

Viper Mission to Reiskarg

Day 1

Half the troops assembled at the transport circle at 10am on Friday morning where we met our Skathen guide. We then started the 20 mile trek to the area near the main circle at Reiskarg.

Our retainers had been on ahead to set up camp for us. Upon nearing the destination we were attacked by a creature which did a small amount of damage to us (mainly to James Timbermast's arm!) At the time it was very dark and difficult to identify exactly what it was.

Soon after we reached our encampment. Tearthroat had erected a stockade of sorts for us to stay in. He had also suspended a rather large lump of warpstone in the camp with the purpose of keeping away the "abominations" (creatures that had already attacked us.) As it turned out the warpstone was rather detrimental to our health and quite a few people were getting poisoned by it (this was not obvious at first though, which is why it stayed there most of Friday night.)

During the course of Friday evening we were attacked by more of these "abominations" which turned out to be (I assume) the very retainers we had sent on ahead to prepare things for us! They had obviously strayed onto the blasted land near the ritual circle.

Later Friday night we were visited by not only Tearthroat but 3 other generals of the Iron Fang who also wished our support for attempting to become Grey Seer. This was a somewhat unexpected twist to matters as we were just expecting a celebration. To begin with I decided it would be safest to sit on the fence a bit and not commit (publicly at any rate) to any one general. This I deemed would cause us the fewest problems in attacks against us. This didn't go down too well with them but at least all out war

was avoided. I also stated that all factions of the Iron Fang were more than welcome to come and talk to us, and to each other, without fear of being attacked. I also stated quite firmly that if any one started any violence in or around the camp they would be dealt with very sternly. All parties fully understood this.

At this point it's probably worth pointing out who the four Generals wanting to become Grey Seer were. Obviously there was Tearthroat who had invited us in the first place. In addition there was Black Tail who commanded a faction in the Iron Fang called the Shadow Rats. There was Split Ear who commanded probably the best dressed rats in Edreja. His forces were all very much anti-disease which was a little odd in itself. He was actually represented by his daughter, Stutter. Finally there was Rip Claw who appeared to be another fighting style general. All four generals wanted our support in becoming Grey Seer.

As the night went on we sent out a smallish scouting party to go and have a look around the general area. It turns out they noticed some odd goings on in the blasted area near the circle. Black Tail, having not got our immediate commitment to him had decided to attempt the Grey Seer test secretly. At least that's what it looked like. He failed. Horribly. Anyway, the scouting party approached them in a friendly open manner and were set upon. In the ensuing fight Black Tail was killed, eventually! No Viper losses, however there were some mutations - mainly tentacles.

Whilst this was happening we were attacked by Black Tail's rats. We faced a large number of Skathen and took quite a battering. I was lucky not to get killed when feared from behind straight through a large line of enemy. Fortunately Mum was looking out for me and sent me straight through the line where it was all sharp and pointy. Thanks for the bling Urasni! The fight took quite a lot of healing out of us but we were victorious. No Viper Losses.

The rest of the night consisted of smaller scale attacks and a few more visitations from the other generals. We also finally decided that getting rid

of the warpstone was a good idea. This may have been prompted by Flader (more on him/her later) - I can't remember when it was we first met him/her. Anyway, the warpstone was removed and the gradual poisoning effects stopped. Godwin was however struck mute by over exposure when removing the said warpstone.

At some point we were also visited by emissaries of Prometheus (yes, *THAT* Prometheus) though we did not know it was him at that time. They wished to talk to us about various things and appeared interested in what was going on with the circle and the Grey Seer test. We agreed to a meeting at some point. We were also told that he could supply us with some potions that would be able to protect us against the effects of Warpstone. This would then allow us to safely witness the Grey Seer test at the circle.

As things started to quieten down people started drifting off to their tents to grab some sleep. I retired for the night at approximately 5:00am

Day 2

Was rudely awoken at 9:00am by the sounds of Frederic Stein being stabbed by a Skathen in our tent! Shot down to the end of the bed whilst Morachi attempted a fear spell (didn't appear to work.) Just as I reached the end of my bed I realised that it was using a dagger and that it couldn't hurt me. By the time I'd got back to the top end of my bed, Frederic had chased it out and was proceeding to visit extreme Viper justice on it for waking us all up so early! Other tents were also similarly attacked. All assassins were killed. No Viper losses. Turns out the assassins were from the Skin Claw clan.

Now, at some point during the morning (or possibly the night before) it was discovered that there were many herbs in the forest with magical, poisonous or healing properties. Smallish groups were sent out to collect these. Godwin also prayed to his ancestor and managed to get his muteness

removed. The mutation was only moved however and one of his arms got tentacled.

