

Echoes of the Labyrinth

Volumes 1a-1d: Winter Solstice 376 YE to Autumn Equinox 377 YE

A collection of notes on the experience of
Pure Liao Visionaries, collected by

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&

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by the direction and authority of the Council of Nine.

Edition 6, printed after Winter Solstice 379YE

Winter Solstice 376 YE accounts taken by Hywel Summer Crow and Livia Cascade; writeups and commentary by Hywel Summer Crow with some editing by Livia Cascade.

Spring Equinox 377 YE accounts taken by Eli of Felix's Watch of Highguard; writeups and commentary by Livia Cascade.

Summer Solstice 377 YE and Autumn Equinox 377 YE accounts taken by Livia Cascade; writeups and commentary by Livia Cascade.

Information contained here is incomplete; future editions of this pamphlet may contain more information as the authors consult again with the visionaries and their guides, particularly for the information returned to visionaries by the Civil Service as a result of their inquiries.

Updated information:

Edition 2: Hallowing of cup that was found as result of Niccolo Barossa's vision of Spring 377 YE. Correction of misspelled names.

Edition 3: Update to Bohemond de Rondell's vision.

Edition 4:

Clarifying detail in Jessica of the Suns of Couros's vision, and added more events following Octavio di Vertos di Tassato's vision.

Edition 5: Added extra information about identities of those in Linden of Endsmeet's vision.

Edition 6: Added extra information about probable time and place of Horsa Tyrshalt's vision.

Winter Solstice, 376 YE

Introduction

Six visionaries experienced visions induced by Pure Liao at the Solstice. Of these, three were selected by the winners of the Virtuous Auction, and three by the newly appointed Council of Gatekeepers.

Following their visions, the visionaries and their accompanying guides were questioned by the authors. Their stories are recorded in the following pages, in the order that the visions were received.

* **General Ruth of Felix's Watch**, of Highguard, accompanied by Eli of Felix's Watch

* **Estevo Barossa di Tassato**, accompanied by Bishop Valentine

* **Octavio di Vertos of Tassato**, accompanied by Sol van Tassato

* **Connaught of the Thorntarry Striding**, of Navarr, accompanied by Nimue ThornKyst

* **Damaris of Cantiarch's Hold**, of Highguard, accompanied by Lazarus of Cantiarch's Hold

* **Brother Anthony of the Marches**, accompanied by Marcus Taine of House Bolholt

It should be emphasised that these notes were taken from verbal testimonies of witnessed events, so spellings and exact pronunciations of names should not be considered definitively correct.

General Ruth of Felix's Watch, Highguard

Accompanied by Eli of Felix's Watch, of the Assembly of Vigilance

General Ruth was selected as a visionary by Lucifer of Highguard, who placed a winning bid of eight Crowns in the Virtuous Auction.

The visionary gave her permission for these notes to be made public. The exigencies of Imperial duty meant that the guiding priest was not available to be interviewed, so these notes are based solely on the testimony of the visionary.

In General Ruth's vision, she was a (male) Highborn sea captain named Abraham, on a voyage bound for the Brass Coast. Abraham's first mate, a short, slim male Highborn with a somewhat pinched face and wearing a black tunic with gold trim, was showing the captain a drake's egg that he had discovered among the effects of a paying customer, one Carlo i Eretzia i Riqueza of the Brass Coast. At the time, the import of drake eggs was forbidden, and i Eretzia had attempted to bribe the first mate to conceal the matter. The first mate had refused and brought the matter to Abraham. i Eretzia offered Abraham a substantial bribe to refrain from reporting him to the civil service, giving them the number of a safety deposit box containing unspecified objects of value. The visionary reported that i Eretzia seemed to want very badly to hold the egg, although it is unclear if there was any reason beyond that it represented financial salvation for his household.

Abraham refused the bribe, held the ship on course and determined to report i Eretzia to the Imperial Civil Service upon arrival in Feroz.

According to General Ruth's description, the sense of touch was the first to manifest, through the feeling of her hand on the drake egg. (The egg was approximately ten inches across, and was contained in a twelve by eighteen inch crate.) Sounds followed, and then sight. The vision occurred at night. While the General's range of vision was limited to a few feet around herself, she gained the impression that the ship was small. From her position on the upper deck, the

bow and a single mast were visible.

The Imperial Civil Service was able to locate the safety deposit box referred to in the vision, dating the vision to the period 80-90 YE. With the permission of both the visionary and the Senator for Feroz, the box was opened and found to contain a sum of money, a set of accounts and i Eretzia's final contract.

The letter described how he felt he had shamed himself by borrowing money from the Crimson Corsairs to support his family's trade fleet, and how he wished to be free of their influence. As their requests began to strain the boundaries of legality, he had instigated a number of secret ventures to generate sufficient funds to allow his family to break free of the Corsairs' influence. The smuggling of the drake's egg was presumably one such venture.

The accounts were produced by the Boris Butchers of Temeschwar, and described the annual profits and losses of i Eretzia's secret ventures. These typically generated up to 60 Rings of profit per year, with a period of heavy investment from 85 YE to 87 YE during which 700 Rings was generated, and a loss of 600 Rings the following year. A sum of 80 Rings was present in the deposit box, matching the final entry of the accounts upon closure in 101 YE.

Estevo Barossa di Tassato Regario, the League
Accompanied by Bishop Valentine of the League

Estevo was selected as a visionary by Bishop Valentine, who placed a winning bid of one Throne, one Ring in the Virtuous Auction.

The visionary initially requested that these notes be sequestered, but upon completion of the questioning, gave his permission for them to be made public.

