



## The Rock

Humbly Submitted by  
Rathman VII

I regret to inform his Imperial Highness that his once mighty fortress of the Rock has become a refuge for madness.

As my great-grandfather suspected, his Imperial Highness' Noble House of Melanthias took responsibility for the fortress in order to coerce a sorcerous liaison with House Nuada.

As your Imperial Highness is, no doubt, aware, the Rock overlooks the only safe passage between the Inner and Outer seas. The fortress atop the Rock stands guard over that strait.

Once Melanthias occupied the stronghold, they began to subtly threaten and eventually tax the passage of Nuada's ships until a less formal alliance was struck. A small number of Nuada's sons and daughters were sent to dwell for a time in the Rock, mingling their bloodlines and providing Melanthias with the highest reaches of Elemental Wizardry.

Having obtained their goal, Melanthias now uses the elemental skills of Nuada to further refine and purify ingredients for their alchemical experiments.

During my stay here, I have been witness to no less than eleven unplanned explosions, three transmutations with disastrous results, an accidental drowning, multiple experiments in deviant potions, elixirs and ointments, and possibly the worst table in the whole of Gallidon. I do not exaggerate in this matter. The food here is unpalatable.

Of further concern is the matter of children. The sons and daughters of the Noble House of Melanthias form sexual liaisons with a completely casual air, begetting children with no care for documented lineage. The children are all well cared for by servants, but no one here can say with certainty which child is the product of which father. Or even if both parents are of Noble (Greater or Lower) Blood. The Melanthias seems to reward and promote his children strictly on the basis of what experiment catches his passing fancy.

In summary, I cannot in good conscious recommend that House Melanthias remain in control of the Rock. Like my father before me, I suspect they will one day create some experiment, open some sorcerous door, cause a cataclysm of such magnitude, that the Rock will be broken to its foundations and a mighty fortress shall be lost to his Imperial Highness.

*From Cartographic Voyages Touching Upon the Current Nature of the Empire*

*by Imperial Administrator at Large, Rathman VII*

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