

The wild wind rises

Loyalty to Great Things

The Tusks march north through Braydon's Jasse into the Greensward. They are fresh from the fight with the orcs of the Lasambrian hills, having had little time to rest, no time to waste. The Jotun are in Mournwold, and the Tusks are marching home to face them.

They won't face them alone – Wintermark fights with them. The Bloodcloaks and the Green Shield, fresh from their furlough in Mitwold and Upwold, come south through Chalkdowns and Freemoor, eager for the fray. The Quiet Step are with them; Cold Sun has been destroyed, Miaren is safe for the moment, and the Navarr are eager to drive the invaders back into Liathaven. A prelude, perhaps, to the liberation of that wooded territory – hopefully while there are still some trees remaining.

Jacks of the Tusks! There is trouble at the Old Oak Inn, unwelcome visitors of the worst sort. I say we march forwards! Forwards with the thorns of Navarr. Forwards with the rising citizens of the Mourn. Forwards with heroes headed by the Emperor. Forwards! Until the banners of sparrow and Tusks fly over Sarcombe, the Old Oak Inn and the Mourn!

Stanley Of Chalkdown, General of the Tusks

From fine Upwold feasting, the Green Shield goes to fight. The war blast calls them all, ready to do right. Walk these ragged roads, with resolute intent, to rout Queen Yrsa's rule, bring down ruin rent. Besides them mournwold's Tusks, Stanley's comrades come with might. We stand beside our friends day of battle, bloody night. Oathsworn Black Scar Forenthar, bring

with us swift spears, and Tager Defender of the Fallen, who fought with me all these years. To the Old Oak Inn we journey, joined as blood-marshal one. To sup and sing of victory, 'neath the setting sun. Witness our wards of war-play, pledges proudly placed. Join us heralds of Janon, there's a mighty queen to face.

Iron Osric, General of the Green Shield

My Cloaks, My Pride, Now is the season to prove our quality to show your peerless dedication to our Imperial kin. Long have you been the healing spring that feeds our defences, now turn that spring into a flood. Raise up Shield and healing hands alike. We march to Mournwold to recover the lost. There will be no death that is not a Good Death. No End but a Heroes End. Yrsa should have been warned. Mournwold brooks no Queen.

Lofyn Blood-cloak, General of the Bloodcloaks

As we leave Miaren, Navarr return home to prepare for our final battle. We march west to the Mourne, Iron Osric with the Mark to the left of us, Stanley of Chalkdown with the Marches to the right, we engage the Jotun Invaders. While the Jotun spared Liaven's Glen, they still hold our Land around a heart we must defeat. We continue to fight in Virtue and Kinship so we may bring this dance to it's end. Victory in our Lifetime

Farenthar Shattersong, General of the Quiet Step

The lands that were our ancestors' will be ours again. Side by side with the septs of the north we fight, to bring the Mourn to Narkyst once more. None will dare stand between us and our prize, save that they face the Choice. Our honour demands nothing less.

King Gudmunder Arasonn, General of the Fist of Ulven

Ulfur's horn sounds, calling us to war! Side by side we march with the King of the South, to repay our debts. As the folk of the Marches came to the north, so we come to the south. For our

honour! For our ancestors! For our triumph!

*Queen Yrsa Jansdottir, Jarl of Jarls, Monarch of Kalsea,
General of the Lion of the North*

They are bolstered by the garrisons of Farstrider's Watch and Landskeeper's Bulwark, and by some two thousand soldiers bound to the warbands of the Empire's heroes. Most of these captains fight with the Tusks, but there are a few with Wintermark. All three armies are also joined by batallions of faerie knights, drawn from the Summer Realm, from the Fields of Glory. With the Bloodcloaks and the Green Shield, twin warlords in resplendent gold and crimson chain; Ser Grumbar and Ser Helvennan, the Hound-knight and the Stag-knight, eternal rivals fighting on the same side in the battle of the Mourwold. Their two-thousand strong households glower and glare but are bound by their oaths to aid their Winterfolk cousins. With the Tusks marches sharp-eared Ollavan the Reeve, bowmaster unparalleled, and his cohort of archers, proud and glorious, eager to prove themselves against the orcs – and to test their skill against that of the beaters they fight beside.