It should be noted that Cardinal Antonio Vanzetti of The Way spoke privately with both the visionary and the guiding priest for several minutes prior to their interviews. However, while conversations prior to interview are normally cause to consider possible collusion, the authors have no such suspicions in this case. The visionary and guiding priest were interviewed simultaneously.

The visionary came to on his knees, before an inhuman creature sat upon a throne of red and gold, itself upon a dais. The creature had a roughly humanoid form, with a head made of many masks, and a third arm under the armpit on one side. Its hands were claws described as like beaks. Its body appeared to stretch out behind the torso, like the thorax of an insect. The mask at the front, where a human's face would be, was missing, revealing just empty blackness beneath. There was a mask above the void, apparently made of stone, another mask on each side, and apparently also one behind the head. The room was decorated with tattered drapes in gold, or perhaps green and gold, with the appearance of former glory fallen into decay. The visionary was offset slightly to their left, relative to the creature, and was right handed.

The creature referred to the visionary repeatedly as Stormcrow Harald, from which we surmise that the visionary's past life was of the Winterfolk. The visionary appeared to be a particular favourite of the creature, and the two were approaching the end of a long negotiation. In return for an artefact known as the First Mask of Mazen, Eternal of Autumn, the visionary was required to deliver the Amity of the Conclave. The creature asked for a guarantee; the visionary merely promised that they would try their best. The mask was desired in order to end some misfortune which had befallen a region, although the nature of this misfortune was unclear. The visionary merely referred to it as regaining the land's Prosperity, although that virtuous name was never used by the creature.

The authors surmise that the creature itself was Mazen, although the evidence for that is purely circumstantial.

When asked what its favourite piece of Harald's work had been, the creature said "that business with the Princes of Summer". When it spoke, there were many voices. The main voice sounded male; the others in the chorus sounded mostly female. When the chorus spoke, the third arm tended to move.

The visionary examined the First Mask; it was a half mask in the League style, designed to cover the upper half of the face from nose to forehead with two eyeholes. The mask was red and gold, of fine workmanship, with the top edge

split into twisting leaf shapes, some bending forward and some back.

Mazen appeared to be very keen to finalise the deal. When the visionary agreed, the vision ended.

This vision raised some interesting questions about the nature of the Pure Liao visions. It was noted that the visionary could see the guiding priest, but Mazen could neither see nor hear him. Mazen was also apparently ignorant of conversations between the visionary and guide, even when the visionary was talking. However, when the visionary and guide conversed, this introduced delays into the visionary's conversation with Mazen which Mazen did react to - at one point becoming irritable at being kept waiting. This suggests that the visions may not simply be a viewing of past events, since the presence of the guide would appear to have changed the course of events in small ways. Similarly, the guide was able to suggest questions to the visionary, which they were then able to ask Mazen, reinforcing the idea that the guide could influence the events being observed, despite not having been there (or indeed born) at the time.

Reports exist of previous visionaries having declared during the vision that they were visionaries from the future, and this not having led to collapse of the vision.

These points raise some questions of causality; whether the visions are perhaps something more, something deeper than merely a chance to observe that which has passed before. We do not yet know enough to do more than speculate, but the potential implications for theological development are so profound that the matter must be keenly considered by the Synod.

Estevo Barossa died in battle within a day of receiving his vision. At the Spring 377 summit, according to Eli of Felix's Watch, a herald of Mazen came to the Camorra Barossa to tell them that Estevo's soul was still bound to the Mask of Mazen and would not pass onto the Labyrinth until someone found the mask and unbound him. At a subsequent summit, members of the Camorra Barossa acquired the Mask of Mazen (an artefacted Mercantilist Mask) from a foreign trader.

Octavio di Vertos of Tassato, the League

Accompanied by Sol van Tassato of the League, of the Assembly of Ambition

Octavio was selected by Iolande of the League, who had placed a winning bid of five Crowns in the Virtuous Auction.

The visionary gave his permission for these notes to be made public. The visionary and guide gave their testimonies separately and simultaneously, shortly after receiving the vision. Their testimonies gave good agreement, with all discrepancies easily explained by the differences of viewpoint (both physical and emotional).

The visionary came to in the dark and the snow, staggering forward towards the lights of a camp they believed to be Kallavesi. The lights looked to be perhaps fifty or sixty yards away. They held an axe in their right hand, and a stick, possibly a magician's rod, in their left. A woman, impaled by an arrow and badly wounded, clung to them, holding onto their shoulder to support herself. Behind them they could hear orcs giving chase. The visionary believed they were wounded, and were wearing heavy armour of some kind (although the guiding priest could see only the heavy robes worn by visionaries to protect them from the dangers of the vision process).

Glancing over their shoulder, the visionary saw perhaps six orcs; one was wearing a pale robe, perhaps also with a pale face. As the first orc reached them, the visionary spun and delivered a heroic axe blow, trying to cleave the orc in two, and the orc apparently fell and stopped chasing. Then the woman stumbled and fell, and she and the visionary became separated. The visionary fought three of the orcs; the others went after her. The visionary took several blows on their armour, dealing several in return as they tried to fight through to her. As the orcs realised she was no threat, one more joined the three fighting him, leaving the pale orc preparing to deliver a killing blow to the woman. The visionary attempted to fight around to her, screaming "Get away from her! Get away from the priestess!" as he did, but struck the pale orc just too late to

prevent her execution. At that point he stopped and stood his ground, being felled in short order by blows from all sides, whereupon the vision ended. The guide stated that he did not believe the visionary was dead when the vision ended, although he may well have been dying. The visionary gave his opinion that he could not see any way it could have ended other than with death.

