

# HANDOUT 1:

## BALLADS IN INNSPA

### Petrified Garden

The sleepy dragon lies wide awake  
Beneath the green sleeves of petrified garden  
His peaceful eyes watch dying masses  
Under his control the people starved

Thundering clouds sends rays to earth  
A spoken word that will never be heard  
A fire's burning without a flame  
And all the colours are faded out

A lonely sheep is searching for a life  
To lead outside the heart of crowd  
His hunger is like the faith of a lion  
His terror overflows petrified garden

Time heals the wounds of soldiers  
But it rips up the life of a child  
It will fade to grey in the future  
And leave you cold inside

### Ballad of Gnomebeorn the Strong

Deep into the woods he went, a dragon to kill  
The noble Paladin, such was his will  
Gnomebeorn the Strong was his name  
The gnomes' greatest hero he became  
In the god Garl's radiant name he waxed  
From Glittergold came his steely axe  
The woods were filled with humans aplenty  
They served the dragon with eager amenity  
Even priest there were the dragon to serve  
To fight Gnomebeorn they had not the nerve  
They tried to flee his killing steel  
That or death, however they feel  
And so the paladin went into the wood  
And found the dragon in the neighbourhood  
Hot the battle soon raged, the dragon spew fire  
And it raised Strong Gnomebeorn burning ire  
Through his deeply felt love in his god's way  
Kept the dragon's fire for hours at bay  
The axe, it sang and cut with power  
During the battle for many an hour  
And at last then slowly the dragon faltered  
It seemed like the best could still be slaughtered  
But the tail of the dragon the gnome did then pound  
And took the gnome with him down to the ground  
The valorous paladin would not bow his head  
Kept fighting the dragon until he was dead  
The tail broke his shield full right in twain  
Causing our hero very much pain  
With the axe he struck the beast in the maw  
And cleft in twain its tongue to great awe  
Mortally wounded the dragon reared up  
He could see his fate in death's gloomy cup  
He fell down and bore unto the gnome  
But he wouldn't give ground so far from his home  
A last scream through the woods it let go  
Then the dragon dies, felled by his foe  
He ploughed under Gnomebeorn the brave  
Who in the end he also took to his grave  
And now both of them, after all those years  
Keep resting without feeling their fears  
Side by side, death united both foes  
Dragon and paladin, just like Garl chose

HANDOUT 2:  
LETTER FROM THE TEMPLE OF THE INVINCIBLE

*Dear friend,*

*we are again in dire need of your assistance. Please meet us at the temple of the Archpaladin, second bell after sunrise, where we will tell you anything you need to know.*

*Kaldor Sunblade*

*Servant of the Archpaladin*

*Chancellor of the Exchequer to the temple of Innspa*

## HANDOUT 9

### DESCRIPTION OF THE FRESCOES IN THE MAIN TEMPLE

#### Fresco 1

This picture shows three tied humans who are led down a stairway resembling a gigantic dragon's maw by masked humanoids in richly decorated robes. The stairs in the picture seem to be a copy of the stairway you took when you entered the temple.

#### Fresco 2

This picture shows some trees which seem to be formed out of stone. A doorway stands open in the middle of the picture; the picture continues seamlessly onto the walls. On the door, a single humanoid with a dragon's head is depicted, kneeling in front of the stone plants. With his left hand, he brandishes a long staff topped with an orb. The sky itself is filled with dark clouds which emit lightning.

#### Fresco 3

This picture shows peasants working in fields adjacent to a forest. The harvest seems to be meagre. Instead of fruits and such, trees like oaks and beeches sprout from the soil. In the skies above is a gigantic dragon accompanied by some smaller ones flying away from the viewer.

#### Fresco 4

This picture shows a procession of dark-skinned humans accompanied by some dragon-headed humanoids trekking through a dark forest. This fresco's colours seem to be either very worn, or laced with a greyish veil. Even though the colours of all the other frescoes have been restored, this one, oddly enough, seems to have been skipped.

#### Fresco 5

This picture shows two dragon-headed humanoids standing besides an altar. On the altar lies a dark-skinned human. Both dragon-headed humanoids hold in their hands golden daggers shaped like a dragon's fang. It seems like they want to carve up the human with those daggers. The human looks like he is alive and awake and he is not tied down. Both humanoids wear richly decorated robes. Some distance from the altar, the outline of a third dragon-headed humanoid is barely visible against the tree line. He is wearing pristine robes with a simple rope for a belt. Tucked into this belt, a richly decorated sickle of ebony is visible. This picture seems to be of recent making. Behind the altar, the gargantuan head of a green dragon is watching the whole scene. All of this seems to be taking place outside. The sky is dark and all stars are clearly visible but none of the Oeridian moons are depicted.

