

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- Teymuraz attacks Coreoth
 - A Torenthi fleet will sail to Coroth (with all the panoply they can muster), along with stand-ins for Liam, Stanisha, Mátyás and Ronal-Rurik. The real Liam and his kin will go directly to Rhemuth via Transfer Portal from Beldour. Morgan is to be in residence at Coroth to welcome the Torenthi fleet and keep up appearances for any spies who might be reporting back to Teymuraz. The ruse may not fool him (for he knows that both Liam and Mátyás have used Portals to go to Rhemuth before), this production will keep his spies busy.
 - In case of trouble, Morgan tells Richenda to take the children and go to Rhemuth. When the Torenthi ships are sighted approaching Coroth Harbour, he, Derry and Laran ride to the docks to meet them.
 - The Torenthi ships are followed into the harbour by Byzantine ships, which attack both the Torenthi and the other ships in the harbour with Greek fire. Chaos ensues. Morgan spots Teymuraz on one of the enemy ships, rides his horse along a jetty, casts a lightning bolt at Teymuraz from the blade of his sword. His horse shies from a burning projectile from one of the *dromons*; Morgan keeps his seat, but his spell misses Teymuraz, who taunts Morgan from his ship as it rows out to sea. Morgan's attention is soon drawn to the injured struggling in the waters and dragging themselves ashore.
 - Rhafallia and many other ships are heavily damaged or sunk. Morgan, Laran, Master Randolph, Bishop Tolliver and others organize medical triage and care. Morgan pushes himself to exhaustion to help all he can, but the burns on many victims are dreadful.

Comments:

- ✓ Since Brother Theophilus (the “author” of the *Codex*) knows Teymuraz is in Byzantium by 1130, presumably Kelson, Liam and their courtiers also know that. They also know that he has many spies in his service outside of Torenth (this is discussed in *KKB*). Thus, a plan such as I propose is a likely precaution.
- ✓ Sending Richenda to Rhemuth not only guarantees her safety (and that of the children), it also is the fastest way to get word to Kelson of Teymuraz' attack.
- ✓ *Dromons* are Byzantine galleys of the period, and they have oars as well as sails, so Teymuraz could follow the Torenthi ships into the harbour, attack everything in sight with Greek fire, and row back out to sea.
- ✓ Burning projectiles (jars of the chemical and caltrops treated with it) are also documented in Byzantine military manuals of the relevant period.
- ✓ Brion cast a kind of lightning through his sword in his combat against the Marluk (see “Legacy”), so presumably Morgan could also do it. Most likely, his energy would be green.
- ✓ This is the scene for which I require Laran's presence in Coroth. Despite his use of Kelson's library annex, Laran doesn't seem to have made any effort to get to know Morgan and Duncan in the years since Llyndruth Meadows (for that matter, others on the Council haven't either). I've set up this plot to force Laran to work with Morgan in Laran's area of expertise (medicine, since Laran is a physician). It's intended to make him reconsider his old dismissive contempt for the half-breed Morgan and Duncan. Morgan's tendency to push himself to exhaustion (which appears in the earlier books) shows the depth of his desire to serve. This proof of merit, along with the evidence of their bloodline, is intended to make Morgan and Duncan acceptable as members of the Camberian Council.