The Knights of Glory are not the only supernatural allies the Empire has found. One Alder of the Mourn has traded their mine to Adamant; in return they lead a cohort of koboldi warriors to help defend Farstrider's Watch. At the invitation of the General, the passionate warriors of the Shadowed Flame continue to fight with the Green Shield. Crimson and cobalt, whirling, blazing bright, they burn like torches inciting the Winterfolk that fight with them to greater and greater diplays of bravery and heroism. They are indiscriminate in their enthusiasm and seek to set a fine example, and rather than avoid the elfin soldiers of the boar, the stag, and the reeve, they urge them to give their all in the battle against the Jotun.

Finally, there are the people of the Mournwold themselves. They accept the presence of the Tusks with dour, deprecating comments. The General had sworn an oath to protect the Mourn – what else would they do but bring the Tusks to fight the Jotun? It's just common sense! But there is no doubt that there is a frisson of relief, of quiet, grim celebration. The Tusks have come, and they will fight until the Mournwold is free. Yeomen and beaters come from across the territory, putting aside their rivalry to bolster the Tusks, to fight with them, to ensure they can say that they were there when the army of the Mourn marched to face the Jotun, to drive Jarl Haakon from the wolds once more. There are also plenty of Marcher orcs among them. Only a few have chosen to take up weapons, mostly young hotheads who have heard the call of their ancestors and seek to cross the Abyss in battle with their former masters. Most throw themselves into more supportive roles – healers and quartermasters – but they are not less eager to stand alongside their human neighbours and show the Jotun that they will never own the Mournwold again.

Here then, the forces of the Empire. Perhaps twenty-two thousand fighters, and six thousand heralds, standing proudly against the Jotun.

Banners of Bear and Wolf

In the hills of north-eastern Southmoor, three towers of white stone and black ice rise. The Frozen Citadel of Cathan Canae, called from her frigid realm, garrisoned by icy warriors with strangely scaled armour and odd full-face helms and unfamiliar short-hafted spears. Summoned forth by Imperial magicians, they are the first to face the Jotun armies.

Last season two armies ventured into the Mournwold from Liathaven; the Lion of the North under the command of the

Queen of Kallsea, Jarl of Jarls, Yrsa Jansdottir and the stoic Tower of the North, under the banners of the granite-faced Derun Stonetower. With them, the household and champions of Jarl Haakon, former ruler of the Mournwold, and the traitor yegarra who follow the lead of Stephen of Sarcombe. Perhaps fifteen thousand Jotun at most. Their cautious invasion took the market town of Sarcombe, but did not press far into the Mournwold proper. By themselves, they would be no match for the Imperial host...

When the Tusks and their allies arrive, however, they find not two armies caped around Sarcombe but six. The Southern Bear have left the Burhfæst in Bregasland to move swiftly back through Liathaen and out to Southmoor; The fist of Ulven, the army of the King of Narkyst, Jarl of Jarls Gudmunder Arasonn is with them, southern king and northern queen ready to fight together in the Mournwold. They leave the Ice Fishers of Ldansk behind, garrisoning the citadel raised at Graven Rock. At the same time the Bear who Swims and Roaring Thunder, fresh from their failed strike into northern Kahraman have moved straight through Liaven's Glan into the Mourn.

The western orcs are not waiting for the Empire, either. They are already on the move, consolidating their control of Southmoor. The Frozen Citadel delays their advance for a short time, giving the Empire's armies times to gather and prepare themselves in Greensward, but it cannot hold them alone. The siege engineers of the Tower of the North bring their might to bear against its walls and they are swiftly overwhelmed. Southmoor falls to the Jotun.

They immediately press east into the Greensward to face the Imperial armies. More than thirty thousand Jotun, striking with overwhelming force against the Empire. In the vanguard, the army of Queen Yrsa, further strengthened by fast-moving light

infantry from Tromsa, adept smirmishers. Had the Empire been dug-in, defensive, they might quickly have overrun the Imperial positions – as it is their presence is a complication but one easily matched by the equally swift-moving Marcher beaters, Navarr thorns, and Wintermark hunters.

The Green Shield are at the forefront of the fighting, glorious and terrible, clashing again and again with their Jotun rivals. The Blood Cloaks ensure that no warrior dies who might be saved, their expertise ensuring that the fallen are recovered and tended and either made fit to fight or sent north or east to recuperate. The Quiet Step and The Tusks are more measured, balancing the need to drive the Jotun back with a desire not to waste lives against the larger orc force.

It looks as if the Marchers will lose Southmoor, and parts of Greensward, but they will be able to hold the line.