#### Fresco 6

This picture shows a dragon-headed humanoid lifting his arms to bless an army of armed skeletons. The skeletons look like they are dressed for war. The whole party is standing at the edge of a forest. From above the trees, the head of a dragon is watching in approval.

#### Fresco 7

This picture shows a gigantic five-headed dragon sitting on a throne. Her heads are red, green, blue, white, and black. Her body shows similar colours. Alongside on a smaller throne sits a smaller, single-headed green dragon. Both dragons sit on a large forest clearing, the trees looking ridiculously small. Behind the two dragons, a single spire reaches out of the forest into the sky. It is completely encased in ice. On the left edge of the picture, a single altar is visible on which rests a giant glowing crystal.

#### Fresco 8

Between the trees, a building looking like a giant crouching dragon can be seen. Where the maw would be located on a dragon, the building sports a stairway leading to a large gate. A procession of humanoids consisting mostly of dark skinned humans is marching through the gate. The stairs and the doorway strongly resemble those you took entering the temple. The outside of the temple is buried underneath a mound of earth. A doorway stands open in the middle of the picture; the picture continues seamlessly from the doorway onto the walls

## HANDOUT 10: REMNANTS OF AN OLD TOME

*Chronicles of the final days of the Cult of the Dragon  
Laid down by Renar Zurnanus in the year 991 of our Lord Ahtiporax*

### *Prelude*

*Now that the olive-skinned invaders from the west are about to reach our innermost temples, we have taken preparations to abandon our holy sites and activate the deadly traps within. I deem the time has finally come to bring the chronicles of our cult to a close so that the generations to come will learn of the glory and greatness of our community. I also put much faith in this chronicle, for perhaps those who will come can achieve what was denied to us: to return the Lord unto the Certh. . . . .*

*. . . . started with our Lord crafting himself a new home inside this beautiful forest almost a millennium ago. Near the Heart of the Adri the Petrified Garden was created, its splendours being supposedly so great that our forefathers couldn't deny the divinity of our Lord . . . .*

*... many centuries passed with the whole forest being granted the protection of our Lord. No one dared to disturb the peace because only He could command nature. All denizens of the woods, be it men or animal, heeded His command. Even the Archdruid bowed his head in awe, acknowledging His wisdom and power and revering Him as a part of the natural order. He who was the successor of those cursed elves, who tried to deny us the proper tools of power, was the human guardian of the woods and yet he knew that our Lord had far more power than . . . . .*

*. . . the year 739, the thrice-damned gnome wickedly entered the Petrified Garden. He was searching for a dragon to slay and as such a divine dragon was very welcome. Other Gods must have had their hands in this, too, because when our Lord had finally mortally wounded the gnome, a wild surge of magical energy unleashed over the whole of the Certh and banished the Lord, along with the Petrified Garden, from the face of this plane. Since then, our Lord has been dreaming of His own realm and has been waiting for us to deliver Him unto us. . . .*

*...s our gates are no longer operational. Thus it has become too exhausting to travel between the temples. Our forefathers had no clue to what had transpired. Today we are aware that the Twin Cataclysms sent a shockwave of arcane power through the gates when they ripped the temple from the Certh. Yet the gates are unharmed and like our forefathers we hope to one day find the way back to the Petrified Gard. . . .*

*... but the dreams were no longer sufficient to fill us with His divine power and so many of us took to the old faiths again. Others contacted the Serpent, whose dreams also offered powerful gifts like the ones of our Lor. . . .*

... foreigners from the west, refugees themselves from the Great War of the pale ones and the wearers of turbans, chased the pale ones to the far south into the swamps and settled the grasslands. Even back then, they were cold and cruel men who didn't know how to handle nature's graces. They revered gods of war and called us barbarian, yet they themselves were . . . . .

... kingdom of Ahlissa is no more. The western foreigners conquered our southern brethren through their military prowess. Thus there were only a few free tribes left besides ours. But it should take almost thirty years until the foreigners looked our way. If only the L. . . . .