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- .Teymuraz attacks Coroth (cont'd)
 - Derry collects damage reports (many ships, including *Rhafallia*, are severely damaged or destroyed). Some fires even spread into parts of the town from the docks and warehouses. Derry observes a sticky residue on many of the scorched surfaces of the smoking ruins of the port, and gathers one or two reports of successful uses of sand in putting out the fires, notably around the shop of a foundry that used their supply of sand (for casting moulds) to douse the flames on nearby buildings.
 - The populace is very disturbed by the strange traits of this fire: the sight of it burning on the harbour waters and the failure of the usual water-based fire-fighting efforts terrorise the people. Some are heartened by Morgan's dramatic effort to attack the lead ship, while a few mutter that it was a deception. Word also spreads of his efforts to heal some of the victims.
 - Knowing that the River Eirian is but a short sail but from Coroth, Morgan wants to get to Rhemuth to help with the defense planning, and Laran tries to convince him to rest first. After a testy exchange, a nearly-spent Laran agrees to take Morgan and Derry to Rhemuth via the library annex Portal, in hopes of finding Kelson or someone who can report to him. Morgan asks Bishop Tolliver to oversee relief efforts, with help from Hamilton, Randolph and his castle officers and staff.
 - The trio return to Morgan's castle, and Morgan uses his signet to admit them to his study. Morgan stumbles into the room, and between them Derry and Laran get him to the Portal. With Derry supporting Morgan, Laran takes the three of them to Kelson's library annex.

Comments:

- ✓ The fans may well be upset about the fate of *Rhafallia*, but having it also damaged in the attack would fit with Kurtz' usual practice (I think the Tropers call it "Anyone Can Die", at least in reference to characters.) No doubt a moving scene could be made with Rhafallia's captain dying of his injuries, or perhaps Morgan being forced to choose which to save, the captain or his son (readers met both of them in *Deryni Checkmate*.).
- ✓ The use of sand to put out the flames from Greek fire is mentioned in historical sources. A foundry would be an excellent source for a quantity of sand (sand casting is described in a book on the subject that dates from 1140, so the technology could presumably exist a mere eight years earlier, and there's some evidence the technology is far older than that. Derry's detective work is important, in part so that the fears of the populace about this new "magical" fire can be allayed (more on this later).
- ✓ Morgan will doubtless be torn over conflicting obligations. Having sent Richenda to Rhemuth, he knows Kelson will have some inkling of what's happened, if not the full extent of the trouble. At the same time, his people (for whom he is responsible as their feudal overlord) are suffering before his eyes, and he has the ability to Heal at least some of them. This might also be a good time to use his Healing openly in an effort to reassure his people about the good uses of Deryni magic. He will want to get to Rhemuth himself to help lead the defense (since he is Lord General of Kelson's armies), but if he is true to character, he will push himself to his physical limits.
- ✓ Laran has known the library Portal for several years (he uses it in *KKB*), so I send the trio there rather than Duncan's study Portal or the one in the sacristy. A bit of a wait will also be useful for the following scene...

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- Kelson's response to the firing of Coroth
 - Richenda's first news stirs Kelson to action. Arilan is sent to Beldour to tell Liam and Mátyás. Duncan (having returned with Arilan from the Council Chamber and his interview) saddles up to ride for Culdi, intending to meet Dhugal there (en route from Cassan/Transha) and attempt to Call Rory in Ratharkin and bid him get word to Laas. Haldane troops are preparing to head south towards Nyford and meet any enemy ships coming upriver, and Nigel and Saer are charged with keeping order in Rhemuth, especially protecting the Torenthi embassy and the *schola*. Warin hears of this and elects to travel with Kelson's forces to Nyford. Fr. Nivard is overseeing the preparation of the written orders for troops, and making occasional checks of the library Portal, while Richenda is visiting with Meraude, (who's expecting the birth of yet another child shortly). With Duncan going to Culdi, Cardiel is working with his staff (especially Fr. Lael), to assist Nigel in minding the capital.
 - While they wait in the library, Morgan comes to and invites Laran to read his mind about the palimpsest, recalling Arilan's offer to him years earlier and pointing out that they may as well make use of their time. Laran is reluctant, but Morgan insists he's willing. Laran then gets a summary of the experience, the Sheele Portal story, and Morgan's Healings before Nivard's head comes through the Veil.
 - Nivard assesses the situation and tells Derry and Laran that he'll bring help. Shortly he returns with Nigel, and the two of them take Derry, Laran and an unconscious Morgan through the Veil. Morgan is put to bed, and the others report to Kelson. Laran looks ill.