Then, the rest of the Jotun arrive. After barely a week of fighting another five Jotun armies march out of Liathaven to join the six already engaged with the Empire. The Fell Hammers, the Howling Night, the Iron Host, the Shield of the Mountain, and the Mandowla's Roar. It seems that only the Lasmabrian Jotun are not here; presumably resting and recuperating from their recent defeat in the Cinnabar Hills. The banners of a half dozen Jotun champions flutter among those of the armies including both the Jarls of Alftanes and Keirheim, and those of Eisa Winterborn and Helma Skutasdottir.

Alongside this great mass of Jotun march ten thousand warriors of the Summer Realm, under their own banners of gold and crimson. The knights that fight with the Empire see no paradox here; the heralds of both sides are eager to test themselves against their cousins.

All told, more than sixty thousand warriors pour east into the Greensward. The Imperial forces are given no option but to

retreat, to fall back to Farstrider's Watch with the Jotun close on their heels.

Battle of Farstriders Watch

Farstrider's Watch is named for the beloved Marcher general Alusair Farstrider of House Balston, who fell in battle against the western orcs alongside many of her household. It stands on the mournful grasslands of the Greensward. It was funded by Imperatrix Lisabetta, and was one of the first fortifications completed with the aid of the virtuous, in the wake of the consecration of the Silent Sentinel. It was partially built in answer to calls from the citizens of the Mournwold to ensure they were protected from Jotun retaliation. It's garrison has fought to protect the southern Mournwold from Jotun raids; now it offers sanctuary to the Imperial warriors facing what may be the single largest force of Jotun to ever come to the Marches. The Empire's champions are quick to regroup, to take advantage of the stout walls to gather their wits and revise their strategies.

They have less than a day before the Jotun are there, at the gates. Mandowla's Roar and the Roaring Thunder lead the way, having set a punishing pace across the Greensward in pursuit of glorious battle. The rest of the Jotun host is not far behind.

There are soldiers here who remember the last siege of the Greensward and the Battle of Orchard's Watch. In the long watches of the night, some of the soldiers tell a tale of an unknown Marcher soldier, one of House Balston's badgers, who offers words of comfort to those on the walls. Some claim it's General Alusair herself; others that it's Bolstering Bill. More rational souls say it is a dream, or perhaps a ghost; the Greensward is haunted after all. But the story heartens some who hear it, for all that a few pilgrims worry it is blasphemous

or heretical to believe in such things. There are plenty of pilgrims here, seeking refuge behind the walls. They offer spiritual support of their own, helping to keep the fear at bay.

Despite the best efforts of spirits, real or imagined, the walls of Farstrider's Watch cannot hold forever. Four days it lasts – two days longer than the most pessimistic estimate so perhaps there is something to those tales of ghostly soldiers after all. The armies are forced to retreat again as the gates fall, as the walls crumble before the overwhelming assault of the Jotun. Back past the Singing Caves, back to the Ore Hills. Perhaps there is some talk of abandoning the Mournwold altogether, of retreating to Tassato. If there is, it comes to naught. The Tusks will not tolerate such a failure. They will fight the Jotun every step, every inch of the way.

The punches keep coming. The Singing Caves is lost to the orcs of the Howling Night and the Jarl of Alftanes, the miners forewarned of the attack by strange knocking and odd dreams they ascribe to Jonah Gold are able to escape with a bounty of mithril, but they cannot hope to hold the mine itself against the Jotun.

At Honour's Rest

At Honour's Rest, the Jotun pause and break from tradition. The story that emerges says that Stephen of Sarcombe sought to sack the church there, and put to the sword any priest or pilgrim that would not bow their head and take the thrall oath. Eisa Winterborn intercedes, refusing to let him harm those sheltering there or fire the structure, her champions prepared to face his in battle to defend the place. In the end King Arasson himself is forced to intercede, to fall back from the front to mediate between his champions. His disgust at Stephen's actions becomes an open secret; upbraiding the furious yegarra he

declares Honour's Rest to be a place under his protection. No Jotun will harm it or any beneath its roof, save that they invite that harm themselves, and if Stephen and his warriors will not accept that... then they will answer to the King of the South.

More than that, the king commands that work on the Orchard of the Watch will continue uninterrupted, and that those labourers involved will be allowed to leave. He points to the honour of the Brass Coast, to the way that they allowed the mound left by the fall of Fort Braydon to be raised and respected. He speaks of the good work done by the Marchers to help the angry dead rest, and loudly declares that any who would interfere in that work, who would steal from or harm those who tend the fallen, could never call themselves Jotun.

The pilgrims and the workers are no less stunned than Stephen of Sarcombe who withdraws in disarray. At the command of the King, Eisa leaves a score of her champions, humans from the frozen north, to ensure the King's dictate is honoured and when their work is done that the Imperial citizens are escorted back to Tassato.