The woman was wearing a hooded cloak, furs and silver jewellery. At least some of the orcs appeared to be armoured with iron breastplates. None carried large shields, and they appeared to be armed with heavy broadswords that were slow to swing. However, the locale was very dark, and neither witness could identify much detail with certainty. The visionary's axe was of a double-bladed design, three feet or so in length and designed for use in one hand. He felt a familiarity, as if it was a weapon he had carried all his life.

The visionary stated that he could feel he had a reserve of strength, perhaps enough for one mighty blow.

Octavio was approached by a Wintermark storyteller claiming to be a direct descendant of his past life, regaling him with his past deeds, including the events in the vision, and presented him with an arrow which she claimed was the arrow that had killed the woman in the vision. When Octavio took this arrow, he felt a shift in how he viewed the world that caused him to be deeply concerned with oaths and promises, and ensuring that he and others adhered to them. Investigation of his soul showed this to be an anointing with the strength of four priests behind it, though not to any of the true Virtues. Unfortunately the priest who carried out this investigation has since died, so further research may not be feasible."

General Connaught of the Thorntarry Striding, of Navarr
Accompanied by Nimue of the ThornKyst Striding of
Navarr, of the Assembly of Wisdom

Connaught was selected as a visionary by the Council of Gatekeepers.

The visionary gave his permission for these notes to be made public. The testimony was presented jointly by the visionary and guide.

The visionary came to in a schoolroom, holding a piece of paper with the name Nicodemus at the top, with arithmetic sums and doodles of horses below it. Their little brother (who he later discovered was named Cassius), perhaps eight years of age, sat beside them. The visionary believed they were a little older than their brother. The guide noticed the date on the blackboard: 28th June 201 YE.

Cassius admitted to Nicodemus that although he knew their father's study was out of bounds, he had entered and looked through some papers, finding a receipt for seventeen of the magically envenomed daggers known as Scorpion's Stings, which were illegal to possess even then. Cassius asked his brother for advice - their father appeared to be engaged in something illegal, but he didn't want to get him into trouble. Should he go to the authorities? Confront their father? Deal with it themselves? The visionary promised him to deal with the matter himself, and reassured Cassius that there might be a legitimate reason for it; perhaps it was a gift from one of their father's military friends.

A man in red, presumed to be a teacher, entered, greeted the boys, instructed them to stand and asked if they were ready for their lessons. Pointing to the blackboard, on which was written the weather (rain), the word of the day (auspicious), today's rune (Jotra) and the date, he asked Nicodemus the meaning of 'auspicious'. The visionary replied 'good fortune', and the vision ended.

The schoolroom was plainly decorated, with simple benches and a teacher's table with parchment, pen and an inkwell. The teacher had a small moustache and looked like he might have been of the League. Cassius was dressed simply in trousers and a tunic; the teacher wore fine red robes.

The Civil Service confirmed that the vision's date coincided with the assassination of Senator Ezekiel of the Riverwatch Chapter of Casinea. It was never formally linked to Janus of the Silent Tide Chapter; claims and counterclaims prevented the case from being heard before his suicide by drowning. Janus's heir was named Cassius. His brother Nicodemus disappeared from the record in 211 YE, also presumed to have committed suicide by drowning. There was no record of any mass campaign of assassinations, at that time or any other, using Scorpion's Stings, although it is difficult to tell for

certain from a body whether one had been used.

The Civil Service were also able to provide a letter given in evidence at the trial of Janus, dated 20th June 201 YE, from one Iolanthe, thanking Janus for providing the Scorpion's Sting used in Ezekiel's assassination and asking to commission another.

Damaris of Cantiarch's Hold, of Highguard
Accompanied by Lazarus of Cantiarch's Hold

Damaris was selected as a visionary by the Council of Gatekeepers.

The visionary gave her permission for this testimony to be made public. The visionary and guide gave their testimony separately and simultaneously.

The visionary witnessed the last minutes of their former life as Sir Isobel of Astolat, a knight of Dawn. They came around lying on a bench, gravely wounded. There were two other benches in the tent; one was occupied by an injured soldier, and one by a body covered in a shroud. It was presumed that the tent was a resting-house; a Dawnish hospice for the dying. The soldier was crying out, clearly in pain, as a surgeon tended to him. The surgeon came over to the visionary and explained that he couldn't stop their bleeding; he had no crystal mana, and there was nothing that could be done to save them. But although they were dying, they were a hero; they had slain the sorcerer Leon and his magically-controlled nightripper, who had been responsible for the deaths of many Dawnish knights.

The surgeon had a single dose of liao, and proposed to use it to mark Isobel's soul with a testimony to her greatness, in the hope that her deeds would be better remembered and her passage through the Labyrinth would pass more quickly. The visionary protested that the soldier should receive the benefits of the liao, but the soldier refused, calling them his captain and demonstrating more concern for the visionary's comfort than his own impending death. The surgeon paid the visionary's request no heed anyway, and performed a rite of testimony, clasping the visionary's hands around their sword hilt and marking their soul with the words "Nightripper's Bane". He expressed a hope she would

be reborn as Dawnish, but regardless, her deeds would be written forever in the histories. As the blessing ended, so did the vision.

The surgeon wore dark clothes with white sections; perhaps patterned or perhaps a shirt showing through. The soldier wore brown; perhaps leather armour. The chamber was austere, with no banners or other decorations. The visionary could not recall if the surgeon mentioned which virtue he was dedicated to.

Damaris gave sworn testimony that she had never been subject to a liao ritual in this life, save from the Pure Liao vision and a testimony from Lazarus earlier that day following heroic actions in battle, marking her soul with the words "Mighty Trollslayer". The authors undertook a rite of Insight upon her soul, discovering it to be under the effects of no active auras, but two testimonies: one of "Mighty Trollslayer" imbued with the strength of one priest, and one of "Nightripper's Bane" imbued with the strength as if seven priests had performed the rite.

