

## Bal-sagoth

# "To Dethrone The Witch-Queen Of Mytos K'unn (The Legend Of Th"

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[The Chronicles of War:]

The vast armies of Mytos K'unn, marshalled by a sorceress of great power known as Zyrashana the Witch-Queen, had been cutting a swath through the Eastern Kingdoms since high summer the preceding year. Empowering her troops with great sorceries, she had seen all opposition fall before the ravaging swords of her forces since the first bloody campaign; the invasion of the ancient and noble realm of Delania. The aftermath of the final battle had seen the systematic slaughter of the Delanian royal family, and the torture and execution of all those who had been loyal to their banner. During the ensuing months, more kingdoms and satrapies toppled before the might of Zyrashana's legions, commanded by the fearsome and unswervingly loyal battle-lord Talus Ebonfyre, a man of sublime brutality whom many believed to be possessed by a demon-spirit from the dark realms. Emboldened by their victories and the expansion of their queen's dark dominion, the hordes of Mytos K'unn began the incursion into the lands of the Northern Tribes, beginning with the grim and brooding territories south of the Snow Kingdoms... the rugged homelands of the warlike clans which had been recently united into a strong realm by the powerful warrior-king Caylen-Tor, a man known to his allies and enemies alike as the Wolf of the North. Thinking the barbaric tribesmen little threat, the Witch-Queen intends a largely unopposed march through their lands to strike

at the wealthy and fertile realms beyond the Mountain Kingdoms to the west...  
but Caylen-Tor has vowed that a searing torrent of blood and steel shall meet  
all those who deign to enter unwelcome or drive their standard unbidden into  
his land... As grim winter slowly yields to spring, the armies of Mytos K'unn  
begin their march northwards, and news of the advance of the Witch-Queen's  
forces into Blackhelm Vale, the valley known for centuries as the Gate to the  
Northlands, soon reaches the highland stronghold of Caylen-Tor. Grimly taking  
up his sword and spear and donning the woad of war, he vows that Zyrashana  
shall pay in blood for every league she has dared venture in his sacred lands.  
Scouts soon return with the information that the enemy is camped at the base  
of the valley, preparing to march with the dawn. The court shamans foresee  
rivers of blood and untold carnage, and great battlespells are woven as  
Caylen-Tor leads his vastly outnumbered Northlander warriors to the misty,  
moon-swathed expanse that is Blackhelm Vale. Legends say that the blood of  
many kings has been spilled on the dark earth of the valley over the  
generations, and Caylen-Tor promises to his grim gods that the earth will once  
again drink deep this night. With his army silent and brooding beneath the  
moon, he knows that whatever the outcome, this night shall see a legend of war  
written in blood and the deaths of men... a legend none shall soon forget...

[The War Testament of Caylen-Tor (On the Night of the Bloodying of Swords):]

O' grim gods of battle, empower us this night...  
Anoint us with the crimson rain, feed our steel with slaughter...  
Let every blow be a killing blow, grant us victory, or a warrior's death.  
Come, moon-fogs, Descend to cloak our numbers, the heady scent of battle  
beckons,  
My ash-hafted spear feels good in my hands, girt  
'round with spells (our flesh

gloriously) woad anointed,  
Ravens awaiting slaughter soar high above, blood-  
worms bloat on red carnage,  
I'll carve the moon-wheel in their flesh, as havoc churns  
the heather!

A swirling mantle of mist-magic swathes us, powerful  
spells woven by the  
fen-witches of the great mere... Deep night and moon-  
mist shall be our allies  
as we surge into the fray! At my bidding, the fog clears  
for a brief moment,  
and I gaze down upon the valley to behold the army of  
the Witch-Queen...  
great tents arrayed upon the heather, powerful steeds  
tethered, the light from  
countless burning brands illuminating the night, many  
warriors standing, weapons  
in hand... aye, all sword fodder.