Mutterings swell in the Jotun ranks that Stephen of Sarcombe and his yegarra have been deafened by hate, have forgotten what it means to be Jotun, have abandoned their honour. This does little to quell the fury that burns in the heart of that scion of Mournwold, or those who march beneath his banners.

Sixty years ago, our ancestors came down the hillside to show the ferocious Pride miners possess. We bleed for every inch of our land, surface and below. Miners of the Mourn; I will be the last to tell you need to prove yourself again. But you called on me to lead us to suffrage, to Exemplify our ancestors. We must be prepared to act like them. So sharpen your picks; let us show the Jotun a fight they will remember for sixty years! The Tusks will relieve us. Until then; Plan. Arm. Enchant. Resist. Exalt.

Remember. Like our rebellious ancestors, we are coming down the hillside - this time, to Sarcombe!

*Jedediah Boon, Marcher Assembly, Summer Solstice
386YE, Upheld (Greater Majority 170-64)*

Raven and Mouse

The Empire tries to push the Jotun lines wherever they can but it is ultimately fruitless. The Imperial armies are outnumbered so severely, and the Jotun so absolutely committed to the conquest of the Mournwold, that the best they can do is slow the advance. By the time the western armies press into the Ore Hills, their momentum is beginning to falter a little, but they still wash over the mines and towns here like a tsunami.

Some Marchers flee, forced to abandon their homes again. Some take the Choice and remain as thralls, knowing that they can offer passive resistance to the conquerors of the Mourn and maybe do their own part in hastening the defeat of the Jotun. Others stay to fight. They know the hills better than any Jotun save Stephen of Sarcombe, or perhaps Jarl Haakon. They take refuge in the mines and the tunnels, striking against the Jotun who seek to conquer their homes.

Helma Skutasdottir, whose battle-might is said to be matched only by her wisdom, is charged with securing the Ore Hills and rooting out these guerilla warriors. They say that Raðljóst himself whispers in her ear and guides her warband to victory, but against the miners of Our Hills, she has her work cut out indeed. There are credible reports that Jonah Gold whispers warnings to them when the Jotun come searching for their hideouts, and that they are able to stay one step ahead of the hunters. A deadly game of raven-and-mouse is waged across the mournful hills.

The last battle before the Autumn Equinox takes place in the

Chalkdowns. The Empire reallies at Lindenford farm, right in the heart of the farmlands. They face the Jotun charge and for a glorious hour it seems they might stop the Jotun here but one by one they are forced to abandon their posts. The last to quit the field are the Tusks, retreating east toward Freemoor and the sanctuary of Landskeeper's Bulwark.

As the season dies, the Jotun complete their conquest of the Chalkdowns, and the Mournwold falls to the barbarians.

The Jotun are fierce in victory, but also bound by their precepts of honour.

Harvest of Sorrow

The Jotun have absolutely overwhelmed the courageous Imperial armies, but they have by no means had it all their own way. If not for the dogged tenacity of the four armies ranged against them, if not for their many allies and friends, the immense Jotun host might well have conquered the entire Mournwold in a single season. As it is, Freemoor, Alderly, and Green March remain free – at least for the moment.

Wherever they have gone, the Jotun have offered their traditional choice. Join the Jotun and fight for them, or lay down your arms and become a thrall, or be granted a swift death, with a blade in your hand if you wish it. They do not differentiate between orcs and humans, nor between those who once were thralls but then were freed. They promise to protect them, and let them get on with their lives, as long as they raise no hand against the Jotun, do not seek to flee, and pay the punishing tithes that go toward supporting the warriors of the west.

All told, over a thousand Imperial warriors fall in the fight for

the Mourn, but only half that many Jotun. Those who die fighting are honoured with barrows swiftly thrown up at each battlefield by the thralls. Only the Navarr are deemed unworthy of honour; no Choice and no chance to sleep beneath the rough earthen hills. Those who bear the tattoos of brand and thorn are roughly executed by beheading, their bodies left for birds and vermin to feast on.

Farstrider's Watch still stands, but in the hands of the Jotun. The keep is battered, it's gate shattered, but the walls still stand - barely. There is talk that Jarl Haakon has claimed it, and begun setting up his hall there. Once again the King of the South has recognised him Jarl of the Mourn - with the unspoken promise that if he fails to hold these lands a second time he will not get a third chance to do so.

A covert war still rages in the Ore Hills – while the Jotun must guard against an Imperial counter-attack they are unlikely to spare the forces to deal with the miners and their supporters. They cannot strike at the Jotun armies directly, but for now they remain a thorn in the side of the conquering barbarians.

