

# The Seige of White Bridge

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"Milord all is lost the bridge has fallen!" Gaspd the exhausted runner. Lord Tarien sat on the Ivory Throne of Cal-Thurin facing the exhausted messenger, who was splayed face forward on the expensive patterned carpet. Sweat had begun to pool around the runners knees turning the rug a deeper shade of blood red.

"Don't just lie there boy order the mages to begin the counter assault." "Yes milord." Came the hasty response the runner issued a sketchy bow and bolted out the large brass doors. Lord Tarien slowly rose from the Ivory Throne and walked down the marble stairs towards the large gilded windows that lined the left side of the throne room. Castle Baulfort had never been taken in a siege in its whole 100 year history and the White Bridge had fallen but twice to foes in its 500 years, only to be recovered each time by a valiant assault from the defenders. Standing in front of one of the great arched windows Lord Tarien, steward of the ivory throne and Lord of White Bridge gazed with his arms crossed out at the furious battle in front of the mighty stone gatehouse hundreds of metres below. Castle Cal-Thurin stood on the southern edge of White Bridge, at the foot of the sacred Baremount road that lead to the unnamed castle atop the entrance to the Deep World. The Deep World was a gigantic construct beneath Baremount that housed the purebloods, a race of people forgotten to most of the world, but very much in power beneath the forbidding Baremount. The purpose of White Bridge was lost in the mists of time as there were other ways to access the mountain, other than across the cavern that stretched below its mighty stone arch. However for some reason any assault that managed to penetrate the country's defences and make its way to White Bridge always sieged across the bridge. Never around. Turning his attention back to the battle Lord Tarien nodded in approval as the siege force was pushed back from the gate house with the aid of the mages guild. Bodies of the foeman flew in multitudes of the white stone and into the cavern below. But still thousands more pushed forward with frenzied screams to take their fallen comrades' places. "At least the mages are following orders for once." Tarien mused to himself. "Of course they are." Sneered a red cloaked man standing some ways behind Tarien. Whirling to confront the new comer the high lord's face stiffened as he recognised the Head of the Mage's guild standing beside the throne. "Belias... I told you to use the door like all others in this kingdom." Growled angry Tarien. The head of the mages guild was a striking man that would have been popular with the ladies except for a sneer hat permanently disfigured his chiselled face. "My good Tar..." the mage stopped short and stared confused for a second, then grimaced a second before a massive explosion rocked the castle. "What in the Gods names was that?" Bellowed the Lord Tarien as he pulled himself up off the marble floor. "Daemons lord." Answered Belias calmly dusting some grime from his intricately detailed red robes. "Daemons?" "Yes a crude form of insubstantial creature that can harness a twisted form of magiks, drawing it and feeding it from the ill will of all near by. They take men's darkest thoughts and amplify them, feeding of the warped energies that our brains put off." "How do you know all this?" questioned a suspicious Tarien as he fondled the hilt of his dragon sword. As with all the other Tarien Lords before him this Tarien was a master of the blade, and proudly bore the mark of the eagle on the back of his thumb as proof. "The leader of their forces told me as much when we met not a month ago at the start of the siege." Replied Belias with a dangerous smile upon his face. "I ordered that there be no conferring with he dark forces Belias. This is treason against my throne." Whispered Lord Tarien a dangerous tone taking his voice as he began to take stance, drawing his deadly Dragon Sword. "Oh but it's not your throne. Not any more Lord Tarien." Belias almost spat the last words. With a silent prayer the defender of Baremount launched himself at the robed mage. His whole body was moving in synchronisation, aware of every muscle Tarien brought his sword to bare on the mage, only to be stopped mid flight barely inches from his target. "What is this Belias?" he demanded "Call it a shield," sneered the mage in response as flames leapt up the blade lighting Tarien's arms on fire. "We have no longer any use for you." He snarled launching the screaming Tarien Lord through the gilded window and onto the bridge hundreds of metres below. "Quite a shame really." Murmured Belias as he stalked from the room setting it ablaze as he left. Upon the bridge the captain of the guard Caelem-du-Fonsac, swore an oath as he turned the burnt body over recognising the face of his Lord. Prying the Dragon Sword from Tarien's scorched fingers Caelem sounded the retreat to the second battlement abandoning the bridge for the third time in its history. "A