While having no independent evidence that the second testimony was not applied in this life, the authors consider it very unlikely that either Damaris or Lazarus were anything less than completely truthful in their statements.

The Imperial Civil Service located records of Sir Isobel of Astolat, who was proposed as an Exemplar of Courage in 226 YE by her troubadour but not confirmed by the Synod. It was noted that the arguments against her confirmation related more to her noble house than to her personal virtue. She was responsible for the defence of Auvanne (in Semmerhold) from Leon the Sorcerer and his magically controlled nightripper. Reference to these events are few, and there are doubts as to whether it would even be possible for a sorcerer to control one of these (famously dangerous and wilful) beasts, especially as they are animals not even native to Dawn.

This vision raises some interesting points worthy of note. Firstly, it provides further evidence that multiple testimonies can be active on a soul at once, and that testimonies remain on the soul throughout the passage through the Labyrinth. More interestingly, the strength of the "Nightripper's Bane" testimony

was far greater than expected for a testimony conducted by a single priest. While it is possible that a further testimony could have been subsequently conducted by seven priests, it seems unlikely given the reported political climate. It was initially speculated that either the troubadour's rite was more powerful than would normally be expected for some reason, perhaps caused by some uncommon feature of Isobel's soul (although apparently one not present anymore), or perhaps caused by the devotion of the troubadour, or by some after effect of her highly virtuous achievements in destroying Leon.

Following a later instance of a similar retained testimony on a later visionary (at the Autumn 377 YE summit), it is perhaps more likely that testimonies might be strengthened during passage through the Labyrinth.

It would have been of particular interest to have conducted a rite of Insight on Damaris' soul before she received this vision, but limited liao supplied did not allow this. If she had not borne the "Nightripper's Bane" mark before experiencing the vision, it would raise questions relating to causality.

Brother Anthony of the Marches

Accompanied by Marcus Taine, Landskeeper of House Bolholt

Brother Anthony was selected as a visionary by the Council of Gatekeepers.

The visionary gave his permission for the testimony recorded here to be made public. The visionary and accompanying priest were questioned separately and simultaneously.

Following the questions raised by the vision experienced by Damaris of Cantiarich's Hold, the authors subjected Brother Anthony to a rite of Insight prior to his vision. The rite found that he was dedicated to the virtue of Wisdom, but there were no active auras or testimonies upon his soul.

The visionary found themselves with a cup in their hands, sitting on a bench in an office. They were choking, and realised they had just been poisoned. They crawled forward to the table in front of them, finding several letters, and what

they believe to have been three wains of refined weltsilver. From the dates on the letters, the vision occurred around the 3rd April 324 YE. The letters identified the visionary as Senator, named either Altice, Altine or Altinus - sadly the visionary's memory was unclear on that point.

The guide called to the visionary to think of the virtue of Wisdom, and learn all they could. The visionary began to read the letters, spreading them out as they did so so that their guide could also read them.

The first letter was from a recently-excommunicated priest named Delvinus of the Shattered Tower, to the visionary, making reference to the virtue of Pride in justification for his actions. The visionary and the authors presume these actions refer to the poisoning of the visionary.

There was a letter from an anonymous "friend" warning the Senator that they were in danger. While reading that, the visionary succumbed further to the effects of the poison, collapsing to the floor and continuing to choke. During this moment, the guide briefly blacked out but his vision returned in what he perceived as a few seconds - perhaps due to the great pain the visionary was undergoing.

Due to the visionary's foresight in spreading the letters out, the guide was able to continue to read them for a while longer, and learned the following:

There was a letter from someone with a League-sounding name "like Del Notro" about a weltsilver mine. The guide could not remember the mine's location.

There was a letter from Delvinus, identifying himself as the Cardinal of Pride, to "Del Notro" instructing the poisoning to take place as previously arranged, and directly stating that the Civil Service were involved in the ongoing arrangement of such things, implying that this was "business as usual". It was speculated by the guide that the Civil Service had been actively involved, although it is possible their involvement was limited to turning a blind eye to such things.

At this point, the Senator breathed their last, and the vision ended.

The room had contained an office bench, table, five letters (of which one was never read by either the visionary or the guide), one large and one small candle lantern. The first letter had been sealed. The table was about three feet long and covered in a maroon cloth. The sealed letter had been on the right by the small lamp; the other read letters had been on the left by the larger lamp. The unread letter had been on the right, so perhaps had also just been received. The cup the visionary held at the start of the vision was metal, perhaps gold.

The visionary described the poison as feeling like a slow envenoming, and thought he must already have been terminally wounded. He could feel himself weakened and choking. He did not believe he had received a physical wound, and believed the poison had been in the chalice in his hand.

The visionary referred to Delvinus as a mage-priest, however the authors consider that he was confusing the Shattered Tower with the Conclave's Order of the Shattered Lantern. There appeared to be no further evidence presented that Delvinus was a mage.

The Civil Service confirmed that 324 YE had been a year of civil war, and confirmed that there had been a Senator named Altice / Altine / Altinus.

A particularly interesting point was raised by this vision. Firstly, the guide's reading of the letters while the visionary was incapacitated demonstrates that guiding priests can observe things which the visionary themselves could not have. The vision is therefore not generated from the sensory memories from the visionary's past life. Combined with the points previously raised about causality, this suggests the mechanism of action of Pure Liao is rather more interesting than first presumed. It may not simply be providing a vision of the past - it may actually be projecting the visionary and the guide into that situation in some way. Sadly, with the destruction of so many Imperial records, insufficient information remains available to theologians to draw any conclusions on the matter more solid than speculation. But the truth of Pure Liao's mechanism of action must remain of fundamental interest to us, since it supplies one of the bedrocks upon which our doctrine is built.

