

The story of Grimwald

Chapter 10: Not so Lonely

We were introduced to our charges. There are the three who are from a place called Sembia. A merchant selling useless trinkets and his two servants. The merchant calling himself Goj Augusto Mizenmaster is dressed like some kind of fool in weird colors and shapes. He is an excellent host though making sure everybody is having enough food and wine and always a cheerful word about you and his wares. I almost feel like buying stuff from him and I think I might if he had something useful. Bruno has good armor and a sharp blade and has a good physique so he should be useful on our travels. The female called Rebecca reminds me a bit of Felina, no armor, no weapons, no strength, but Felina has proved herself useful so perhaps Rebecca will as well. I just don't see why there has to be all this singing and dancing all the time. If they were elves at least they could have claimed it's in their blood and they can't help themselves. Useless waste of time they could spend working. At least Rebecca seems to have a sense of duty the way she obeys quickly with a "yes master" at every whim. Bruno seems to be shirking his part of the work when his boss is not watching.

Then there is the alchemist, he smells funny, but alchemy is an honorable trade with many useful applications. I have heard it told certain acids can be used in metalworking and ore purification. I would not mind learning some of these secrets. He is very bookish and not the kind of person I would expect to see on the road, but I guess that is why he is coming with us. The worst of the lot is the fellow we are here to nurse along. He looks even more fragile than Reed, deadly pale and emacipated like he's been locked into a dungeon for most of his life. Then there's the haunted paranoid look in his eyes which will make everybody know they are after him. Good thing we can keep him out of sight! Well at least he is quiet and wary of anyone learning his secrets so there is wisdom in him. I wonder what kind of books he is carrying and where a person like him got them from. He does not strike me as either rich or influential. Strangely though on some level I feel a kinship I wonder where that feeling is coming from.

Before we set off with our barrels full of water and packs full of food there is some discussion as to how to arrange our affairs. Luckily the rest has seen the value of great weapons and armor by Jay's example. How proudly he wears them and how magnificent he looks! If would not wear such a silly smile he could be very intimidating with such gear. So finally they see the necessity of letting me work on our journey's and it is arranged that I shall work while the rest sleeps. Since Reed has been having these prophetic daydreams I ask her if I could wear her little circlet to see if it will produce a similar effect and she agrees. Given the fact that our charge is being hunted it is a good thing too we have this otherwise his enemies would quickly find us. Reed tells us we should be wary of becoming possessed. Amazing how clear she speaks this time and how inspired she is by hidden knowledge.

I am woken when the wagon suddenly tilts as we are crossing a ford. I hear some quick curses from Cuura and the horses rally to obey and save the wagon. The elf is babbling about birds, but I manage to fall asleep even though she starts a fuss about them. The food to my surprise is very tasty now the elf has had some time to do some shopping and Goj has contributed some of his spices. While the rest sets up camp I roll out my tools and set to work on crafting some more sets of tools with the aid of my divine servants. Few people realize the true importance of tools and the fact they have to be of an even sturdier metal than you are fashioning. It is simply impossible to ever craft dwarvencraft items with just tools. Luckily I know a thing or two about hardening metal so I apply myself to stoking the embers and

heating metal, while preparing the oil baths of various temperatures. In the middle of the night Reed notices some noises and forces me to interrupt my work. While I make sure the metal won't suffer she wakes the other's and they set out to explore where the noises in the distance are coming from. Pretty soon Cuura orders me and Bruno to join them since they found a strange phenomenon. It is like a giant molehill. Sand, clay, stones are just pushed to the surface from underneath. I pray to the Silent keeper to allow me to delve deeper into this mystery and I see magical forces are at work here. The strength of the magic is almost blinding, but I notice a current of energy flowing from where our wagon is to some spot under the earth. There is a necromantic and enchantment magic flow in it, but there seems to be something more alien as well. I cannot place it, but it makes my blood run cold.

While I am studying this energy Cuura calls to battle as further up ahead a skeletal giant breaks into the surface world. I have seen skeletons before but this one has a baleful red glow in the eye sockets and the pale blue energy floating around his bones bodes ill as well. Cuura charges into it and starts swinging her hammer. To my amazement some blows glance off. Most bones are not this resilient and when I get closer I notice the bones have started to petrify. How can something this old have been awakened? The blue mist spreads to the bodies of Cuura and Bruno and we notice that slowly but surely they start losing the battle against the possession as their bodies start rebelling and try to throttle the life out of them so only it will remain to control the body. Felina and I quickly cast protection from evil. We may be too late since their bodies have already been invaded... Luckily it turns out we were in time to save them. The evil power still needed to be fed to continue it's fight against their wills. With their bodies restored to them Bruno and Cuura manage to grind the skeleton to dust and Cuura makes doubly sure it will never rise again.

Upon returning victorious we are confronted with Jay foaming at the mouth with a wild look in his eyes attacking bushes and stones. Felina tries to calm him down by words and magic but he continues his wild dash with eyes rolling wildly in his head striking at shadows. No wonder they are paying us so much for simple guard duty if this is what we have to come to expect at night! Reed and the elf have caught some people who were sneaking around and Reed hands me an intricately rune inscribed magic disk which according to her holds foul magic. She tells me to break it and after some sturdy hammer blows it starts to split and finally breaks, but still Jay raves on in the distance. Not knowing what to do we keep watch so he doesn't do himself permanent harm and after a while he starts slowing down and seems to be coming to his senses again.