Comments:

- ✓ Arilan has served as ambassador to Torenth (he may still be at this point, four years on), so he's a logical choice to go to Beldour. Assuming there are no Portals in either Ratharkin or Laas (a reasonable assumption, given the Camberian Council's control over the information on how to create them), Duncan's plan to reach Culdi and have Dhugal join him in a Call to Rory is the next fastest way to get word to Meara; if they send the Call at night, it may even be easier to reach Rory in his sleep. I'm also assuming that Rory would have been at least partly triggered much as Nigel was, for the powers would be useful to him in his position as viceroy, and the distances mean he's somewhat on his own in Ratharkin. Heading for Nyford is also wise, for Teymuraz' ships could get that far up the estuary, if not farther. Nigel would likely have to assist Araxie in a Regency for the infant Prince Javan if Kelson is killed, so his assignment to Rhemuth is also sensible.
- ✓ Nivard acts as Kelson's secretary, so he may be away from the library, sitting in on any meeting Kelson conducts to make plans. This allows the scene between Laran and Morgan (which echoes Arilan's offer to Morgan in *HD*) to take place.
- ✓ Meraude's latest pregnancy will figure in on another plot resolution. It certainly seems to be possible (she and Nigel have had four children by the time of *KKB*, and in that book she confides to Jehana that she thinks she's pregnant again).
- ✓ Given Morgan's condition and the security parameters of the Veil, Nivard would likely summon help to get the three men through it, especially given Morgan's essentially dead weight. Richenda might also be summoned from Meraude's chambers, since it's her husband who is unconscious, but Nigel could more easily help with the heavy lifting (to get Morgan into a proper bed).

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- Kelson's response (cont'd)
 - Derry provides Kelson and the others with his memories of the attack on Coroth and his investigations into the nature of the Greek fire and the usefulness of sand to extinguish it. Kelson decides this information must get to Duncan and Dhugal at Culdi so they may pass it on to Rory, and they discuss attempting to join the link themselves to save time. The possibility that Greek fire is not magical is also cause for hope, and it is decided to emphasize this as far as possible in hopes of preventing another anti-Deryni backlash.
 - Arilan returns from Beldour with Liam and Mátyás, and the three join the discussion. The Torenthis wish to attach themselves to Kelson's forces, since they think Teymuraz is most likely to come to Rhemuth himself rather than go all the way to Laas. They assure Kelson that they have loyal retainers (including weather-workers who can conjure contrary winds) who can hold off any ships Teymuraz might send their way. Mátyás offers to make a quick trip to inform the Hort of Orsal about the sand, so he may also mount a defense of his port and douse the fires.
 - Laran catches Arilan's eye and via Mind-Speech pleads to speak with him. Arilan instead goes to his side and draws attention to Laran's plight, particularly to Warin and Cardiel. Laran is having a heart attack, and Warin's efforts are not fast enough to stop it. Laran "tells" Arilan that he was wrong about Morgan, expresses regret and conveys brief impressions of the Sheele Portal and the palimpsest before he dies. Arilan and Cardiel recite the Office of the Dead, and Arilan leaves to inform the Council of the day's events.

Comments:

- ✓ Per *King Kelson's Bride*, Derry's mind has been fully released from the control of Wencit and his kin, and I presume the others have taken Azim's admonition (not to tell Derry of how he was forced to stab Mátyás). Thus, Derry may even be willing to supply his information via Mind-Speech. Of course, not everyone in the room can understand it, so they may have to resort to more usual forms of conversation.
- ✓ In earlier books, Kelson and his courtiers have used long-distance Calls to keep each other informed, particularly between Rhemuth and the plain of Dorna. It may be possible to make some kind of tandem connection with Duncan and Dhugal in Culdi acting a relay station to reach Rory in Ratharkin, especially if Rory is asleep at the time. Such a conference Call would also be a natural progression.
- ✓ Weather-workers are mentioned in *KKB* ensuring good weather for Liam's *killijálay*, so a defensive use such as the one proposed here also seems quite appropriate.
- ✓ Informing Létald is mostly a precaution, though one that can be taken since he has shared the coordinates of his Transfer Portal with the others. Arilan has already made a number of trips via Portal, so Mátyás is more likely to go on this errand before Kelson's forces leave for Nyford.
- ✓ Laran's death does have storytelling reasons (it opens his seat on the Council and it reduces the number of physicians available to help in case of future attacks or other medical emergencies). It's also rather realistic, since Laran is in his sixties and has just spent a very long day helping Morgan and the others cope with the mass casualties at Coroth, as well as making several recent Portal trips. His communication with Arilan is not only expected under the circumstances (he likely knows he's dying), it keeps the palimpsest info in play for later...