Spring Equinox, 377 YE

Introduction

Six visionaries experienced visions induced by Pure Liao at the Equinox. Of these, one was selected by the winner of the Virtuous Auction, and five by the Council of Gatekeepers.

Following their visions, the visionaries and their accompanying guides were questioned by the authors. Their stories are recorded in the following pages, in the order that the visions were received.

- * **Asher of Felix's Watch** of Highguard, accompanied by Naomi of Felix's Watch
- * **Niccolo of the Camorra Barossa** of the League, accompanied by Tancred de Rondell of Dawn
- * **Tockryn Nighthaven** of Navarr, accompanied by Morrok de Carsenere of Dawn
- * **Edwin de Warrene of the Order of the Forgotten Word** in the Marches, accompanied by Brinna, also of the Order of the Forgotten Word
- * **Floree de Rondell** of Dawn, accompanied by Agnetha de Rondell, also of Dawn.
- * **Bohemond de Rondell** of Dawn (guiding priest not recorded in our notes)

The accounts for the Spring Equinox 377 are from interviews conducted by Eli of Felix's Watch, as neither Hywel nor Livia were present at the summit. Some of the notes from Eli do not mention whether these are directly from the visionaries, from their guiding priests, or both.

Asher of Felix's Watch, Highguard
Accompanied by Naomi of Felix's Watch

The visionary awoke in the vision with their head on the shoulder of a man, who called them Ruth and embraced them. The man praised the visionary's courage and handed over maps he had made, that he said were maps to find parts of Permion the Navigator's body. He asked the visionary to hide the maps so that someone could one day find the body.

The man was about to go and address the Patrician's Council, so the visionary gave him some words of Courage. He told the visionary not to tell him where they were going to hide the maps, but to think on it, and the visionary considered Atuman's tomb in Necropolis. The vision ended.

Of the four maps that the man handed to the visionary, they saw two.

The first map had a crescent moon symbol, and three stars on it.

The second map had several designs on it:

- * In the top left, there were three lines of coded text.
- * In the top right there was the symbol of a hand grasping a sword hilt.
- * In the bottom right, there were two lines of coded text, perhaps eight words between them.
- * In the middle, there was an X with 7 points surrounding it with the names of the virtues on them.

Afterwards, the visionary suggested that the man who gave them the maps might have been Lepidus of the Seven Stars.

Niccolo of the Camorra Barossa of the League
Accompanied by Tancred de Rondell of Dawn

The visionary came to in a fighting pit in the League, in the middle of a knife fight. They were a combatant and had taken several wounds (to arm, groin, leg and several to the torso) and had lost several bouts prior to this one. This was their final bout.

They asked the name of the person they fought. Their opponent addressed them as Johan, but wouldn't tell them their name; the visionary was told that their opponent had a weakened right leg. They fought, and fell into unconsciousness whereupon the vision ended.

Meanwhile, the guide was in the audience, who were all masked, and overheard a conversation about a cup that would bring some kind of providence that had been hidden in a vineyard called Felisse Groves for safekeeping.

The Civil Service confirmed that there was a Peace cult active in Felisse Groves, and that the cup was an artefact of theirs. The Camorra Barossa went and retrieved this cup and exorcised an unvirtuous Peace aura present on it. At the Spring 378 YE summit, Cardinal of Prosperity Ynez di Caricomare hallowed the cup to Prosperity with a dose of Pure Liao obtained for the purpose.

Tockryn Nighthaven of Navarr

Accompanied by Morrok de Carsenere of Dawn

This account was from the visionary with some assistance from his guiding priest.

The visionary was a jailer in a den with orc slaves, sat on a bench with water and apples next to him. There were four orcs with him, three adults and one young girl. The young girl and one of the adults seemed friendly to him, while one of the other adults seemed hostile and the last seemed suspicious of him. They called him Charlie Orcfriend, and asked him to pass them apples. When he did so, they asked him to tell them more about the Virtues. He spoke to them about the Virtues, particularly Pride and Prosperity, although with difficulty.

The orcs asked him how they could prosper and take pride in their work while they were slaves. The two friendlier orcs whispered to him that change was coming, that they wanted to be free, and that they were planning to break out if he didn't release them, though they knew they would die in the process.

The orcs also asked the visionary if he could take pride in his work, as he worked for his brother (a merchant prince who owned a trade house, and the mine that the visionary and the orcs were at) who treated him badly, and was separated from his family. The young girl asked the visionary if he wanted to be with his wife. This persuaded the visionary, who asked what would happen to him if he freed the orcs, and the two friendlier orcs said that they would take him to a place of safety. When the visionary reached out to them with the keys, the vision ended.

Edwin de Warrene of the Order of the Forgotten Word in the Marches

Accompanied by Brinna, also of the Order of the Forgotten Word.

This vision has been redacted from the public accounts of the Pure Liao visions for reasons of Imperial security. We are consulting with those who asked it to be redacted to see if it can be made public. Until then, if you are a Cardinal or Gatekeeper, please consult either Hywel Summer Crow or Livia Cascade for further information about this vision.

Floree de Rondell of Dawn

Accompanied by Agnetha de Rondell, also of Dawn.

When the vision began the visionary was kneeling down, bearing medical implements, with her hands covered in blood. They were a medic who had just finished working on a female soldier, who was thanking them. At that point, four people burst in. There were two injured people, each aided by a friend, all dressed in League clothes.

The first injured man was apparently a captain who had lost an arm, and was

screaming at the visionary to save him, saying that the incompetent general had caused his death. The second injured man was the general, with a grave chest wound. The army he was with appeared to be one from Temeschwar.