Once again we were visited by the remaining generals. Split Ear himself (along with Stutter) visited us and attempted to persuade us that we should side with him. I managed to put him off with the "we haven't decided yet" line. He once more was disappointed but seemed to accept this fact. As a sign of good faith he left some of his rats with us to help protect the camp against any attacks - we had still been having intermittent assassination attempts. None were successful. The more worrying thing was that he brought a Fey from the Court of the Sea with him. This did not go down very well with the Vipers though there was no hostilities.

At this point we decided it would be a good idea to go and have a quick word with the chaos people (Prometheus' lot.) Strangely enough, just as we had decided this a couple of his emissaries came to say that he was lying low at the present time but he would come and see us later. We decided we'd go and have a look anyway. The General split us into two equal forces. I took one lot off to look for the chaos lot whilst the General kept the other lot at the encampment to defend it. We got up to where the chaos lot said they would be but sure enough Prometheus was nowhere to be seen. At this point there was an attack on the camp but I don't have too many details about it, suffice to say the General and his men saw it off with no problems. We returned to camp to see the aftermath. No Viper losses.

A bit later a wounded Skathen, purporting to be from Tearthroat, came to us asking for help. We were told that Tearthroat had been captured by another Skathen group and wanted us to help rescue him. We were also told that he was being held on the blasted lands and that he had some amulets that would protect us against the warpstone effects. Unfortunately there were only 12 of them. The General decided to lead this mission and took the Lanchnechz(sp?) and the Orcs.

Unfortunately it was a trap. The people on the mission were constantly ambushed all the way to the blasted area. Whilst this was going on Rip

Claw turned up with a not-insignificant force. He demanded that we side with him. I once more gave him the party line of "we haven't yet decided." He didn't like this so attacked us. Presumably it was he who set up the trap to try and draw our most skillful troops away. The fight was long and vicious. At some point during the fight Rip Claw himself made his getaway. We killed all his troops. No Viper Losses.

At this point the General and his people returned from their ill fated mission. Unfortunately due to their small numbers and the large number of enemies they had to face we lost 2 men. Sgt. Flint and Krog of the Tusks. They fought bravely and should be remembered by all Vipers for their deeds.

The attacks continued for a little bit. During this time there was a largish earthquake. Turns out that Rip Claw had gone to attempt the ascension to Grey Seer on his own. It failed and he was turned into an "abomination". After this it's safe to say that he was angry and confused. Flader however had him under some sort of control (using lumps of warpstone) and brought him back to see us. We were told that the abomination (previously Rip Claw) could remove the tentacles from the betentacled people by eating them (the tentacles, not the people!) This was done and all mutations were removed. There was also some fighting against former Rip Claw troops and ourselves. At this point I believe that the rat formerly known as Rip Claw was killed.

We were then (or possibly initially; during the fight with Rip Claw) visited by a couple of the chaos lot who in turn demanded then asked nicely (gotta love those chaos peeps) that we should go and see Prometheus. Also at this point some Fey from the Court of the Mountain (I think it was, may have been the Mind) turned up and demanded and answer to their offer they had made. This was news to me so I bluffed as best I could. Turns out that Nicholas Diamecht had said that we had two Cold Iron weapons and that we would probably swap those for inside knowledge of the Teutonian Unsealy Courts. I had no knowledge of any of this as it turns out that it all took place on the mission to the Heartwood which I did not attend. At this

point James Timbermast took over our side of the conversation as he had a lot more knowledge about this.

I don't know exactly what was said between James and the Fey lord (whoever he was) but it ended up with insults and then some Fey died. I think the Fey lord got away though. May well be some repercussion from this but the last thing we needed were Fey sticking their noses in things whilst we were in a very dangerous area and political situation.

Anyway, after the dust had settled we arranged the same party that went earlier in the day and left to go and meet Prometheus. Again, the General kept a good force back to defend the encampment. We met up with Prometheus at his castle (not the flying one but a ruined one on the edge of the blasted area.)

Prometheus basically told us that he did indeed have access to potions that would protect us from the effects of the warpstone. We also had a chat about how things were in general. He's a bit bored with blandness it seems and is thinking of spicing things up a bit so everyone consider yourselves warned! Seems a nice enough bloke though, very personable. Anyway, he said he knew how to make these potions but only had a few pre made ones. He told us the exact ingredients required one of which only grows in the blasted area! Fortunately he was willing to supply us with two pre made potions so a couple of people could go and collect the more dangerous ingredients. He did require a small payment for this though.