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- The Road to Nyford
 - Arilan summons the remaining Councillors to the Chamber to inform them of the day's events. He urges Sion to warn his king and the folk of Concaradine in case Teymuraz moves against them while en route to Rhemuth. He shares Laran's last thoughts on Morgan, the Sheele Portal and the palimpsest, and the others urge him to contact Morgan again on the subject. Arrangements are made for Laran's family to hold his funeral, and the other Councillors help Arilan recover some strength so that he can return to Rhemuth and join Kelson's forces before they head south.
 - Kelson and his remaining courtiers (including Warin, Cardiel, Araxie, Richenda and Rothana) together with Liam and a returned Mátyás, place their Call to Duncan and Dhugal in Culdi. The McLains have meanwhile set up their own effort to Call Rory, with Warding provided by Ciard and several MacArdry retainers providing additional energy. The group does reach Rory in his dreams, and he learns of the events at Coroth, the strange Greek fire, and Duncan and Dhugal's plans to ride for Ratharkin so they may all three join Jolyon at Laas. Nigel and Saer are busily organizing the more mundane preparations so Kelson's forces can head south at first light.
 - Aboard his ship, Teymuraz angrily rejects warnings from some of his officers that their supply lines are too tenuous for the fleet to be split or even for it to go on towards Rhemuth after the attack on Coroth. He also dismisses concerns about the River Eirian becoming too shallow and too narrow for their ships. Nikephoros seems to support Teymuraz in the meeting, but also makes other plans.

Comments:

- ✓ Arilan has several reasons to Call a Council meeting at this time. Aside from informing the members of Teymuraz' return, he can get those members not facing immediate maritime invasion to make arrangements for Laran's funeral. He can also warn Sion (the Under-Chancellor of Llannedd) about the Greek fire, so that Sion may in turn warn his king (Llannedd is separated from Gwynedd by the River Eirian, which Teymuraz' fleet must take to reach Rhemuth). Finally, he can pass on the thoughts he got from Laran before his death: Morgan's personal merit, and the idea that the Sheele Portal and the palimpsest may be connected, giving the Councillors some things to think about: that Morgan and Duncan may be connected by blood to their patron's family (and therefore to Camber himself), and that they may be worthy of joining the Council as Kelson suggested to them years earlier. These points also shed new light on Camber's appearances to them in previous books: while Stefan Coram admitted to being the source of some of them, he never took credit for the ghostly impression of hands that they get when they Heal, and he was dead before Duncan received his episcopal ring, so he had nothing to do with the "message" from Camber that came from it late in *The King's Justice*.
- ✓ It may seem like a transparent device to get Duncan away from either Kelson's forces or the capital, but there is some support for sending him to Culdi and then Laas. In *KKB*, Teymuraz knew of the tensions between Gwynedd and Meara, and the Mearan troubles were of such long standing that it is possible he might wish to divide Meara from Gwynedd again. Prudence requires Kelson and the others plan for the possibility.
- ✓ Teymuraz is likely showing more signs of madness by now, so Nikephoros must act.