... few are those who believe in the Lord's return. Even most of the druids have adopted the Old Faith. The breeding experiments were of little success and exploration of the planes also didn't yield the expected results. All around us, war erupted between the olive skinned humans. Many of our prairie-living relatives were enslaved, and now the enemy is coming for the forest. The outer temples have been secured and fortunately haven't been found yet. The fools can't even distinguish a heaped-up hill from a natural one. We have come up with a new master plan. We have released the last of the slaves and breeding experiments, hoping that this will confuse our aggressors. In the meantime, we have begun installing powerful guardians and traps in the seven inner temples and prepared them for submer. . . . .

... e year ago, the foreigners showed their true intentions. They were no longer content to enslave us; up north they massacred one of our tribes in the name of their dark god Erythnul. Those had been the last of the prairie people to resist the Serdy and they were ultimately punished. Yet the Dark Horseman and the Reaper avenged their people, and thus many of us came to the conclusion that only by adopting their faith . . . .

... he connection to the Queen of our Lord grows weaker. The council has decreed that there is only one hope, after the temples have been secured: the Lords of Plague and Death will stand with us and allow our descendants to one day take revenge on the ungrateful Serdy scu. . . .

... small place in the north of the forest will be our sanctuary until one day the time is right. . . . .

## HANDOUT 11: DIARY

### *A new beginning*

Many centuries have passed since our forefathers took refuge in the northern reaches of the Adri Forest to wait for a time when our Lord Ahtiporax would return unto the earth. Now we are sure the time is at hand.

In 1751, we discovered that the temple near our village had been pillored. The perpetrators came from the city of Innspa and had been instigated by some shady individual living in the Flinty Hills.

Through those investigations, we became aware of certain activities in direct connection with the actions of our forefathers. All of the outer temples that still exist today had been sacked within only a few months and every time the same man was responsible. During our investigations, we met some descendants of our old slaves and breeding experiments who would pose a serious threat to us. They have organized in Innspa to discover the heritage of dragons, especially their own. We do not want to help them along but rather should beware of them, lest they discover we know something. Many of them carry strong ties to their dragon heritage, so maybe we should again adopt experimenting like our forefathers did.

We also uncovered that a challenge was imminent to determine which Archdruid should rule the Adri. The old one had long been a thorn to our cause because we reckoned she was aware of our influence in the druidic circles. As Archdruid, she would be aware of the circle's history and its connection to our Lord Ahtiporax. During the challenge in 1755, we intervened. The Great Druid, being aware of our rightful claims to the title, did not banish us from interfering and accepted the outcome. The small one will not pose any threat to us at the moment and even if she chooses to challenge us, our contestants will annihilate that miserable creature of an inferior bloodline. Maybe this is the best way to cleanse the forest after our agents failed so miserably.

Once it became clear that the only possible means to contact our Lord are the inner temple's gates, we started searching for them. Our forefathers had done

quite a good job at camouflaging them. It took us months to discover them. Sadly, most of them had been reduced to mere ruins. Only one remained functional, maybe because of its location deep within the Inner Forest. Although the other six temples only held destroyed gates, this one sported an intact gate to the Petrified Garden. Yet we did not know the means to operate it to this effect and the guardians of the temple were quite an obstacle. Soon we discovered that they weren't indestructible. the holy symbol of our old faith rebuked them. After this, the first of them began to convert back to the old faith, and to our surprise they retained the ability to work magic - but only within the temple. We held council and decided to keep faith with the Lords of Death and Plague until we found means to open the Petrified Garden. Research took a long time and as time grew short - foreigners discovered the other six temples - we succeeded in the late summer of 1757 in contacting the Petrified Garden. The gate was stable and we found our Lord in deep slumber. We summoned all members of the cult and returned to the old ways. Many converted happily, but some we had to coerce because they could not or would not see the glory of our faith. We showed them the weakness of their faith and left them as they were.

Not long and we will be able to revive our Lord and return the Petrified Garden unto this plane of existence. Then, with the return of our Lord, his reign over the forest will be supreme again.

## HANDOUT 12: A LETTER

*Innsa in the moon of the Wolf, 1754*

*Dark Sister Serbia,*

*we allowed Inphalas great latitude because the spreading of his plague would have been a welcome distraction from our forest operations. Regrettably, he proved to be an incompetent idiot. Apparently, he worked for the wrong people as he had support from high-ups in Innsa's government, which would have become a risk to our cause. Fortunately, some rogue elements ended this spook before the cursed bitch could use him to get unto us.*

*May the Reaper look graciously upon our vengeance*

*Honia Tiefstetten*