The Tusks have repaid the trust of the Mournwolders a hundredfold. Every one of the yeofolk who fell in the fight to protect their people from the Jotun died a hero in the eyes of the citizens of the Mourn. The General kept their word, and the people will remember it. In the face of sixty thousand Jotun they know that the Tusks will do whatever it takes to keep the Mournwold free. And that faith is a powerful thing indeed.

Game Information: Mournwold

- Southmoor, Greensward, Ore Hills, and Chalkdowns are now in Jotun hands; the territory is no longer Imperial
- The General of the Tusks faces a grim choice

With four regions now in Jotun hands, the Mournwold is no longer an Imperial territory but belongs to the western barbarians. Rituals cast at the Imperial regio in Anvil cannot target the territory.

The General of the Tusks has kept their oath to return to the Mournwold if it is threatened. The challenge now is what comes next. The Jotun are more than likely to press their advantage and the Tusks are close to breaking as it is. But leaving the territory now, when it stands on the precipice, would be a terrible betrayal of that oath. Even if they stay, they may be driven out, if the Jotun claim the rest of the Mournwold. The last time that happened General Hob Cullach went into the Wicker Man.

The Tusks are faced with grim choices whatever they do. If they chose to keep their oath, they will need to stand their ground in the face of the Jotun assault. If they survive, but are pushed out of the Mournwold anyway, then they'll need to return as quickly as possible, or else face the fate that awaits those who break their oaths.

None of the military units who supported the armies or fortifications in the Mournwold this season received shares of the Imperial Guerdon.

Game Information: Titles

- Several titles have lost powers due to the Jotun conquest of half the Mournwold
- The Black Canal has been completed but has reduced benefits until Chalkdowns and Southmoor are liberated
- The Singing Caves have been lost; a final shipment of mithril is on its way to Anvil

The Mournwold is no longer an Imperial territory and so is no longer represented by a Senator. If the Mourn were liberated, it would be again available to be assigned by the Imperial Senate and a new Senator elected.

Work on the Black Canal was completed shortly before the Jotun took the Chalkdowns (the length stretching from Sarcombe through the Ore Hills was already complete). stopped; it cannot be completed while the Jotun control the Mournwold. With half the canal in Jotun hands, the great work currently provides no benefit in the Mournwold and reduced benefits in Mitwold. This reduced production will persist as long as either Chalkdowns and Southmoor are not in Imperial hands.

The Reeve of the Happiston Mana Exchange and Keeper of the Happiston Fields have lost access to their ministry and sinecure respectively. The titles remain active, but their production is lost until the Chalkdowns are reclaimed from the Jotun.

The Empire has lost control of the Singing Caves, but the final shipment of mithril will be delivered at the Autumn Equinox. After that, the bounty of the caves will go to the Jotun until the mine is liberated. Once this happens, the Imperial Senate will be free to allocate it Imperial or National.

The Friar of Honour's Rest has been given special dispensation by the Jotun King, allowing them to continue to visit the shrine and the priests who reside there may continue to minister to the ghosts of the Greensward without interference. They have, however, lost access to both their liao and their money income - until the Greensward is liberated it does not function as a place of pilgrimage.

Participation : Tusks

- A Marcher character whose military unit supported the Tusks this season may receive a special benefit if they receive an appropriate anointing

Any Marcher character whose military unit was assigned to support the Tusks this downtime may choose to gain a special, personal benefit. If they receive an Anointing of Pride, Loyalty, or Hatred before time out on Friday during the Autumn Equinox, then they gain an extra benefit. In addition to the normal benefits they will gain an additional rank of endurance.

The effect is not magical - it does not register on either detect magic or insight. It is likely a result of the powerful hearth magic of the recent oath sworn by the general of the Tusks and their commitment to Mournwold.

This benefit lasts only as long as you continue to be committed to freeing the Mournwold and defeating the Jotun; if your will to do so falters the bonus rank of endurance is lost and cannot be regained. It is also permanently lost if your anointing is removed or changed to one other than Pride, Loyalty, or Hatred. In any event the benefit will fade along with the anointing, by the start of the Winter Solstice.

Sixty Years Gone (Battle Opportunity)

- The miners of the Ore Hills are not prepared to surrender to the Jotun

There is an opportunity for Imperial heroes to face the Jotun in Mournwold, in support of the rebellious miners of the Ore Hills, with a chance to further demonstrate the commitment of the Tusks to the defence of the Marcher people.