It seemed clear to the visionary that they could only save one of them, and they chose to save the general. They had the captain lie down on another bed and had his friend tend to him, left him to die and returned to the general. As they began treating the general, they told his friend to tell the troops outside that he would live. The friend did so, and the vision ended.

When the visionary awoke after the vision, her hands had broken into suppurating sores on the palms, and her fingers were red and itchy where they had been covered in blood. Physicians suggested this was a mild allergic reaction.

From the visionary's memory of the general's name and army, the Civil Service supplied details of a critical battle against the Druj in Holberg in May 229 YE, commanded by General August Tamerlenovich von Temeschwar leading the Towerjacks.

General August's life was saved by Elena Lucianova von Temeschwar, a prosperous League doctor who joined the Free Company a year before the battle, and thus it is likely this is the visionary's past life.

It is possible that the Captain the visionary refers to was Captain Jens "Stonewall" von Holberg of the Heart of Feresh Company - the captain of a Free Company of heavy infantry, committed to the flank - allegedly because General August did not trust him to hold the centre. Captain Jens died of his injuries under medical treatment during the battle with the Druj.

General August is known to have been a brilliant orator, but made a series of startlingly poor military decisions. He later went into politics and died as Senator Tamenovich von Temeschwar in 241.

Bohemond de Rondell of Dawn
(Guiding priest not recorded in our notes)

The visionary had just stepped into a room that was sprinkled with rose petals and held a strong cloying rose scent in the air.

In the room was a man lying on a bed, in robes of Dawn or Highguard cut that were covered in blood, his chest burst open from the inside. Blood spatters led away from the man's body towards the exit.

He held a part-written letter in his hand, with a pen and spilled ink nearby on a writing desk, and the writing interrupted mid-word. Papers on the writing desk detailed a ritual he had been researching, and implied the man may have been an Archmage.

The letter in the man's hand detailed that the man had cast a ritual to treat with the Spring Eternal Yaw'nagrah, and had made a deal with the Eternal for a briar child to be granted to him and his lover. The letter also mentioned that Yaw'nagrah gave the man a jar of seeds, of which he ate one.

Another person entered the room, and addressed the visionary - from context it seemed the visionary was a man named Ywaine. The person who had entered asked what had happened, and the visionary told the person the contents of the letter and papers, and of their grief at the events. The vision then ended.

Further research into this incident has revealed an address by Yvaine d'Orsin to the Conclave in 329 YE that identifies the dead man as Laurence d'Orsin, and also that the jar of seeds was given to Laurence by Yaw'nagrath's herald Ylith Silthar that Laurence might provide Yaw'nagrath with offspring. Following this address, a Declaration of Enmity against Ylith Silthar was made, and upheld until Emperor Walter's reign (between 371 and 373 YE), when the then Archmage of Spring argued that the story taught the Empire a valuable lesson in Vigilance when dealing with Eternals, and the Declaration of Enmity against Ylith Silthar was lifted on the understanding that the boon it brought from Yaw'nagrath was not an act of murder.

The creature that had spawned from Laurence d'Orsin was ultimately destroyed in 378 YE by a group of citizens from Anvil travelling forth through the Sentinel gate

Summer Solstice, 377 YE

Introduction

Four visionaries experienced visions induced by Pure Liao at the Equinox. Of these, one was selected by the winner of the Virtuous Auction, and three by the Council of Gatekeepers.

Following their visions, the visionaries and their accompanying guides were questioned by the authors. Their stories are recorded in the following pages, in the order that the visions were received.

* **Seth of Adina's Charge** of Highguard, accompanied by Malachai of Adina's Charge

* **Jessica of the Sons of Couros** of Highguard, accompanied by Jared of the Sons of Couros

* **General Stanislav Borodin Havel** of Varushka, accompanied by Mikael Siderof

* **Adoramus of the Shattered Tower** of Highguard, accompanied by Abraham of the Shattered Tower

Seth of Adina's Charge of Highguard

Accompanied by Malachi of Adina's Charge

Because of difficulties with finding the visionary after his vision, this account comes from his guiding priest and information returned to his Chapter by the Civil Service.

The visionary was in a tent sitting opposite two women. One of them spoke the language of the Sumaah republic, and the other appeared to be an interpreter. She addressed the visionary as Benito i Aziz i Requiza.

She offered the visionary a box in return for the gift that the visionary had previously given her, a relic of the Exemplar Zemress, and said that her mistress did not understand the Imperial language and thought that this was part of the agreed trade, which it was not.

The box he was given contained a letter. The interpreter asked the visionary not to allow the other woman to see inside the box. The letter appeared to be from the interpreter, bidding him goodbye as she would not join the Empire even for love, and was accompanied by a poem.

There was discussion that implied that the Sumaah Republic and the Empire were at war at the time of the vision, although Civil Service records are unclear on this matter.

The interpreter asked the visionary if he agreed to the trade deal. When the visionary said "I do", the vision ended.

Civil Service records show that there was a trial held in 121 YE relating to an illegal trade agreement from 120 YE where a relic of the Exemplar Zemress went missing. Benito i Aziz i Requeza was arrested and executed for treason as a result. The relic was never recovered.

Jessica of the Sons of Couros of Highguard
Accompanied by Jared, also of the Sons of Couros

This account was from the visionary with some assistance from her guide.

The visionary was in a library, in a small room that she and two others had barricaded themselves into, along with some of their papers. Outside, people were trying to break down the door, calling on them to come out in the name of the Emperor. Outside the room was possibly burning; the visionary suffered the effects of smoke inhalation afterwards. The visionary believed this took place during the reign of Emperor Nicovar.

The visionary does not know whether her past life was male or female. The name started with I, ended with S or A and had 3 syllables.

