

Seventh Arc: Thalmor Machinations

~Aftermath~

-**Investigating J'ssi**: The group gains some information about J'ssi from her possession victim, specifically evidence as to what the remaining tethers might be (a body, likely the Night Mother, and a "heart," which they later learn to be the Dark Heart)

-The poison she used is confirmed to be Coral Viper Venom by Nevetrius; this indicates that the Thalmor and Dro M'athra may be working together.

-**Celebrations**: A celebration is planned, in part to capitalize on morale, in part to lay a trap for J'ssi (which she sadly does not spring).

-Nevetrius hears the name "Cyrus" in place of his own during Talydin's speech.

-Passages of Thegainvalde unveiled are read during the event by Historians from Solitude; Thienne, caught off guard and disquieted, reveals to Ylgar that these are her own journal entries from long ago.

~Ciphers (4E 230, 1st Week of Second Seed)~

-**Sabin's Dreams**: Sabin intercepts another Thalmor transmission. Cluny analyzes her symptoms, and hypothesizes that she might be infected with a mind-virus of daedric origin, possibly linked to Vaermina or Peryite.

-**INSTRUCTION CYRUS**: Nevetrius dreams of his home in Falkreath, and awakens to find he has sleepwalked and then sleep-carved words into a wall; he has no notion as to what they mean.

-**Lost**: Steinn struggles to find his center, and retreats into the woods alone for several days to re-establish his sense of self-control.

-**Starcrossed**: Thienne tells Ylgar about their relationship (her past, his future), and its tragic end. She says that she still has feelings for him, and would be open to having a relationship in the present time. Ylgar is conflicted.

-**The Old Farm**: The group flies to Nevetrius's farm in Falkreath to investigate his dreams; they find it has been burned down, but locate a root cellar that Nevetrius is certain didn't exist;

the walls of the cellar are covered in words that give the Redguard a headache, and indeed, he seems unable to focus on anything related to them for long stretches of time.

-Looking into his mind, Ylgar determines that there are indeed walls locking away memories, and finds evidence that Nevetrius placed those walls himself.

~MOP Dranil Kir~

-**Air Ship:** Sabin intercepts another Thalmor transmission on the return trip to Bromjunaar, allowing the group to locate and attack their air ship, Mobile Observation Platform Dranil Kir.

-The group often observes from here on out that the Thalmor are using modified Dwemer technology.

-**Interrogation:** The group interrogates the surviving Thalmor agent, Finarmo; ultimately, they decide to kill him after he purges the ship's database. They leave before the ship self-destructs, with the knowledge that there is data they need in the Solitude Thalmor Embassy.

-**Better to Have Loved and Lost:** After receiving encouraging wisdom from Steinn, Ylgar decides to begin/continue his relationship with Thienne.

~Solitude (13th of Second Seed)~

-**Familiar Faces:** The group heads to Solitude to rendezvous with Hjyrkon, who has also been investigating Thalmor activity in relation to the city's treasury. Many of the party encounter people from their past in the city.

-Ylgar meets with his parents, and convinces them to move to Bromjunaar; later, he encounters a childhood classmate/kind-of foster brother/bully, Julius.

-Nihlus encounters his classmate and ex-girlfriend from the Bard's college, and manages some minor reconciliation. He is also recognized as the suspect in a murder case from many years ago, by young Penitus Occulatus agent Stendan.

-Nevetrius meets up with a fellow veteran of the Legion and his wife, and promises to help them leave the city and improve their fortunes.

-Sabin is haunted by visions of Hircine, but is resolute in defying/ignoring him.

-Evidence compounds of a daedric presence somewhere below the Solitude, affecting the populace of the lower city.

-**Planning the Heist (15th of Second Seed):** The group gathers information, and plan their ambush/heist on the Thalmor to obtain a large amount of gold.

