmest welcome among the families here of anywhere in the three regions. These orcs are close in temperament to the Sannite, but they are motivated by a belief that the Grendel are going to

come back, and that this conquest of Mareave by the Empire would prove as temporary as the Grendel conquest of Spiral has always been. They view the Imperial Orcs presence as a disruption of the normal order of things that will soon be over. They are opposing the Empire because they believe it will earn them favour with the Salt Lords when they inevitably return – and because they just don't see any long-term advantage to cooperating.

The level of cynical self-interest these people demonstrate surprises even the worldly Eilian. At first she's at a loss of what to do to convince them that their best interest lies in working with the Empire rather than against it. During the Solstice, the Imperial Orcs Synod sent a contingent of Tamazi to Mareave to explore the place for opportunities. Ketus Stonewalk, the experienced stonemason who recently drew up plans for the Walls of Gildenheim, makes a suggestion which by happy coincidence aligns with something the sept would be keen to see in Mareave regardless.

Not Going Anywhere

Fortified Settlement

Commission Type:Fortification

Location: Skouran Ruins, Eoradal

Cost: 80 wains of white granite, 100 Crowns, one year

Upkeep: 10 Thrones

Special: Base labour costs would be 240 crowns, but are reduced to 0 by the Thrace opportunity. The remaining costs - 48 crowns due to the Under Developed quality, and 60 crowns to employ Eoradal orc assistance, are not reduced by that opportunity

Special: The support of a Summer eternal to infuse it with adamant is required

Effect: Removes uncooperative quality from Clisearn, establishes walled settlement in Mareave

- Outside of Beoraidh and Fioroult there are few large settlements in Mareave
- Eilian and the Tamazi propose the Imperial Orcs establish a fortified town in Eoradal

The challenge here is to convince Eoradal, and the outspoken Uthni, that not only are the Imperial Orcs here to stay, but that they will come back in the event their dominion is challenged. Showing the people here that they genuinely view Mareave as part of their Empire, and as part of the Imperial Orcs nation, will challenge their cynicism and encourage them to make accommodation with the Imperial Orcs. While the orcs may be cynical about the border, they know that the Empire has endured for nearly four centuries. It represents permanence once it sets its mind to things.

So with Ketus' assistance, Eilian presents plans for a fortified town - or more realistically a fortified and walled settlement that will grow into a town (or event a city) one day. The settlement would represent a kind of territorial capital for their people, and as it is roughly in the middle of the territory, Eoradal represents the ideal place to establish it. There are also ruins in the east of the territory that once marked a large Skouran settlement, that was supported by a long-since collapsed aqueduct bringing fresh water down from the mountains. The labour costs are higher than might be expected, even allowing for the problems of moving materials to Mareave. This is because part of Eilian's plan involves offering incentives to the Eoradal orcs to help the Imperial Orcs dig

wells, clear the site, and raise walls, demonstrating that it is more rewarding to work with the Empire than against it.

The centrepiece of the settlement would be a bastion or fortress, and every settlement needs protective walls. In time Ketus suggests that the settlement could grow to rival Beoraidh or Gildenheim. Coincidentally, this is exactly the kind of urban centre the Tamazi favour. Quite a few of the Tamazi are enthusiastic about establishing a settlement in Mareave – previously from Axos the climate here is much closer to what they many of them are familiar with. If the Imperial Orcs commit to creating a settlement here, then substantial numbers of the sept would move south to help build it. By metaphorically driving a pin into the map saying “Mareave is an Imperial Orcs territory and we plan to keep it that way”, and by showing the Eoradal orcs that they can profit from working with the Empire, they can win the recalcitrant orcs round and silence cynical voices.

Eilian is initially unconvinced, but as well as being masters of stonework the Tamazi are canny magicians. Ketus proposes that the Imperial Orcs prevail on the Archmage of Summer to petition either the King Under the Mountain or the Queen of the Endless Glacier for their support before beginning construction. The whole point of establishing the fortified settlement here would be to show the Eoradal orcs that they are here for good - and the best way to do that would be to infuse the foundations of their building with adamant, in the same way the Adamant Gate in Semmerholm is. This would mean that even if the Grendel did recapture Mareave, the fort would serve as a "promise" of the Imperial Orcs' return. Without this additional step, Eilian's concern is that if the Grendel counter-attacked and destroyed the fort it would actually make it harder for the Empire to maintain control of Mareave when they returned - having shown that their "pin in the map" was so easily

removed.