The other two people were a man and a woman, both either cambion or changeling with very small horns or antlers, and were wearing Urizen clothes in grey and white with geometric patterning. The man was called Gaius and looked to be in his mid-twenties, and the woman was called either Seraphis or Sysiphis and looked a little older.

The man was worried, and the visionary calmed him and reminded him of his duty to the Empire. The woman spoke of sending what they could of their life's work to the Great Library, and led the visionary to a table with three piles of paper, of which she had to choose one as there was only time to perform the ritual once.

The visionary chose one of the piles, of which the top sheet of paper mentioned "virtue". The woman handed her the mana, no more than five or six crystals, and the visionary performed the ritual of The Celestial Library.

At this point, the impacts from outside on the door were getting louder, and the roof was in danger of caving in. The vision ended before the ritual was complete

or the room was breached.

General Stanislav Borodin Havel of Varushka

Accompanied by Mikael Siderof

This account was from the visionary with some assistance from his guide.

The visionary was in a chamber divided into two rooms. In one room there was a table bearing boxes, and in the other was a man manacled to a bench who was under guard and being tortured by a second man wearing Wintermark clothing. This man, the guard, called the visionary "Captain".

The man being tortured was called Alvisdottir and was thin with short blond hair. He seemed to know the visionary, was not surprised to see him, and was expecting the visionary to torture him for information. He said that it was too late, and that people were coming.

There was a letter in the smaller room indicating that the man being tortured was part of a conspiracy to murder a General Iverden, who the letter writer considered responsible for the death of many Winterfolk. The pronouns in the letter indicated that General Iverden was female. The letter was initialled at the bottom with a capital T above a capital C, the bottom of the T joined to the top of the C.

The visionary ordered the guard to remove the man's fingers until the man gave the name of the person who had planned to kill General Iverden. Eventually the man caved and gave the name "Volpuri", and the vision ended.

General Stanislav's soul was examined for any spiritual effects on it before and after his vision. Both before and after, his soul was clear of any spiritual effects.

Adoramus of the Shattered Tower of Highguard
Accompanied by Abraham, also of the Shattered Tower

This account was from the visionary with some assistance from his guide.

The visionary was Nehemiah, the founder of the Shattered Tower chapter, who had been searching for a place to found their chapter and had finally found a Sentinel's tower at which to found it. He and his companions were celebrating the completion of their journey.

During the celebrations, it was revealed that one of Nehemiah's closest friends, who led him to the Sentinel tower, was a herald of one of the Summer eternal, most likely Eleonaris.

The herald had been ordered by the Eternal to guide Nehemiah to that location and raise a chapter, and asked if she could stay with the chapter. Opinion was divided, and it fell to Nehemiah to decide if she could stay.

Nehemiah said that if she would be completely honest with the chapter from now on, and if she could be loyal, she could stay. He asked what would happen if there were a conflict of interest between her loyalty to the chapter and to the Eternal. She said that there had not been a conflict of interest, but she would be honest and loyal to both the chapter and the Eternal, and he decided to allow her to stay. At this point, the vision ended.

Nehemiah is known to the chapter as a priest of Wisdom and was proposed to the Synod as an Exemplar of Wisdom in the past (although the motion did not pass). However, in the vision, people referred to him as a priest of Pride.

Adoramus's soul was examined for any spiritual effects on it before and after his vision. Both before and after, his soul was clear of any spiritual effects.

Autumn Equinox, 377 YE

Introduction

Four visionaries experienced visions induced by Pure Liao at the Equinox. Of these, one was selected by the winner of the Virtuous Auction, and three by the Council of Gatekeepers.

Following their visions, the visionaries and their accompanying guides were questioned by the authors. Their stories are recorded in the following pages, in the order that the visions were received.

- * **Sejanus of the Spire of Shattered Art Reforged** (also known as **Shatterspire**) in Urizen, accompanied by Leilia of the Spire of Shattered Art Reforged
- * **Horsa Tyrshalt** of Wintermark, accompanied by Sigismund Barabbas
- * **Linden of Endsmeet** in Urizen, accompanied by Solas of the Spire of the Waxing Sun in Urizen
- * **Ingar Saker** of Wintermark, accompanied by Sabria i Covas i Erigo of the Brass Coast

Sejanus of the Spire of Shattered Art Reforged, Urizen
Accompanied by Leilia of the Spire of Shattered Art Reforged

This account was from the visionary, with some clarifications added by personal correspondence afterwards.

The visionary was called Anion or Anaeon, and was at a desk within Urizen with an ushabti present. He was reading a report on a Highborn named Malachi, who was born 8 years before the Empire was founded, had consumed more ceremonial (not Pure) liao than the human constitution could stand, and had studied with mystics from Miekarova in Varushka and prepared a set of prophecies that he had had copies of delivered to friends and allies.

One of the people who had had a copy had been someone named Danae from Ankarien in Urizen, and she was the source for copies of the prophecies that were in the room that the visionary was in. One of the prophecies appeared to be an accurate survey of what happened during Empress Richilde's reign (of 36 to 69 YE).

Either the report that the visionary was reading, or the start of the investigation into the prophecies, was dated 203 YE.

A man entered the room, and asked the visionary what he thought about the prophecies, and whether they were true or false. The visionary made a judgement that they contained truth, and the vision ended.

Sejanus commented afterwards that there were a great many documents, and there was not enough time to read them all during the vision - as a consequence, his decision during the vision (as a visionary seeing the past life) that the documents contained truth was based on an argument from Virtue that it is better to take what information you have and make a decision than not to act at all.

Sejanus's soul was examined for any spiritual effects on it before and after his vision. Both before and after, his soul contained only the effects of a dedication to the Virtue of Ambition.

Horsa Tyrshalt of Wintermark
Accompanied by Sigismund Barabbas

This account was from the visionary. He did not share some details, such as his past life's name, as he wished to discuss with others first; further research will be needed.

The visionary was with a Dawnish army at a wake with a military council. The general of the Gryphon's Pride army, Briganti de Lionsgate, had been killed by Druj poisons and her body was there, along with members of her army and the de Lionsgate family. There were about thirty knights there, all wearing heavy armour. The visionary was a female Dawnish noble.

Five of the people there asked the visionary what to do now that the general was dead. Their choices seemed to be whether or not to retreat from the current battle with the Druj. The visionary made the choice to make a fighting retreat back to the Empire, taking General de Lionsgate's body with them, and the vision ended when this decision was made.

Further investigation suggests that the events in this vision most likely took place in the Barrens, since the last army to bear the Gryphon's Pride name was lost to the Druj there in 276 YE.

Linden of Endsmeet, Urizen
Accompanied by Solas of the Spire of the Waxing Sun, Urizen

This account was from the visionary with some assistance from her guide.

The visionary was a Navarr Brand who had established their own striding or steading that was new and successful. They were in a tavern in Navarr, at some point near the end of the reign of Emperor James. There were two rooms to the

tavern; the visionary was in a side room, with an orc slave giving out drinks, and in the other main room some people were playing cards. The card players were commenting that the Emperor seemed to be ill or dying, and was not expected to live for long.

They were speaking to an old friend that they hadn't talked to in a while, who was a senator. The senator was talking about how the generals were trying to seize power and take over, and how he was trying to preserve the Empire from this. He strongly implied or said that he had paid a Winter coven to put a curse on Emperor James some time ago.

If the Emperor died then the senator was planning to run for Emperor, but senators' pasts were being investigated and he was worried this would be discovered, so he asked the visionary to say that they either did the ritual themselves or paid for it to be done. He implied that the Cardinal of Loyalty was on his side, and that the Cardinal would appeal for Clemency on the visionary's behalf if the visionary took the fall.

The visionary was worried for their own people in Navarr, and felt they did not have enough information or time to make such a decision. The senator pressed them to answer, and was adamant that if the generals took power, it would be bad for the Empire.

In the end, the visionary did not say yes to the senator, and tried to give the impression of it but without actually saying yes. They drank to Loyalty and the Empire, and the vision ended.

Further research by the Civil Service revealed that after the death of Emperor James, the Navarr senator Siarl Liat-Tread of Liathaven campaigned openly for the Throne, with support from members of several Assemblies and an apparently unblemished record, but died on the battlefield before he could become Emperor.

Iain Great-Pine, also of Liathaven, was at this time condemned and (somewhat unusually) exiled for cursing an Imperial senator. There are no further records for him. Given the context, it is possible that Iain was Linden's past life.

Linden's soul was examined for any spiritual effects on it before and after her vision. Before the vision, her soul had a testimony on it of "Loyal Healer" with the strength of a single priest behind it.

After the vision, as well as the testimony of "Loyal Healer", her soul also had a testimony of "Senator's Conscience" with the strength equivalent to 7 priests behind it.

The testimony on the soul of Damaris at the Winter 376 YE summit was theologically interesting because that was a Testimony in the vision that persisted through to the visionary. This one seems even more interesting as it is a testimony that was not applied during the vision, and perhaps did not even happen in the vision. Either it is a spontaneous testimony, or it's something that was put on the past life's soul at some point either before or after the vision's events, but that the visionary's soul at this point picked up as part of experiencing the vision.

As a result of Damaris's vision, the authors have been more thorough in checking visionaries' souls with the rite of Insight both before and after their visions, and the testimony on Linden's soul has confirmed our opinions of this as good methodology.

Ingar Saker of Wintermark

Accompanied by Sabria i Covas i Erigo of the Brass Coast

This account was from the visionary.

The visionary was in a church, in front of an altar. After a few moments, a man burst into the church, calling the visionary Father and asking him for sanctuary. The man was dressed in Urizen-style clothes.

Shortly after that, a magistrate and guards rushed into the church, saying that the man was a criminal and would be arrested, tried and executed. The visionary told them that he'd granted the man sanctuary, and they should tell

him what the man had done. The magistrate said the man had treated with Kaela, who was a forbidden Eternal at the time. The visionary asked the magistrate's name, which was Darius of Highguard.

The visionary told the magistrate to wait, since the man had sanctuary for an hour, and he took the accused man to a pew, calmed him down and asked him if it was true he'd been treating with Kaela.

The accused man said that it was true, but that he'd treated with Kaela only for information about where the barbarians fighting against the Empire were weak. He had sent forces to the place Kaela had named - Pygar, in Urizen - and the barbarian forces had reached it and then faltered because of the military forces that were present, and this had saved Urizen from being overrun. The visionary said that although the man's actions were illegal, he had acted with virtue, and said that he would call for Clemency for the man on the grounds of Wisdom. In response, the man gave the visionary a piece of paper, telling him that "for your actions, you deserve this".

Then the vision went dark, and the visionary had a sense of some time passing before the vision resumed with him sat at a desk with the paper open before him. The paper said that Devlyn of Farlaen had treated with Kaela, bargained hard and struck a good deal, and that Kaela had granted an unconditional boon to be called on at a time of Devlyn's choice. After the visionary read this, the vision ended.

When the visionary emerged from the vision, he was apparently being eaten by a flesh-eating fungus. He was not aware of what scrying or investigation might have been done on this fungus, as he was unconscious at the time.

Ingar's soul was examined for any spiritual effects on it before and after his vision. Both before and after, his soul was clear of any spiritual effects.