

The Chronology War

Phase Two: The Illuminated Many



**“An arrow is carried by the wind – a message by the heart//
Tell me Empress, which will prove your downfall?”**
-Canto 32:7, Book 3 of the Divine Word of Celestina

Rend Talon

Despite the promised potential of Tick Tock’s new Queen, numbers and charts were only pieces of parchment that did little to waylay the amassing throngs of marauders resting calmly upon the planes within clear sight of the newly constructed battlements atop the walls of the beleaguered nation’s capital. Helplessly, the few guards that had once patrolled the bustling cobble-stone streets of their gorgeous city watched as bonfires cast a demonic glow upon the armored creature standing before a writhing throng of excited ponies.

“Come! Come see how the once mighty cower before the new rulers of this realm,” Declared the winged monstrosity of a griffon known as Rend Talon, whom had developed a worshipful following by sycophants wishing to earn trinkets cast aside in his devastating wake. “Their precious Imperial owners have abandoned them to the wolves. Their pitiful dog pets thrown back to their mines with tails tucked between their legs. And not even the worthless, beaten so-called griffon tribes will do more than bicker amongst each other. Their lands will be ours.”

Word had spread to the distant lands about the supposed land of technological plenty that had withdrawn before this warlord into their last bastion of safety – the capital of Tick Tock itself. When those front gates burst open all the plunder that a soul could ever desire would be there for the taking.

So it came to be with the passing of weeks, a swelling of ranks was brought about by excited pirates, thieves and honest farmers turned against authority by gilded tongue speaking of past oppressions poured into the camps before those great walls. Taunts, arrows and gunshots were traded daily but Rend called to his men to wait for the proper time to strike.

“You have waited your entire lives for this moment. What is another month?” He admonished.

"Cry not Father // Weep not Mother //
Though your son has taken his last breath in this life //
Know that he now gasps like a newborn in another."
-Canto 16:291, Book 17 of the Divine Word of Celestina

Illumination



In the deepest brood sat the mechanical Queen upon her throne. The reward was immense but the task seemingly insurmountable. No standing army could be called upon to meet arms with the once bothersome foe grown deadly with the timidity of the kingdom. No, strength of magic and technological power would be needed to overcome physical might.

In front of her stood the most prominent of the Oligarchy of Fathers, Lord Swirl Wrench, who was the one stallion that had most reluctantly agreed to the Necromancer Flintheart's suggestion to instill something as pure as a machine with a tainted soul of a child. Still, bitterness would do little to turn aside the coming storm.

"M'lady..." The grayed horse began, drooping down before her with a dip of his head. "What is our first course of action? Give a simple command and I will carry forth your will unerringly. I will be your eyes, ears and hooves out in the world, you may trust me!"

"If only we could see the situation from a new perspective..." lamented the Queen outwardly. Crimson light upon her face turned to a brilliant cobalt when she sprung forward to pace at length where she could. Beyond the steps of her throne the wiring to her frame would prevent her from passing.

"An idea has come to us!" Gaspd the metallic creature excitedly enough that her vocalization circuits scrambled for a brief moment in a screech. "Bring me your head scientist, a surgeon and that damnable Necromancer." She quickly lifted up a hoof that bent with servos grinding at the ankle. "How loyal are you to us?" carefully murmured the mare in her electronic tone.

"To the death! Anything to save my people and my lands," assured the elderly stallion. Knees creaked with the best attempt of a bow he could give whilst holding back a pained grunt at his failing body's achiness.

"Steel your resolve..." whispered the Queen, reaching out to stroke his cheek with a cold hoof that left him shivering with fear. "I shall illuminate your path." she continued with an almost sad tone. Arms wrapped about the Elder's neck. Strength came to bear in the sharpest second with a crunch of a throat and the gurgle of a confused cry. Before the guards could even reach the couple she let the corpse slump to the ground.

"Carry forth my will! Gather those I have asked for," said the Queen with her face dimming to its sickly hue of dripping vitae. The guards made quick work of rounding up the requested individuals. Not even Flintheart questioned the calling; cheek curled back in a knowing smile when he viewed the slain body and weeping mares assembled to the side.

The surgeon, a brilliant mare by the name of Deep Cut gently went over the body with her hooves. She was the first to break the silence made thick by seemingly senseless death. "Why? Why did you kill this innocent man, you..." breath sucked in then she spat at the Queen, "monster!" Up to her hooves she rose, stomping them as anger flooded her face.

"Stay thy judgment mortal. Know this - the needs of the many will always outweigh those of the few. Or did you forget already that I too was innocent like him? Many more sinless will die before the month is out, but I promise their deaths will not be in vain, nor mine!" The Queen shifted her gaze towards the scientist, Bright Light. "Your task is to make another such as I with his soul. One that I may see, speak and live through. Succeed, and I shall reward you beyond imagination. Fail and...." the Queen stepped back up to her throne, slumping into it was if a great weight has been placed upon her young shoulders.

"Then it will have all been for naught. All of it."

"Necromancy is often seen as an evil, vile art dedicated to destroying lives and minds. But the Diamond Dogs often speak of the Yin and the Yang – two opposing forces. I believe we may have finally found the Black Art's sister.

-Head Scientist Bright Light

The Many

Another week was required to create something close to what the Queen had specifically asked for: a body for the Elder that she too could inhabit. Magicians argued over the dangers of having souls share a single space, and technicians doubted the length science could go to transmit knowledge over distances with such limited time. The decision was made that if there was an idea that could feasibly work, it would be embraced and integrated into the Model A-7 Stallion.

The Queen herself would serve as a hive-mind that would perform the computations necessary for the model to carry forth with its own thoughts and machinations. A new ore that hungrily absorbed channeled magic into it by the name of Demon's Blood would serve as the fuel-cell for the mechanical creature by creating a living field around it for the instilled soul to awaken and react in. An additional furnace would burn within its belly to provide steam for the body to carry forth with smoke hissing up in its wake. And lastly, a phylactery that rested atop its chest would rest the soul of the Elder.

That first trial run went exceptionally well. The Queen and the Elder both inhabited the same space in that Model, while she also calculated code within the palace walls. For the first time in months, she experienced the outside world through glowing eyes. Cool wind bit into her thermal sensors and the ground crunched beneath metallic hooves sending out plumes of smoke.

"It's perfect..." She whispered, turning at home to her gathered advisors. "Build me many."