

THE BIRTH OF THE EMPIRE



THE SELLONAE WAR

As the Order of The Light grew, so did the challenges that rose to meet it. In the year 331 OL, war broke out once more. Armies from Riik – backed by several factions of human mercenaries — attempted a full invasion of the Naran world of Sellonae. Sellonae was rich in bolan crystal, the key component in powering starships and building crystal sabers. Its control was both profitable and influential.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BOLAN

“YOUNG GUARDIANS LIKE TO THINK THAT THE ORDER SOMEHOW HAS A MONOPOLY ON BOLAN USAGE, BUT THAT'S SIMPLY NOT TRUE. BOLAN IS THE MOST EFFICIENT ENERGY SOURCE IN THE GALAXY AND IS THE PRIME SOURCE OF POWER FOR STARSHIPS ACROSS THE EMPIRE. WHILE OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY EXIST FOR SMALLER VESSELS, THE LARGEST WARSHIPS DEPEND ON BOLAN CORES...”

The Nara appealed for support, soon finding themselves in a rocky understanding with the Human Alliance and the Khi'Hinnese Republic. Both sides begged for The Order to intervene, but its leader – Supreme Master Darinius, a Tallunian Rikkan – refused to become involved. Darinius cited The Order's longstanding tradition of neutrality, but many accused him of not wanting to side against his own people – the obvious aggressors.

With both sides refusing to back down, the war grew larger. By 335, the Vyx Collective had become allies of the Rikkan, who were likewise joined by their counterparts from Tallun. The Solanar – typically isolationist – threw their limited forces behind the Khi'Hinn, Humans, and Nara, who were collectively joined the following year by a flotilla of weaponized Shumi Garden Ships. Still believing themselves to be countering Rikkan hostility, this new pact formally declared itself the Grand Alliance. By contrast, the Rikkan, arguing they intended only to liberate Sellonae's colonists from political oppression — had labeled their own alliance as the Freedom Confederation.

The war raged on for another 75 years, with The Order maintaining its neutrality. With the exception of the isolationist Koleon, every sapient species in the known galaxy was now in a conflict that had altogether abandoned its interest in Sellonae. The planet had been all but destroyed, with glassed craters where proud cities once stood. Fighting raged on more than a dozen different worlds, with galactic civilizations reorganizing entire economies to fuel the war effort. Frustrated with The Order's inability to act, thousands of Radiants began to disobey their orders and join the conflict. When even members of the Master Council began to become openly involved, the newly-elected Supreme Master Navona Syntauri finally issued new orders to all of her loyal followers.

In 406, Navona called upon all Followers of The Light to demand a ceasefire from all parties by any means necessary. Immediately, knights and masters – on both sides of the conflict – began to act, sometimes bringing themselves into conflict with their own kinspeople and political allies. Dominiari and Venefari masters persuaded entire fleets to disband while Bellati and Ouiori strike groups brought a forceful end to continued hostilities. Vindori protected vulnerable worlds and populations while Medicari tended to the casualties of both factions. Within weeks, the struggle ground to a reluctant halt. Peace talks began while the conflict's most heinous war criminals were brought to trial before the Master Council. The Sellonae War was finally over.

THE NIGHT OF PEACE

“THERE'S A LONGSTANDING AND WIDESPREAD TRADITION THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY THAT IN 406, THE LIGHT MANIFESTED ITSELF IN SUCH A WAY AS TO GUIDE THE GUARDIANS TO PERSUADING PEACE AND ENDING THE SELLONAE WAR. IT'S CUTE, BUT LIKE SO MANY TRADITIONS IN HISTORY, THIS IS QUITE LIKELY HISTORICAL NORUK-SHIT AND DESERVES TO BE PLACED EXCLUSIVELY IN THE 'MYTHOLOGY' COLUMN. STILL, WE GOT THE NIGHT OF PEACE OUT OF IT AND I GET TIME OFF FROM WORK AS A RESULT, SO I CAN'T COMPLAIN...”

THE EMPIRE BEGINS

Supreme Leader Navona – a Dominare – recognized the unique position The Order now found itself in. Rallying together the leaders of all the galaxy’s various species and political factions, she encouraged them to cease further hostilities and establish a plan for lasting peace. The Tallunian Peace Conference brought together thousands of representatives from every species and planet, all with the earnest desire to prevent anything like the Sellonae War from happening again.

It was the Khi’Hinnese Republic’s representatives that first suggested the establishment of a unified governmental body. The danger of political and cultural factionalism was obvious, they argued. If lasting peace was to be achieved, a singular government had to be established. When the Conference began to squabble about who should lead such a government, the Naran delegation presented the obvious answer: The Order. Only the Order of The Light carried representation from every background, carried no biases, and commanded the undeniable power to lead civilization into the future.

