

The Blue Knights in the Present Age

Lore Article · Politics

Summary

The current role, posture, and internal tensions of the Order of Vembryl in Year 2368 RSL -- a martial-arcane order built to police a world that no longer exists in the form it was designed for.

What They Were Built For

The Blue Knights -- formally the Order of Vembryl -- were created by the god Arcanthos to police the Orders of Wizardry and hunt rogue casters. They were given the Blue Vale, the only significant pass through the Drakepire Mountains, as their permanent station: a geographic chokepoint that gave them strategic leverage over movement between the eastern territories and the Settled Lands and, more relevantly, over any caster trying to cross that movement without Order sanction.

The Blue Knights were designed for a world with a functioning empire. The Weohstannuk Empire gave them institutional context -- a legitimate governing authority whose arcane regulations they enforced, a court that backed their authority when disputed, and a political structure that meant their presence in the Blue Vale was an extension of state power rather than a self-appointed monopoly on a mountain pass. When the empire fell, none of that changed mechanically. The Blue Knights still hold the Vale. They still inspect travelers. They still pursue rogue casters. What changed is the source of their authority's legitimacy, and they have spent approximately three hundred years deciding how much that matters.

The Present Posture

In Year 2368 FW, the Blue Knights hold the Blue Vale as they have always held it. The fortress is maintained. The inspection protocols are current. The enforcement of Order licensing requirements at the gate is, if anything, more thorough than it was under the empire, partly because thoroughness is what the Blue Knights have in place of institutional backing.

Their relationship with the current Settled Lands factions is complicated by the fact that none of those factions have an obvious claim over them. The Mage-Councils regard the Blue Knights as a useful enforcement arm and treat them accordingly -- which the Blue Knights tolerate because it is practically convenient, not because they have accepted the Mage-Councils' authority. The Kingdom of the Hart, which has never signed an Order-jurisdiction compact, regards the Blue Knights with the particular wariness reserved for armed organizations operating in adjacent territory on self-defined mandates. The Coastal Confederacy barely thinks about them at all, which the Blue Knights find both accurate and faintly insulting.

The Conclave's relationship with the Blue Knights is the most important and the most carefully managed. The Blue Knights were created to police the Orders -- including, in principle, the Conclave itself. This has never been tested directly. The working assumption of both parties is that it will not need to be, which is maintained by the Conclave never doing anything that would require the Blue Knights to decide whether they would act on it.

Internal Tensions

The Blue Knights are not a monolithic organization. Three centuries of operating without the empire they were designed to serve has produced internal factions that disagree, sometimes sharply, on what the Order is for.

The traditionalist faction -- currently dominant, holding the Commander's seat -- argues that the Blue Knights' mandate is unchanged: police the Orders, enforce licensing, hold the Vale. The empire's absence is an administrative inconvenience, not a fundamental change in purpose. They have been saying this for three hundred years, and the consistency of the position is both its strength and its most telling weakness.

A reform faction, smaller but vocal, argues that the Blue Knights need to redefine their relationship with at least one of the Settled Lands governing powers before someone else defines it for them. A martial-arcane order holding the only mountain pass without an institutional patron is, in this view, one bad Commander away from becoming either a mercenary organization or a territorial power, and neither is what the Order of Vembryl was made to be.

A third faction, which does not call itself a faction and whose members are careful about who they speak to, has been quietly tracking the evidence of Charoth's release and asking what the Blue Knights' mandate says about an entity whose methodology is the corruption of institutions. The Order of Vembryl was created to police practitioners of arcane power. Charoth does not practice arcane power. He operates through people who do. Whether this falls within the Blue Knights' remit is a question none of them have raised officially, because raising it officially would require the Conclave to give an answer, and the Conclave giving an answer on Charoth's release officially would mean the Conclave has acknowledged Charoth's release officially, which they have not done.

The Commander

The current Commander of the Blue Knights is **Aldric Venn-Sorn**, a human of Weohstan lineage in his late fifties, who has held the position for eleven years. He is a traditionalist by disposition and a

pragmatist by necessity, which means he holds the traditional position in public and makes the pragmatic accommodations in private. He is aware of the internal faction arguing for a redefined institutional relationship. He has not suppressed it, which is either because he agrees with parts of it or because he has calculated that suppression would make it stronger. He is aware of the third faction's quiet inquiries into Charoth. He has made no official response to those inquiries either.

Venn-Sorn has met Archmage Theodric Vane twice in the past decade, in contexts that were officially routine coordination meetings. People who attended both meetings report that the conversations ran considerably longer than routine coordination requires, and that both men left looking like they had said less than they meant to.