-**The Horned Lord's Reckoning (Daedric Encounter):** Just as the ambush is about to occur, Hircine decides to punish Sabin for repressing the beast for too long; she transforms and goes on a rampage, killing Julius and Stendan.

-**The Schism (Daedric Encounter):** The rest of the group pursue the Thalmor into the sewers, and find themselves in a testing ground for worshippers of Sheogorath; they overcome riddles

and trials in pursuit of the Thalmor.

- Dyus Intervention (Daedric Encounter)*: Sabin reunites with the group when she crashes through the sewers from high above, still in werewolf form until a crystalline knight arrives and forces her back into elf shape. The knight then leads them through a short cut to the final puzzle.

- Throughout the Schism, clues are found indicating that Dyus's patron may be Jyggalag, a daedric prince tied to Sheogorath. Comparatively little is known about him, save for his association with the concept of order.

- Madness Tarot**: The final trial of the Schism requires the group to identify and understand the dichotomies that characterize themselves and their companions. They succeed, and pursue the only remaining Thalmor agent out of the Schism.

- The Thalmor Embassy**: Ogaz arrives with mage reinforcements and the severed head of Ancano to execute a raid on the Thalmor Embassy. Though they succeed in gaining a good deal of the data they were looking for, there is massive collateral damage.

- The Thalmor use terrifying artillery to destroy the Embassy, rather than let it remain in enemy hands.

~*Seeking the Night Mother*~

- Deciphered Data**: The group analyzes the confused chunks of information recovered from the Embassy, and are able to draw some conclusions:

- The Alaxon Revival movement is part of a Thalmor plot, seeming to involve the mind virus that Sabin was accidentally infected with, and likely the Towers.

- The Thalmor have created teleportation networks for large scale material and troop movements, many of which seem to be stationed at Dwemer Ruins.

- There is a resistance movement in Cyrodiil called the "Dragonfires," and they are fighting the Thalmor; one member of this group is Ylgar and Ogaz's classmate from Arcane University, Lhukeika. People are also talking about the return of Shezzar.

- The Thalmor have an interest in the Moth Priests and their Elder Scrolls.

- Operation Gadfly, which has been deduced to be a search for a Blades Vault containing an Elder Scroll, is ongoing.

- The Thalmor have been monitoring Void energies and in doing so have located the Night Mother; they have already dispatched a team to acquire her.

- War Impending**: Bromjunaar calls for war against the Thalmor; the group, who is more acquainted with the horrors and dangers of war, manage to redirect this energy towards waging a more intelligent attack. Veterans of war remain disquieted by the increasing scale of violence.

- The Question Owed (Daedric Encounter)**: Nihlus calls in the answer he is owed by the cultists of Hermaeus Mora to locate the Night Mother; they set out for Dawnstar that night.

-During the flight, Nihlus confesses his feelings to Steinn, who reciprocates.

~***The Dawnstar Sanctuary (Daedric Encounter)***~

-**Innocence, my Brother**: The group finds and enters the Dark Brotherhood Sanctuary near Dawnstar; Nihlus is increasingly overwhelmed by the Void energy as they proceed.

-**Aicaon**: The group finds that the Thalmor have arrived ahead of them and are already in the process of excavating the Night Mother's coffin. High Chancellor Aicaon arrives via teleportation and incapacitates the group with powerful magic.

-Nevetrius finds himself compelled to answer Aicaon's questions honestly when the Thalmor uses a particular code phrase, "selfless honor begets selfless trust."

-**Mother**: Nihlus is spoken to by the Night Mother; she tells him that to save her from the Thalmor, he must let her in, and he acquiesces to her wishes. Aicaon vanishes with the Sarcophagus, ordering the group to be killed, but the spell is broken when the foreman attempts to kill Nihlus (Mortal Peril) by cutting his throat and trapping his soul in a soulgem, and inexplicably dies instead. The group slaughters (yes, that is the correct word) the remaining Thalmor.

-That night, Nihlus hears the prayer of the Black Sacrament.

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