Payment was three Viper volunteers to, *ahem*, mate with some of Prometheus' minions (they all appeared human or at the very least humanoid.) Volunteers were found and the potions were supplied. Sir Cozak and Memphis were chosen to take the potions as they have regenerative powers so were more able to survive any ambushes etc. During the talks with Prometheus, some of his chaos followers had a little "fun" with Tyrol of the Kethirion. Presumably they thought it amusing (or chaotic certainly) to hide some warpstone about his body. As you would expect this made him very ill and also disfigured him rather horribly. Still,

he survived and we duly dispatched Sir Cozak and Memphis off to the blasted area to collect the relevant herbs. The rest of us returned to the encampment.

Once more we had visitations from the two remaining generals (Tearthroat and Splitear) and we finally had to state who we were going to support. Flader him/herself demanded that we do so. I thought we'd done pretty well to put it off for so long but there was no getting out of it this time. Anyway, during an earlier muster I asked the entire assembled Vipers to give me any good reason why we shouldn't be supporting Tearthroat as we had originally agreed. There were no descending voices. It was at this point I publicly stated that the Vipers would be supporting Tearthroat but we would always be allied to the Iron Fang regardless of whoever actually became the new Grey Seer. Split Ear was disappointed (obviously) but seemed to accept the decision. Obviously being allied to the Fey didn't help his cause at all. I explained to him and Stutter (his daughter and advisor) that allying with the Fey was never going to help him and they'll most likely screw him over.

It was shortly after this that I found out that Skritch had been talking to the Skathen who used to serve under Black Tail and Rip Claw. Skritch had managed to convince them to follow him and support him in going for Grey Seer. This obviously caused us some not inconsiderable headaches considering I'd just publicly declared (in front of Flader no less) that we would definitely be supporting Tearthroat. Obviously Skritch is a Viper and I had no intentions of denying him the opportunity or to cause him any harm. The course of action taken was my decision and the best way to deal with this situation that I could think of. We told Skritch he'd have to do this on his own without any public support from us. In turn we would not stand in his way, however should he raise arms against us he would be in breach of the 1st Viper law and would be dealt with by the Knights. Everyone seemed happy with this.

During most of the late afternoon and continuing into evening and night, Skathen assassins were planting Warpstone in the camp to try and poison

us. We kept finding bits behind tents, in tents!, under beds, under discarded armour and clothing. The removal of this was relatively tricky. Skritch, presumably as a show of strength to his new armies, decided to eat some of it!!! This struck him mute and also it looked like he had a small amount of tentacle action going on as well! Road Kill, another Viper Skathen also got mutated during this period and most definitely became Viper tentacle boy (both arms!)

Around about this time we had visitations from about every possible politically motivated being on the surface of Edreja (or it at least seemed that way!) I will try and recount each and every one of them but it's probably best not to assume that these are in any kind of chronological order.

- 1: Skritch decided to try Godwin's example and disappeared off to try and commune with his ancestors to get his muteness removed.
- 2: Flader, Tearthroat and Splitear turned up and demanded to speak with Skritch, who wasn't there due to the above point. Flader needed to talk to Skritch to ascertain whether he was suitable to even attempt the test. The other two turned up to ascertain exactly how the Vipers were reacting to the situation. I stated that we were going to keep our word and support Tearthroat but that we wouldn't stand in the way of Skritch unless he took up arms against us.
- 3: Members of Skritch's new army (ex Black Tail and Rip Claw) turned up to try and ascertain if we were going to support Skritch. Gave them the party line. They then left to weigh up their options. They seemed to be unsure about it all as Skritch was no longer able to speak to anyone.
- 4: Prometheus and some chaos people turned up to say hello and see if we had all the ingredients to make the potion as yet. We didn't as we were missing (in useful quantities) one vital ingredient. We said we'd sort it out the next day.
- 5: The big, BIG surprise. Lady Lanithia and Lady Frantica (with a few of their unliving) turned up and demanded to know what we were doing about the missing Prince. I told them that people were working on it but that the Vipers present were on a different mission. I suggested that they may like

to take it up with Berlin. They didn't seem too happy about this but such is life (or unlife!) Fortunately Cloud was not around as they seemed very interested in talking to her with respect to El Nino.

6: Skathen from the Heartwood turned up and suggested to me that Mum (B.Y.) would be very happy if Skritch became new Grey Seer. I took my future life into my own hands and stated that whilst it would be great if Skritch did become Grey Seer it was unlikely to happen now (due to muteness) and we couldn't support him due to the already publicly declared support for Tearthroat. I am expecting an ancestral bitch slapping at some point in the future but I'm sure she'll understand when I explain everything to her! *gulp*

7: Land item people turned up saying they thought the Cup was somewhere around these parts and might even be used in the ritual to make a new Grey Seer. Didn't really have chance to talk to them about due to dealing with everything else listed above.

8: I have a suspicion that there was some Fey knocking around as well though they may have been along with Split Ear. Someone else may be able to provide more information on this.