Thus in 407, the United Sellonian Empire was formally established. Novana was elevated to become the first Empress, heralding the Dominari shift into the world of political power. For the next five centuries, Dominari Masters would lead the new imperial state in an unbroken line of power.

Recognizing the cause of the conflict that preceded it, Sellonae was selected as the capital of the Empire. For centuries, it would serve as a symbol of heal-

ing and unity. An elaborate Ouiori-led terraforming project began to revive it into the jewel of the new state.

Facing little resistance, the imperial banner soon flew on every inhabited planet. Within a few years, an unprecedented age of peace and prosperity would begin.



The Official Crest of the United Sellonian Empire, as it existed until 898.

THE EMPRESS NAVONA SYNTAURI

“ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, THE LEADERSHIP OF NAVONA SYNTAURI CEMENTED THE LATER SUCCESS OF THE EMPIRE. BEING THE FIRST TO FIND THEMSELVES AS THE GALACTIC MONARCH, SHE DID THE BEST SHE COULD IN A TURBULENT TIME. SHE SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATED THE TALLUNIAN PEACE CONFERENCE, OVERSAW THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT ACT, AND LED THE EMPIRE DURING THE ONSET OF THE LURIAN WARS. WHILE HER REIGN WAS SHORTER THAN MANY WOULD HAVE LIKED, SHE WAS WORTHY OF THE POST. REFERENCES TO “THE FIRST EMPRESS” REMEMBER HER FONDLY...”

THE GUARDIANS

With full control over the known galaxy, The Order of The Light began to evolve. With as much newfound responsibility to the political world as they had to the spiritual one, Radiant individuals began to see themselves as the defenders of the Sellonian Empire and the peace and justice it represented. Officially declaring their acolytes to be the “Guardians” of this new imperial unity, they struggled to establish a clear demarcation between themselves and the growing state they swore to protect.

Their existence danced a fine line between the pro-

tectors of a newfound state and an independent spiritual Order. On the one hand, they continued to maintain their own independent Supreme Master and repeatedly declared independence from partisan matters. Yet on the other, their goals reemphasized the preservation of the newfound sense of harmony that existed across all planets under. In truth, the Guardians acted as the executive wing of the Empire and its influence began to be felt like never before.

Across the Empire, the Guardians continued to apply their abilities to the benefit of all. Dominari leaders navigated difficult political landscapes to promote compromise and utilitarianism. Medicari leadership established remarkable hospitals, guiding major medical breakthroughs and recoveries. Quiori efforts rebuilt the surfaces of Sellonae and Yarut while simultaneously cultivating new crops to nourish billions of beings. Bellati security forces replaced squabbling regional militaries. Vindori scholars poured over historical records and learned new secrets of the past. New histories were written, marking the discovery of The Light as the beginning of a new calendar, thus becoming the year 1 Of The Light (OL). Venevari mystics continued to delve into the mystery of The Light, allowing its power to blossom like never before.

A NEW GOLDEN AGE

Despite these successes, the early years of the Empire tested the meddle of the newfound state. The Corporate Secession saw thousands of major businesses flee imperial regulations for Wari, threatening to disrupt the young imperial economy. At much the same time, the Kingdom of Lurio, refusing imperial participation, challenged the Empire's borders. Despite what are generally considered imperial losses in both affairs, the economy and military quickly recovered and allowed the Empire to address matters closer to home.

As these dramas concluded over the next three centuries, the galaxy experienced a remarkable Golden Age. Cities bloomed and trade goods flowed. Cultural and technological achievements peaked, leading to a remarkable quality of life for virtually every planet, species, and walk of life. While minor disputes and uprisings were not unheard of, warfare altogether disappeared under Guardian leadership. Age-old rivalries between species blossomed into alliances and friendships while collaborative terraforming projects began to breathe life onto otherwise barren worlds.

The Imperial political machine was robust and effec-

tive. Dominari emperors acted as constitutional monarchs who chose their own successors. While this could mean the passing of power to family members, it often-times meant a far more political selection process. Beneath the emperor was the Senate of The Order and the Congress of Planets. The Senate was composed of ten representatives from each of the Order's Sects and was the only body – with a majority vote – able to override the actions of the emperor. The Congress allowed each of the Empire's inhabited planets five representatives to act as a sort of advisory council to the emperor. Congressional representatives were not permitted to be students of The Order, allowing individuals not sensitive to The Light to continue to participate in galactic government.

Individual planets were permitted a sense of self-rule, provided they adhered to the rights and privileges outlined by The Empire. Planetary militaries were not permitted except for the smallest of security forces, and a growing Imperial Navy – independent of the Order – began to establish order throughout the galaxy and secure its borders.

By the end of the 9th century, the Empire stretched across more than two dozen bustling planets. The Guardian Order reached the height of its prosperity, ushering in a period of interplanetary peace unlike anything ever seen.



ONCE THE RUINS OF AN ANCIENT WAR, SELLONAE NOW THRIVES AS THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL.