

The Terunael Mineworkings

The so called Terunael Mineworkings are one of four sets of tunnels that weave deep through the stone beneath Lorenzo's Deep pockets- the massive sinkhole in north western Miaren

Compared to the natural caverns and the deeper ancient tunnels they are somewhat recent- still over a thousand years old however. The Navarr appear to have entered the caves under what is today the sinkhole from Miaren and from south west Temeschwar, initially expanding them and then eventually digging their own galleries and tunnels.

The mine workings are notable because they are clearly worked stone, and clear for human- or orc seized creatures to use. They are unstable - water, time, and trogoni alike have undermined the workings and left several tunnels and galleries at risk of collapse. During the recent adventures in the depths as part of the escort for the Master of the Koboldi there was opportunity to examine some of the more out of the way areas of the mine workings in the process several conclusions were reached.

There are two phases of development here. At first, the Terunael appear to be simply mining whatever metal they come across, making a particular effort to find veins of mithril and the occasional ilium deposit. At some point, however, they focus their efforts more specifically on mining orichalcum. There are also smelters down here which have been used to alloy orichalcum, ilium and mithril together. Technically in fact, there are three phases. At some point, the Terunael suddenly abandon the mine workings. There are signs that this abandonment likely coincided with a massive incursion of the trogoni. The Terunael apparently tried to stem the flow of the beasts, and then when that proved impossible, they fled and collapsed the tunnel behind them. (explaining why it is that the mine workings remained undiscovered for so long).

This destruction appears on the surface to have set in motion the long drawn out process of water erosion that eventually led to the opening of the sinkhole. It may have taken a very long time indeed, but it appears the Terunael were directly responsible for yet another disaster.

Here comes the Sun

There are also some very old wall paintings, initially taken to be attempts to raise morale among the miners - depictions of the blazing sun. One such depiction, however, turns out to be inset with a metal tracery identical to that found by Snowstorm Henk's expedition to Sungold Pass in the opascari mountains. As with

those much more extensive trceries, the metal turns out to be mithril and orichalcum alloy, and it absorbs and redistributes warmth and heat.

These trceries had obviously once been much more widespread, bringing light and warmth into many of the lower galleries, but that over the centuries they had been torn apart by the trogoni, with the walls showing signs of having been gouged by the claws of the subterranean horrors. It seems likely that the creatures were after some residual trace of magic still held in the alloys.

Perhaps the most important real find however is a dusty, cracked clay tablet recovered from one of the abandoned chambers. Carefully restored, the tablet reveals a potentially priceless secret - the formula the Terunael were using to mix orichalcum and mithril together to create these special trceries. There were also tantalizing hints that, with the addition of large amounts of ilium, the Terunael artisans believed they might be able to construct a much larger source of heat and light that would allow the cultivation of crops in even the most inhospitable environments - perhaps this is the source of the “golden sun” that apparently hung over Emrys in Otkodov.

The secret of gold and mithril

The tablet detailing the creation of the Terunael alloy is currently at the Great Library of Hacynian. There are two obvious ways it could be used, but there is more to it than just writing. The tablet is very similar to a schema - only those with access to it can learn the techniques it describes.

Firstly, it could be shared with the Empire. This would require a senate Motion, and ten thrones, but the techniques would quickly be made available to anyone who wanted to take advantage of them. If this were done, its main value would be to allow the northern nations -Wintermark and Varushka- to overcome the restrictions that make it difficult for them to cultivate Cerulean Mazzarine in commissions. Existing structures could be improved with mithril, and new commissions could make use of the discovery to allow Wintermark and Varushkan herb gardens to finally produce the same amounts of mazzarine as their southern counterparts.

Alternatively, this secret would be extremely valuable to the Thule. The northern orcs live in a climate even colder than Wintermark or Varushka and apparently have to go to great lengths to grow sufficient crops to feed their people, especially as their eastern territory is marked by Wither the Seed. This technique would allow them to greatly increase the amount of food they can produce each year. But for this to work the schema would need to be sent north into Otkodov, which may require delicate negotiations.