

The Children of Whispers

A Tale of the Warsurge Omniverse

By: Caden Burkhead

It was almost time. After years of work, Michael could finally experience the fruits of his efforts. No longer must he take the disgusting concoctions of the bio-alchemists to stay awake working. There were no mech priests spouting religious nonsense while he oversaw their work. The stench of the cain beasts was not something he would miss either. The eclipse would be at its zenith in fifteen hours. Michael could not miss the debut of his masterpiece.

T minus four hours. Michael awoke to his mental alarm with a start. He had not heard that sound since he began his work. Michael had much to prepare and did not have time to spend on memories. Michael dressed for war and peace. T minus three hours. Michael prepared his life's work. T minus two hours. Michael met with the only four individuals higher in rank than him - The Aurochs. T minus one hour. Michael triple checked every cord and troubleshooted every piece of software. He looked out to the cheering crowds of demons, androids, bio-horrors, and his fellow liches. This was the greatest feat of their collective lives and the credit was all for him.

The clock struck 13.00 and the entire sun was covered by the moon. Michael flipped the switch. Such a tiny switch activated the hundreds of meters of metal. Blue light flashed and turned to purple, then settled on white. The Gate was open. The crowds cheered and The Aurochs clapped. Such pride filled Michael that he thought he could hear the Whispering One itself congratulate him. The rift was open and the Children of Whispers could traverse through the Infinite Dark - the home of Whispering One.

Michael would lead the initial entourage through the rift. He was joined by a squad of helios and lunas knights, a persuasive hel reaper known as The Deviltongued, and an annoying mech priest Michael knew too well. Michael stepped through the Gate into a world that was much darker than the fluorescent lit room he walked out of. The sky seemed to be permanently overcast with a sheet of grey clouds stretching to each horizon. Looking to the landscape, Michael saw a dead forest of ash colored trees sitting upon rolling hills. The air was chilly, like an autumn morning. Michael basked in the fresh air for a moment before his reverie was interrupted.

“You're too soft, Mikey.” The chipper mech priest teased, “You know what we have to do to this world.”

Michael scowled, but realized she was right. If the natives of this land did not destroy the landscape in the inevitable war, then the fleshgorger wurms and cain beasts surely would. Michael cast an incantation to expedite the group's movement. The mech priest giggled as she scanned the landscape, likely laughing at her superior. The Deviltongued ordered the helios knights to explore points of interest found by the mech priest's scans.

Before long, the group found a city a dozen clicks from the Gate. Rising above the treetops Michael could see stone walls reaching at least twenty feet into the air. He sensed the walls were

imbued with the arcane arts. In front of the walls were slums that housed sickly and poor individuals. The slum dwellers watched the entourage in awe and wonder. Some dared to beg for “just a couple drops” or “just one Crescent”. These people were pale in skin tone with thin faces and red eyes. When they spoke, Michael could see fangs in their mouths. Four on top, two on bottom.

Guards halted the group at the gate. They spoke in a language that sounded like a mixture of French and German. Michael could not quite understand, but the mech priest was able to decode the language.

Michael addressed the guards, “We are foreigners to your world. We seek an audience with your leaders.”

One of the guards ran into the city, while the other guards told Michael to stay in front of the gate. After some time, a unit of guards would take the group to a keep in the center of the city. The escorting guards did not just wear steel scale mail, but had accents with crimson cloth. The Deviltongued told Michael that these were royal guards and that they were in the capital of a country named Tivelsült. The mech priest alerted Michael that the people are human-like sanguivores.

Once in the walls of the keep, Michael ordered the helios and lunas knights to wait outside of any building they enter. Michael, The Deviltongued and the mech priest were taken to the central building of the keep to meet with the leaders of Tivelsült. They were led through winding halls past runners and other royal guards. The ambassadors were shown into a meeting room.

The room was well-furnished and sported many pieces of art. Upon the long table was laid a feast of live animals and soups of blood and flesh. Sitting at the table were seven well-dressed men, three well-dressed women, and a kingly looking figure at the heads of the table. They were attended to by servants and women of pleasure. The kingly figure moved his arm from one of his escorts and motioned to sit with a hand decadently covered in jewelry.

The three Children of Whispers sat and were asked what kind of food could be provided. Michael asked for a lamb to be prepared for himself and The Deviltongued requested a living person. The mech priest declined any refreshments by explaining she is made of metal. The kingly figure laughed at this and some of the other guests followed suit.

The kingly figure introduced himself as Fuhrer Alexänd Dracu and implored, “You say you are not from our world, I hear. One of your companions does look like a Daegos from our legends. And your cleric is made of metal and lightning? What a god you must follow!”

Michael explained their arrival and home world. The mech priest explained Whispering One and the religion of the mech priests. Alexänd seemed enthralled by their stories. He explained his own world. They were the Draculants who were a recently developed empire. They took the land from the humans, which are their primary form of sustenance. Alexänd also detailed the

Wülfin, half beast half men, and the Spectres. Each species vies for control, but there is a single empire that is comprised of all the species.

The Devil tongue engaged in diplomacy, while Michael and the mech priest were given a tour of the city and the Fuhrer's mansion. The mech priest made sure to drop a tiny drone to gather intel at each important place. Michael wrote notes on the culture of this city, the social and economic classes, the food, the architecture and more. The Children of Whispers left the next day to return to their own world with the information they gathered.

Michael looked at the landscape riddled with holes from artillery and entire swaths of trees burned. The land churned by the fleshgorger wurms and the air rancid with the smell of murderous chemicals. Michael reminisced on how the land in front of the Gate looked before years of war. He finally remembered what it made him think of: The Darkling Thrush by Thomas Hardy.

"Hey Mikey, get your head out of the clouds. There is still a war out there." said the mech priest.

Michael turned thoughtfully and replied, "Have you noticed how despite our superior technology and magic we still are having difficulty?"

"Sure, but that could just be bad luck or lack of tactics."

"I think the Infinite Dark weakens us or strengthens us to match the power of the denizens of the world we invade."

Michael looked up to the sky. It was the first time he saw space on this foreign planet. There were no stars. Only a consuming shadow and a question of what's beyond.

WARNING! THE CHILDREN OF WHISPERS ARE NOT TO BE TRUSTED. DO NOT GIVE IN TO THEIR INTRICATE LIES OR FLASHY GIFTS. THEY CONSUME AND ABSORB FASTER THAN MOST OTHER TRANS-DARK EMPIRES. DO NOT FALL LIKE THE GRIMM AS DETAILED ABOVE.