

House Orin of Linon

House Orin was another of the [Delos](#) System's ancient houses, longer in-system even than the Marlowes, being a fixture of the old Anemas dynasty who ruled before [House Ormund](#) and the Aurigan Wars, though they only received the demesne of [Linon](#) in ISD 11081. There had been Orins in the Delos System when the planet itself was being terraformed, but they had long fallen from glory and repute. Their holdings on Linon were poor and far from populous, Linon itself being an airless moon orbiting the gas giant Omphalos on the borders of the system's outer asteroid belt. They had made their name and their fortune on the mining and sale of Linon's massive reserves of helium-3 and methane gas, but by the fifteenth millennium, the wells were dry. Their purchase of mining rights from the Mandari allowed them to get back into the map of Delian politics—a house ancient and far more noble than their current circumstances. Like the Marlowes—and unlike House Kephalos and House Ormund before it—House Orin was listed in the *Cinnabarad* (the Red Book of Avalon, the first list of the great houses of the Imperium), making them blood relatives of the Emperor and members of the Peerage. Despite this kinship, the Lords of House Orin were enflamed with jealousy, having been so long marginalized by the High Court of Delos System. Whilst Timon III ruled, the Orins consolidated power in the system's outer rim, such that by the time Timon III passed away and Lord Lucian took the throne in Meidua, the Orins were accounted the wealthiest and chiefest of the exsul houses, having brought the houses of the moons of Omphalos into alignment. Where before the exsuls had been scattered and prone to infighting, House Orin had organized them into a unified faction—known as the Moonlords—with power sufficient to sway even the Vicereine-Duchess.

Throughout the reign of Lucian Marlowe and of his daughter, Sabine II, the Moonlords grew wealthier and more influential, due in no small part to their closeness with the Mandari, who desired Delian uranium to fuel their ships. But [House Marlowe](#) also flourished, and grew closer to [House Kephalos](#) as a consequence, with both Lord Lucian and Lady Sabine II marrying daughters of the Duchesses of House Kephalos (as would become increasingly common with the latter generations of House Marlowe, culminating in the marriage of Lord Alistair to [Lady Liliana](#)).

This realignment of political power in the Delos System created a bipolar political climate, with the Moonlords and the other exsul houses balanced against the Duchess and her retainers, who were almost entirely based on the planet Delos itself, and who—like the lords of House Marlowe—were primarily archons and not baronial lords in themselves.

Shortly before the death of [Lord Timon IV](#), the father of [Lord Alistair Marlowe](#) and the grandfather of [Lord Hadrian Marlowe](#), the [Duchess Elmira Kephalos](#) had been summoned to [Forum](#) to attend the young Emperor William XXIII, who was but newly come into his inheritance. In her absence, Duchess Elmira had appointed Lord Timon executor of her estate, the duke in all but name. His sudden death at the hands of the Mandari created a power vacuum and instability in the Delos System—one that might have spelled the end of the Kephalos dynasty—were it not for Lord Alistair.

Led by House Orin, the Moonlords formed a coalition armada and went to war with the archons of Delos and the inner system, hoping to seize the central planet and House Kephalos's assets for themselves with Mandari support. Lord Thaddeus Orin, Baron of Linon, first sought to claim that he should rule as executor, being the senior-most of the Moonlords. But young Alistair insisted that his father's rights and privileges were his, and the archons of Delos—eager to keep power in their own hands—backed the young lord's claims. It is likely the archons of Delos believed the young Marlowe, barely more than an ephebe, would be amenable to their control. But young Alistair quickly asserted his rights and privileges as Lord Executor of Delos, and assembled an armada to blockade the planet and keep the Orin coalition from landing on Delos proper.

The bulk of the fighting occurred in the asteroid belt. Angered by Marlowe's blockade and general obstinacy, the Moonlords seized House Marlowe's mining outposts beyond the orbit of the gas giant, Omphalos, executing the soldiers of the various station garrisons and pressing the workers to labor for themselves.

The conflict culminated in ISD 15863—two years later—with the [Battle of Linon](#). Lord Alistair Marlowe, acting as the head of the Delian nobles, took a fleet to Linon and bombarded the palace of House Orin at Last Watch. Linon had no atmosphere of its own, and the palace—while mostly subterranean—was dominated by a series of great domes under the open sky. On Alistair Marlowe's orders, these were shot open, and sapping teams were sent in to drill holes level by level until all the air was drained from the palace. Baron Thaddeus Orin and his entire family died slow deaths by decompression as the winds

leached out of the palace at Last Watch.