It might bring other benefits as well. While Eilian can't predict its exact effects, it would demonstrate the commitment of the Imperial Orcs to everyone in the territory. It would be perfectly positioned to benefit from any effort to restore the Skouran aqueduct (and providing large amounts of pure water to the settlement would help it grow, as well as being good for local farms). It would provide an urban centre for Imperial Orcs exploration of the territory, drawing more settlers from the north and also convincing more Mareave orcs to join the Empire bringing in additional funds to the Imperial Treasury - as the settlement grew so would the prosperity of Mareave.

Shells

- The Brine Turtles are a powerful sept, and their warriors still fight under Grendel banners
- In addition to being uncooperative, the Brine Turtles place the territory under threat of invasion

Finally, the Brine Turtle sept is the dominant power in Fleisardh. For years they were one of the two dominant forces in Mareave, rivalling the power of the Salt Lords of Beoraidh. The southernmost region of Mareave is their heartland, and almost everyone living there belongs to the sept. Their warriors are currently in Ayereed fighting the Empire but still the leaders of the sept expect them to return, along with the rest of the Broken Shore orcs, and drive the Imperial Orcs out of their territory any day now. Paradoxically, they would be the group most likely to take up arms against the Empire... if not for the fact most of the people able to wield those arms are already fighting the Empire to the south.

The leaders of the Brine Turtle - their civilian leaders at least -

are concentrated in and around the settlement of Fioroult and one of the few large sources of potable water in the region. As a sept they are proud, comparatively powerful, and resentful. They control the borders between Mareave and the rest of the Broken Shore, and are keen to see the Imperial Orcs driven out. At the moment they are barely even prepared to talk to the Empire, let alone help it move through their arid lands or share their resources with it.

Recognising the Brine Turtles as foreigners will make it easier to negotiate with them but it will take a lot more to stop them wanting the Empire gone. As the Autumn Equinox approaches, and with a heavy heart, Eilian begins to worry that the only way to deal with them is to drive the sept out of Mareave by force of arms, and hope that a future prognostication might help deal with the consequences. In the end, he is helped by a seemingly chance encounter with an Illarawm - Bonesung Reller - visiting Rucraic's Aerie in Eoradal.

Reller points out that the Brine Turtle are fundamentally not that different to any other orc sept – they are proud of their traditions, proud of their ancestors, proud of their lands. They're not really allies of the Grendel as such; they just have a long history of working with them. The Illarawm have seen this kind of thing before, in the Mallum and even in some ways with the Imperial Orcs. Instead of trying to guess what the Brine Turtles want, why not ask them?

With Eilian's assistance, Reller makes cautious contact with the elders of the Brine Turtles, presenting themselves as a mystagogue and shaman rather than a representative of the Empire. After their meeting, they recount a tense exchange that runs the risk of exploding into violence at any moment, but that the elders of the Brine Turtles are frightened and angry more than anything else. They know that without the protection of

their army, the Empire could kill them all and take their land without breaking a sweat. They know that without the commitment of the Grendel, their army would be decimated by Imperial forces - and they are also angry at the Salt Lords for leaving them at the mercy of the Empire while committing their military on the other side of the Bay of Catazar while the Empire tore through Mareave like a hot knife through buttered turtlemeat.

Turtles all the Way Down

- Eilian proposes that the Senate make it illegal to hunt or harm turtles in the Bay of Catazar
- This is an opening gambit that will not end the problem by itself but will allow negotiation with the Brine Turtles sept
- The Illarawm may be able to serve as diplomats for the Imperial Orcs

Despite this Reller believes that there is a chance to defuse this situation and potentially bring the Brine Turtles to the point where they are content to live as foreigners in the Empire. They doubt there is much chance the sept would join the Imperial Orcs, but the only way to find out would be to find some common ground between the Empire and the Broken Shore orcs.

Heads together, Reller and Eilian propose that the first step to showing that the Empire is not the enemy is to make it illegal for Imperial Citizens to hunt turtles anywhere in the Bay of Catazar. What at first seems silly is actually very serious indeed to the Brine Turtles. The sept takes its names from the great sea-going turtles that return each year to nest below the cliffs of Fleisardh. As recent military intelligence showed, the sept sees a vital connection between the turtles and their own ancestors

and fortunes.

According to the elders, one of the ways the Salt Lord maintained the support of the Brine Turtles was by allowing them to punish anyone who harmed one of the beasts. Only one kind of turtle is important to the sept, but Imperial citizens are unlikely to be able to tell the difference between the various species in the Bay. Applying the same law the Grendel apparently applied would send a message to the sept that the Empire was not going to ride rough-shod over their traditions. It would crack the door open, and at least create a space for negotiation.

Eilian predicts that there would be very minor loss to Imperial taxation in a few of the coastal territories; no more than 4 Thrones total in his estimation. A small number of people who hunt turtles would need to find alternative employment, but there don't seem to be that many businesses or farms that focus exclusively on raising or hunting turtles in the Empire. Most would be able to pivot to other prey.

Mystagogue Reller has another proposal, for the Imperial Orcs assembly. They believe that if the same mandate used to send the Tamazi to Mareave were used to ask the Illarawm to approach the Brine Turtles, it may be possible to establish a line of communication with their elders, provided the law suggested by Eilian were passed. The mandate would need to be worded appropriately, and the only "benefit" it would provide would be the chance to open negotiations with the Brine Turtles rather than anything more general. This isn't the only way communication could be established of course, but it is Reller's opinion that the mystagogues are in the best position to make peaceful contact with the sept.

One last note; Reller cautions that the Brine Turtles represent an opportunity, but also a danger to the Empire. How they choose

to deal with this sept will be seen by the other Broken Shore septs as representing how they themselves might be dealt with. Direct violence would solve the immediate problem, but it would lay up trouble for the future as every one of the other Broken Shore septs would expect similar treatment. If the Empire can persuade the sept to deal with them peacefully, then they believe it will be slightly easier to get the other septs to find a path to at least neutrality once their lands in turn are conquered.

Violence

- A single Imperial army could remove the uncooperative trait from a single region in a season with an appropriate order

Eilian has not spent much time exploring opportunities around violence; he sees no need to do so. A single Imperial army could end the uncooperative problem in a region in one season. The General would issue the Cautious Advance, Grinding Advance, or Gather Intelligence order, naming a region and clearly stating the intent to crush or drive out the recalcitrant elements in that region. The army would likely suffer a small number of casualties - no more than fifty in Eoradal and Clisearn and up to a hundred on Fleisardh - and the uncooperative quality would be removed. It would be impossible to drive out only recalcitrant orcs - a lot of people who were otherwise neutral to the Empire would be slain or displaced, reducing the likelihood of any positive opportunities related to the people of Mareave, or them joining an Imperial nation, and causing many more of them to simply keep their heads down and wait for the Grendel to return.

However, doing this even once would permanently sour relations between the orcs of the Broken Shore and the Empire not only in Mareave, but across the entire Grendel nation. They

would know the kind of treatment they would expect at Imperial hands, and act accordingly. Eilian projects that the Grendel would find it easier to raise armies, and resupply those armies, when their people knew that the coming of the Empire would bring only destruction. Indeed, as there were fewer places to drive the orcs to, the resistance against the Empire would become stronger as they would know they faced an existential threat to their lives and those of their families.

The other reason Eilian has not spent much time considering this problem is that nothing he sees from the Imperial Orcs suggests they are keen to simply kill the people living in Mareave. If he is incorrect, he suggest that another appraisal might turn up other opportunities, but asks that should they commission it the Imperial Senate choose someone else to perform it.

More Friends

- There are a series of other opportunities relating to Mareave this season

The Prognosticator's Office is not the only force busily exploring the Empire's newest territory this season. The Imperial Orcs assembly asked representatives of the Tamazi to look for opportunities here; the Grandmaster of the Golden Pyramid directed their Conclave order to seek ways to improve the territory's prosperity; and the Marcher, Freeborn, and League assemblies all urged their nation to offer their expertise to help the Imperial Orcs in Mareave. Details of what they have been up to are recounted in the *We all stand wind of fortune*.