Entwined in war-fogs...  
Entwined by war-spells...  
Blessed in blood as raven-saters, slake the thirst of  
steel burning bright,  
Reap the harvest of spilled entrails, we'll return with  
many heads this night.  
The death-ravaging black fury fills me,  
The spatter of hot blood seet on my lips,  
This yard of steel sings a deadly song in my grasp!  
Cleaving bodies left and right, a head falls with each  
swing of my blade,  
A storm of shafts screaming from yew-bows, (through  
their armoured ranks we  
shall) carve a path with steel, a blood-drenched swath!

And the thirst of the earth shall be slaked with blood at  
the fields of  
carnage...  
A staggering sea of crimson, a towering mountain of  
ravaged flesh,  
All enraptured by the searing kiss of steel,  
All surfeit from supping deep of the grim chalice of  
battle...

Brooding gods of the north, display to these outlander  
thralls thine ire,  
Envenom our blades with the death-kiss of a thousand  
serpents,  
Unfetter the dread war-wolves within us,  
That their claws may rend, and their jaws may be  
reddened.

The bloodying is at hand!  
My spear hammers into the chest of a warrior, and  
bright blood erupts  
from his lips as he falls to the heather. I turn aside a  
vicious swordthrust  
and my own blade snakes out to cleave the neck of the  
attacker, shearing  
through his veins in a shower of dark red. An enemy  
blade opens my shoulder  
to the bone, but I sweep my axe out in a deadly arc, its  
iron head rending  
armour and biting deep into flesh. Talus Ebonfyre's  
abdomen yawns open and he  
staggers back as his intestines spew forth in a pulsing  
mass. I sunder his  
head with another blow as he falls and his skull yields  
to spill its steaming  
contents to the earth. As I watch, a writhing, shadowy  
form rises from the  
smitten corpse of the Witch-Queen's warlord and flees  
howling into the  
night... I vault to the saddle of a riderless black war-  
horse and seize the  
banner of Mytos-K'unn... for every one of us that has  
fallen, we have taken  
five of the enemy screaming with us... the battle is  
ours!

Bright moon, gleam o'er moor and heather, wood and  
vale, deep fen and  
lake, Grim mountains crowned with snows, great rings  
of stones, black 'neath  
the stars, The storms extol our ancient glory, great  
mounds feed us, power  
from the sacred earth. With faith and steel we walk our  
shadowed paths, our  
blood runs as fire, swords blessed by sorcery.

Wolves of the north, raise thine steel to the skies, revel  
in the pride of  
your wounds,  
Let our victory-song ride the winds of this blood-  
gorged eve,  
For on this night of red swords we have wrought a  
legend,  
Forged in the fires of our rage, and tempered with the  
spilled blood of the  
slain...

O' grim gods of battle, empower us this night and

always,  
Anoint us with the crimson rain, forever feed our steel  
with slaughter...  
Let every blow be a killing blow, grant us eternal  
victory, 'til we die a  
warrior's death.

And so did Caylen-Tor turn the armies of Mytos K'unn  
back from the  
frontiers of his northern kingdom. Those enemy  
soldiers who fled the field as  
the mist lifted and their banner fell, are hunted down  
and brought to their  
knees before the king. Summoning a surviving warrior  
Mytos K'unn, Caylen-Tor  
gives unto him two gifts with which to return to his  
queen; one is the fallen,  
sundered banner of Mytos K'unn, the other is the  
cloven head of Talus  
Ebonfyre. The king's words ring out over the blood-  
drenched moor: "Take this  
message back to your queen... if ever again she deigns  
to strike against my  
people, the slaughter this night will seem as naught  
compared to the havoc I  
shall visit upon her then." When news of the defeat and  
the fearsome message  
of Caylen-Tor reached Mytos K'unn, Zyrashana's spells  
of regal dominance  
waned, and her many courtiers and councillors,  
liberated from the imposition  
of subservience, plotted against their queen, 'til soon  
she was driven from  
the great royal palace by her own elite guard, her  
throne seized by an  
ambitious baron who had won the favour of the nobles  
and mages of the realm.  
Evading imprisonment and surviving only by her  
mastery of spellcraft,  
Zyrashana fled to the satrapies of the east, and  
nothing more was seen or  
heard of her for some considerable time...

[Lyrics: Byron]

[Music: Jonny Maudling]

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