

The War of Dissolution Begins

It's said that converts are the most zealous, and Firefly was certainly no exception. When he returned to Focus, he began a campaign of extermination against, not only Wayfarers, but anyone not sufficiently godless. Of particular note was his treatment of the Misotheists, whom he pursued with as much hatred as his former coreligionists. To despise The Light was to acknowledge its existence, and Firefly would brook no compromise in that regard.

So ruthless was his persecution that many of his own advisors entreated him to stop. Some were genuinely disgusted by his actions, while others simply realized that the Traditionalists could be a valuable ally against the ruling hierarchy and knew that slaughtering their fellow Wayfarers was unlikely to convince them to render aid. Reluctantly, Firefly took their advice, but not without quietly noting which of these advisors was the quickest to gainsay him.

Meanwhile, the disparate traditionalist movements on Hearthside were beginning to gain momentum, helped considerably by the new influx of refugees on Hearthside fleeing the secular warlord states in the Outer Belt. Two individuals are credited with finally bringing these disorganized movements together, both of whom were moved to act by the scandal of Firefly's apostasy and subsequent rise to power among the secularists.

Iris the Hearthsider was a traditionalist hearthkeeper known for her fiery sermons condemning the hierarchy's acedia and greed. She was the first cleric to call the faithful to take up arms to overthrow the ruling clergy. Many heeded her call, but the war had yet to begin in earnest.

The other figure responsible for lighting this powder keg was Greenleaf the steadtree hermit. Steadtrees were mystics who dwelt in the trees along the banks of The River on Yih. Some hermits would gain enough fame to collect a few disciples, who would sit at the base of their tree to hear their wisdom, but most kept to themselves. Greenleaf, moved by righteous anger, descended from his steadtree and confronted the High Hearthkeeper in person, going so far as to call her a heretic, accusing her of abandoning the Great Commandment in the pursuit of worldly power. His show of defiance was the crack that finally caused the dam to burst.

Iris, buoyed by Greenleaf's actions, was able to convince nearly half of the Knights of the Sun to join the Traditionalists against their former brothers in arms defending the Bright Way's worldly possessions. Thus were born the Pious Dissolutionists, who formed a second battle front at Hearthside working outwards, just as the secularists pushed inwards from the Outer Belt. The knights, considerably weakened thanks to the internal schism, were unable to hold the line against the secularists, who were finally able to break through the border of Moonlitter. The War of Dissolution had begun.

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