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- The Road to Nyford
 - Once the Call is completed and Arilan returns to the capital, Kelson's courtiers (and Liam and Mátyás) catch a few hours' rest before they set out for Nyford at dawn.
 - Morgan is allowed to sleep through the night since he was so thoroughly spent when he arrived. He wakes to find Richenda in his bed in Rhemuth. She tells him of Laran's death, the warnings sent both east and west, and the plans to march south, with Nigel and Saer holding the capital.
 - Teymuraz requires some persuading to refrain from making an attack on the Carthmoor coast en route to the River Eirian. He seems to be vacillating between a fierce desire to strike terror in as much of the populace as possible and a prudent conservation of his resources. He is also subject to more frequent and more severe headaches. Nikephoros begins to secretly control all the information Teymuraz gets, notably arranging for the command ship's captain to report directly to him. Teymuraz does order some of his ships to go on to Laas, but Nikephoros secretly orders the captains of the Laas contingent to drag their feet once Teymuraz' own remaining fleet is out of sight.
 - Word of the firing of Coroth begins to reach the rest of Rhemuth's citizenry. Not surprisingly, the stories are embellished in the telling. Most of the citizens are loyal to Kelson, but there are some few who are wary of the Torethis in the city and of the Deryni. The "unnatural" traits of the fire used on Coroth are most often cited by those who cling to the old fears of Deryni and their "satanic" powers. Haldane household forces are seen patrolling the streets of the city.

Comments:

- ✓ Among other things, the possibility of weather magic to speed the sailing ships drives the timetable for Kelson's departure. There's also a wish to organize protective measures in Nyford and its environs (such as acquiring quantities of sand, blocking the river somehow).
- ✓ There may be time during their ride for Morgan and Arilan to share information, at least regarding Laran's late-stage change of heart regarding Morgan. Arilan may also have to reassure Morgan that his insistence on having Laran read his mind did not cause to his heart attack (at least not any more than anything else).
- ✓ Teymuraz symptoms should be worsening during this time. It seems unlikely he could cope with the emperor's memories while aboard a ship (privacy would be at a premium, if it could be had at all). The emperor's soul might even be actively preventing him from concentrating, or interfering with his sleep (which also won't help him either).
- ✓ Nikephoros will be working towards some endgame in which he can hand over Teymuraz as a payment to secure the escape of his fleet back to Byzantium, possibly in a negotiated settlement with Gwynedd. At the same time, he must give Teymuraz the impression that he is loyal to him and dedicated to a successful invasion. It's therefore in Nikephoros' interest to get Teymuraz to head towards Rhemuth, but not with so many ships that the whole fleet can be trapped and destroyed in a too-narrow river channel. He also wants to have as few actual raids on Gwynedd (or any other places) as possible; the less damage is done, the less demanding Kelson will be in any future negotiations.
- ✓ Old fears will die hard, and folk have been taught to hate and fear Deryni and Torethis for centuries. A few years' peace won't preclude the possibility of fear-driven violence in Rhemuth.

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- Rioting in Rheemuth
 - Something finally triggers mob violence in Rheemuth (an actual attack or a rumoured one on Nyford, the arrival of refugees from Coroth, a Torenthi defending himself with magic from an assault, whatever).
 - Nigel and Saer have to protect multiple venues: the Palace and Saint Hilary's basilica, the nearby *schola*, and any Torenthi embassy or other Torenthi property in the city. There might even be extra complications (and attendant frustration) if the Torenthi embassy is some distance from the other vulnerable places.
 - Araxie and Rothana kneel and publicly pray before the Camber chapel (perhaps the outer door to the garden?) and display their auras in an effort to divert a mob intent upon destroying it. As they do this, Camber briefly appears standing behind them, to the consternation of the rioters. This gives royal and episcopal forces a chance to regain control of the situation and disperse the crowd.
 - A small band of rioters actually make their way into Duncan's study. Some of Nigel's forces rout them before they do any serious structural damage or find the Portal or the Camber chapel, but the tapestry covering the entrance to the Camber chapel is ripped down and burned.
 - Meraude goes into labour while this is happening. It becomes apparent that she is in some distress, in part due to the size of the baby and part because the cord is wrapped around the baby's neck. As the riots subside, Nigel comes to her bedside. In the end, Richenda is able to move the cord from outside, and Nigel uses his dagger to enlarge the vaginal opening, with young Briony to Heal the cut after the baby is safely delivered.

