

The story of Grimwald

Chapter 13: Entering the twilight zone

Well the insanity has subsided again for the moment. Reed's visions imply we need the little runt. Too bad, but if all are needed we will have to accept this burden. I guess his intimate knowledge of foul fiends might prove a deciding factor some day.

Finally we are informed about our cargo apparently there are four books in total not just the one Weldin told us about. I wonder if he knew, I think so. He did tell the truth as well since it is imperative we bring the book which seems alive since it keeps on writhing to Candlekeep for safety. Louis tells us the other books are there for protection and that he hopes the sages in Candlekeep can restore an ancient binding ritual which is starting to fail.

According to Louis they have kept this evil in check for quite sometime. An impressive feat for a race as volatile as humanity. I guess it must have been the Elves who organized it at first and the ritual has been failing since the elven court fell. I wonder if it really fell or if the elves just abandoned it. The elves are decent craftsmen, but they lack dwarven tenacity! I should look into what really happened some day.

The first book bears the symbol of the sun. Even though the sun was cast out of the earth by the Soulforger and thus clearly an imperfect creation it is nonetheless a great work unparalleled since it's forging. It is a great bane to many foul beings and as such a great ally in wars against the foul greenskins, but I wonder what purpose it has in this setting. I perform a brief prayer to the silent keeper so I may understand the secret of the forging of this great work. When I touch the book I feel the difference between me and the earth as I never have before. I know I am of the earth, but now I feel clearly set apart, as a gem which has been cut or metal which has been smelted and polished. I feel as if the sun, the very light is what sets me apart. For a moment I have the blasphemous thought that the sun is life, but then I realize it must be the fire of the Soulforge which I mistook for the sun. But fire is nothing without craft to shape the materials in the forge. This craft I feel as well. I feel as if I am light and the world is grey and the undead and evil are the darkness. I feel the fire of great crusades against the darkness, the sun which burns away the evil and the craft to forge the fire into..... halfway I realize the fire has carried me onwards and I stand in a half finished circle with arcane symbols. As I hesitate in confusion I feel the charge dissipating as I break the cadence of the incantation. Fortunately I feel no backlash. I feel as though I am a weapon, crafted by the light and ready to strike.

I also realize that neither Cuura nor Felina has managed to harness the power of light into a weapon since the power is flowing away without control, but Kendalan seems to recall how the elves of old once stood against the darkness.

The book of the dead almost takes the life of Reed and even after we pull her away she almost goes into the silent realm. For a moment I feel the risk is too great, but then I remember my visions of the halls of the ancestors and feel comforted by the memory. Dumathoin who is the lord of the sleeping waiting to be reforged would not let me fail in my duty to him. Besides how can one deny such an opportunity to delve into this great mystery? As I touch the book I become aware of life, but in an oddly opposite way as when I touched the book of the sun. Rather than standing out in a gray world I feel that life hinders and blocks one from the truly interesting eternal realms. I feel the great ancestors coming closer, the warm protection of the elders of the clan. I notice worries and fears falling away from me as I approach true

neutrality, the divine key to true insight which I now see can only be achieved in the freedom offered by death. Remembering what happened to Reed I stand firm in my duty to my group and people. It is as if death somehow follows my resolve. While the fire swept me along it has to be my resolve which sets this heavier energy in motion. I become aware of moments of perfection around me, a dead hare over yonder hill. Disturbed rest, beings fragile in their imperfect rest, on the brink but unwilling. I feel the wind of death gathering in me and I sense their swaying to the wind. They seek to hide from death in the shadow of the abomination. The abomination which lies outside the eternal domain. I become aware of some chaotic life talking to me and I feel the pure knowledge and clean mind shattering as my will to hear what life is saying disrupts the calm.

The final book is that of the brotherhood. At first I feel it very strongly. It is as if I feel the rock, how it is under tension of immense pressure, yet riddled with caves and tunnels. I feel the fault lines which can split the rock. But somehow the rock is not rock and caves are not caves and the fault lines are in this world, but what are the things beyond? What are the powers? I am baffled by the knowledge which for now lack the understanding to grasp. The Elf seems to understand though. Grandfather used to say elves are part magic so perhaps that is what I am lacking.

We need to decide what to do. Wisdom prevails and everyone makes an offering to the silent keeper for the ritual of the runes. I feel the acceptance of Dumathoin as the power of the rune sticks grows in my hands with each offering. We are told we do not need to seek out the lair of the undead, which was revealed to me when I held the book of the dead. When we ask where to seek the lost dwarven relic the runes say above, crystal, below, lost, hold. I pray to Dumathoin and the ancestors to guide my interpretation. With an unnatural clarity which must be inspired by the ancestors I recall stories of the hearth mother of how our clans came to the north from Shanatar. "We passed by places holy to the silent keeper and took nothing from his temple, but left the best tool of our craft as a sign of acknowledgment that we could not surpass his crafting." From what I gather of the location of the falling kingdoms of the north it should be under the High Moor. I had so hoped never to see that endless desolate place again!