9: Flader also needed people to prepare for the ritual to make Tearthroat Grey Seer. This was because as part of our alliance I committed us to doing the Ritual for Tearthroat. Morachi and Feygor who were both going to be contributing went off with Flader to get prepared. We were very contributor light and as stated before Cloud was nowhere to be found - possibly off in the woods hunting assassins. Some very odd stuff happened apparently which Morachi and Feygor are probably better off telling.

At this point I'd like to say that all this lot turned up at the same bloody time! It took an awful lot of juggling to keep everyone happy(ish) and no doubt I've missed something out here.

The rest of the night was basically just a few small scale attacks from ex Rip Claw abominations and other Skathen assassins. No Viper Losses. Finally got some sleep at about 4:00am.

Day 3

The sleep period passed peacefully and I was up and about at 10:00am. We had a few small scale attacks that were easily repelled. We sent out some more scouting parties to go and find as many of the missing herbs (for the potion recipe) as possible.

Whilst these parties were out in the woods, a largish group of Split Ears' Rats turned up and asked us if we were still supporting Tearthroat. I said yes and they attacked. We beat them off and killed them all. By this point at least we knew exactly where we stood.

The herb hunting parties returned and we came to the conclusion that we probably had just about enough to cover most Vipers going onto the blasted area and the circle itself. I again took half the forces to see Prometheus whilst the General and the remaining Vipers guarded the encampment. When we got to Prometheus he checked what we had and said he could either make 50 doses that would give us 30 minutes protection or 25 doses giving 1 hours protection. After discussion we thought it wiser to get as many Vipers protected as possible.

After returning to camp we started dosing people up. At this time a Knight of Teutonia, Sir Parcival, turned up and again stated the need to find the Cup land item. He also stated that being a Knight of Teutonia and his faith within that position gave him protection against the Warpstone. Due to this Sir F'sta went without a dose (Cozak was already covered from the previous day - those potions lasted up to a week.) We managed to get everyone covered in some way, shape or form.

The ascension to Grey Seer requires a ritual which myself and Cloud were going to do with all the contributors at our disposal (5 - count them, 5!) Everyone else was required to clear the way to the circle and to make sure no-one attempted to stop the Ritual midway through. Another important point to mention at this time is that no-one can use the circle at Reiskarg until Flader has "calmed" it. Any attempts to do so without this calming will result in severe tentacular mutation/death.

Anyway, we all left for the ritual circle. Upon arriving we found a large number of Split Ears troops waiting for us. A mighty battle ensued. We eventually started making some progress after a "Banner of Forbidding" war. Once we had cleared the path to the circle Flader proceeded there and began calming the circle in preparation. Whilst this was going on Snarltooth finally showed up. Flader had been told he was dead and was a bit miffed as you can't perform the ritual without the old Grey Seer being dead. anyway, Snarltooth and his troops started to attack us. The banner of Voivre was ineffective against him, presumably because he was a Viper. Using the name of the Regents council I exiled him from the Viper Nation for good. After this we finally killed him. No Viper losses.

Flader demanded that we take Snarltooth's body into the circle and use it in the Ritual. This we did and after 15 minutes of a somewhat chaotic, off the cuff ritual Tearthroat was made the new Grey Seer. Vipers triumph - All The Boys ...

We had to fight our way back out of the blasted lands by those Skathen still miffed at all that had passed but we eventually managed to leave and return to our encampment. A few remaining renegade Skathen were soon brought into line by new Grey Seer Tearthroat. After collecting our things and once more confirming our alliance with the Iron Fang we started the long trek back to the Queens Residences, leaving behind only the three chaos mating volunteers.

General Notes

The above is a full account of everything that I remember happening. It deals more with the diplomacy and bargaining side of things and rather skims over the fighting we had to do. In my uneducated opinion I thought the Vipers generally fought very well. I'm sure General Doyle will be able to point out more specifically areas that were good and others that may need improving.

We decided very early on that unless something gave us a very good reason not to we would support Tearthroat as it was he who invited us there in the first place and specifically he who had supplied us with material aid in the past. We didn't nail our colours to the mast until we absolutely had to however so that we weren't attacked from all angles by everyone.

The ritual circle at Reiskarg is a very dangerous place to be. Unless it is calmed by Flader (presumably the circle master there) horrible things will happen. Flader is old however and there may need to be a new Circle Master soon. Maybe we could get Mouldy to do it if we can find him. He would seem to fit the bill and is a Viper.

Prometheus is back and looking to play. Seems on very good terms with the Vipers though was a bit coy when asked about Vlad Tepes. For those who don't remember apparently Prometheus took Vlad away with him just after the Vipers had killed his possessing demon. Morachi was present at the time and can probably fill in more details if required.

I think that's everything. Other Vipers present on the mission may well be able to add things / correct mistakes.