Comments:

- ✓ I'm not sure if it matters what the precise trigger for the riots is. I've given some suggestions, and the filmmakers could use any or none of them. The important point is the timing: they have to happen while Kelson's forces are away.
- ✓ If there's been any mention of local craftsmen who worked at the *schola* being disgruntled about the place, those fellows should play a part in these events, say by leading a part of the mob or helping some group gain entrance to the *schola* or the basilica.
- ✓ This scenario recalls a particular personal crisis for Nigel: the battle of Jennan Vale in *High Deryni*. Nigel's small force was routed in that encounter (losing more than a third of their numbers), much to his shame, and he himself was injured. Of course, he faced certain limitations in his defence: he was taken by surprise, since his foes were Morgan's tenants, who were fueled by a quasi-religious zeal and wielding clubs and improvised weapons (including farm implements like scythes). In short this was not the sort of fighting for which Nigel was trained. These riots might well remind him of that failure, and they'll present him with similar problems: untrained fighters motivated by fear who are also fellow countrymen. By handling this riot successfully, Nigel can make up for Jennan Vale, though of course Kelson doesn't feel he needs to, Nigel still might.
- ✓ The tapestry gets destroyed for a reason, which will become apparent later.
- ✓ Meraude's pregnancy complications and the solution are meant to resolve Morgan's objections to his daughter being trained as a Healer. I've intentionally sent the other Healers away, so that Briony is the only resource left. Later on, Nigel can thank Alaric for his daughter's help in saving Meraude and the baby, as well as offer advice on coping with Briony's growing up (Nigel has experience in that area, due to his training of pages).

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- Nyford
 - Kelson's forces set up their command centre in the royal estate of Carthaelle, on a hillside above Nyford. From its tower, they keep watch for the approach of the Byzantine ships.
 - Orders are given, not only for the precautionary gathering of sand in large quantities, but also for the dousing of all lights at night until further notice.
 - Azim arrives to join Kelson's forces, and he suggests a daring plan: create an illusion of the town further along the River Lendour, which will also appear wider than it actually is, to entice the enemy ships into shallow waters to run aground. Though some in this war council express doubt, Azim insists that they should be able to project an effective mirror image, making the wider channel of the Eirian appear to diverge to the northeast and the narrower one of the Lendour appear to continue north.
 - A further doubt is raised about the number of Deryni in their group being sufficient for this task, and the suggestion is made that Morgan attempt to unblock Warin, in hopes that he is Deryni and can be that much more useful, even as an untrained Deryni. Morgan does admit he's thought about the memory of Rhys' discovery and has an idea of where in a person's mind he might try this, but he can make no promises of success. Since it seems they'll be no worse off if he fails, and Warin is willing, the attempt is made—with success!
 - The party sail out into the river to get a view of the actual coastline and the town, so they have an image to work with in creating their illusion. Then they return to Carthanelle to rest and meditate until the ships are sighted.

Comments:

- ✓ The royal estate of Carthanelle, its hillside position, and its tower, are mentioned early in *In the King's Service*. Since the place was once Prince Richard's, it likely belongs to Nigel now (the name suggests an association with his Duchy of Carthmoor), and he may even suggest using it in Kelson's Rhemuth council.
- ✓ If a blackout of this kind was a good idea in World War II, I see no reason why it wouldn't also be suggested in this situation, even if it only provides a measure of concealment by night.
- ✓ Azim was deeply involved in the pursuit of Tedyduraz in *KKB*, and I expect he would be involved again. He's also an excellent person to suggest the Illusion tactic for tricking the enemy fleet into running aground.
- ✓ I suggest the trip into the river to get a view of the actual coastline on the basis of some reverse reasoning. Evaine was held to be particularly skilled in creating her "Brother John" illusion without any real person to imitate. This suggests that if our heroes have seen the actual coastline, it should be easier to construct an illusion that simply reverses the Lendour and the Eirian.
- ✓ Perhaps Brendan could be stationed in the tower, ready to Call to the others as soon as the enemy fleet is sighted. He might be relieved periodically by Derry, with Morgan in a low-level trance to help Derry make the connection if needed (much as was done in *Deryni Checkmate* and *High Deryni*).
- ✓ The power needed for such a large illusion could force the issue of Warin's possible Deryni powers (which was set up earlier). I cannot say for certain that an untrained Deryni could contribute more than energy or assistance than an ordinary human, but it seems likely. It is hoped that Kelson, Morgan, Liam, Mátyás, Azim and Warin would be enough.

Back in Gwynedd (cont'd)

- Nyford (cont'd)

Teymuraz' fleet arrives at Nyford. The first of the ships do run aground in the shallows, and Nikephoros takes advantage of the opportunity to have Teymuraz seized and blinded, and he orders the bulk of the fleet to row back south toward deeper waters.
- Under a flag of parley, Nikephoros offers the captive Teymuraz to Kelson and Liam, relating what he suspects Teymuraz did to the emperor and showing the hand gesture the child saw and made. He notes Teymuraz has been blinded, though otherwise intact, so he may be punished for his crimes according to the laws of either Torenth or Gwynedd. He also offers that later emissaries can discuss monetary payments, but he refuses to offer any information on the Greek fire or its implements.
- Teymuraz, insane and enraged at his plight, escapes his captors and summons monsters to attack his foes. Kelson and Liam defeat the monsters, while Morgan and Mátyás take down Teymuraz and Nikephoros himself escapes in the confusion, rejoining his fleet and leaving for Byzantium.
- With Mátyás restraining Teymuraz, Morgan blocks his powers, but he is shaken by what he reads in Teymuraz' mind. Morgan summons the others to confirm the presence of the emperor's soul in Teymuraz' mind, and our heroes learn of what Teymuraz did to the emperor back in Byzantium.
- Recalling what he read from the palimpsest about the stasis spell, Morgan suggests they consult the book again. The ethical problem of killing an innocent man (for the emperor is yet another of Teymuraz' victims) is discussed, as well as the real possibility that killing Teymuraz' body might not release the soul.

Comments:

- ✓ Nikephoros certainly has a meaningful name, though I did pick it from actual Byzantine history. “Nikephoros” means “bearer of victory”; the question is, victory for whom?
- ✓ I'm not sure it matters if the illusion works, or if this whole scene takes place at night when more mundane precautions (like dousing the lights) predominate. Our heroes might even use lights at night to confuse the enemy about the actual location of the town in stead of merely hiding it in darkness. It would be nice if the illusion was seen to work in the daytime, but the Byzantines might want the cover of darkness for their attack, and the costs to the filmmakers might be less as well. A lot depends on the budget.
- ✓ The blinding is also based on historical precedent. A number of Byzantine emperors and rival claimants were blinded to make them unfit to rule without killing them, especially once they'd been anointed and crowned and were therefore somewhat holy.
- ✓ Nikephoros hopes to start a dispute between Liam and Kelsoon over who gets to punish Teymuraz, in hopes that will give him cover to escape. Teymuraz provides that instead.
- ✓ Teymuraz conjuring monsters should come as no big surprise, especially after Charissa summoned some herself and Wencit had Rhydon summon one years earlier. This guy is another one who has crossed the Moral Event Horizon. Besides, the creatures have their sight, as well as their other abilities.
- ✓ I've rather fancied the block as a better alternative for incapacitating a Deryni than *merasha*. There's no need to worry about the dosage, or having to repeat the dosing once the original drug wears off.
- ✓ I also like the idea of both Torenthis and Gwyneddians getting a piece of Teymuraz; Mátyás because he is kin and Morgan as payback for Coroth and Derry.

