

The story of Grimwald

chapter 27: Intermezzo

Before we set out the elven High Priest, who must have recognized Reed as one blessed, bids me to give my circlet to him. He gages the magic in it and pronounces that very soon it's protection will not suffice to hide us anymore and it will become useless to us. He forebodes our enemies will overtake us before we can reach Candlekeep and we will not be able to stand against them. He then invokes the divine powers and they answer in a manner I have never witnessed before and only heard of in legend. The very earth and all upon it quivers and bends it's power to support the ritual. The circlet grows in size and might and becomes a metal band securing the vile book in it's chest. The secret powers of earth have triumphed momentarily over the vile book and contained it, but there is no telling for how long.

I intend to return though and learn more of what is hidden in the writing on the elven caves. Often have I wondered why my ancestors coming from Shannatar and High Shannatar did not settle in the Green Fields or High Moor, but rather passed them by to seek homes in regions seemingly more perilous where giant and greenskin roamed. Perhaps there can be found some clue as to this mystery...

We set out on the road to Nashkel and I notice that the elven high priest did not trust the secret of the book to remain within the weaker minds of our companions. From her actions I see Reed still has recollection as well as I. Apparently only those who have the support of the gods can bear the weight of this knowledge and keep it hidden.

But forewarned is forearmed, at least if I can find the time to make these arms in Nashkel. As we close to our goal the patrols of our enemies will become more frequent and there won't be time near to Candlekeep to build and recover our strength. We must prepare to withstand the siege of evil and become a bulwark.

Even Snake seems to be trying to arm himself with knowledge. Often I see him for long hours exhausting himself trying to wrest knowledge which is obviously trying to escape his foul clutches. The way he looks you would almost think the book was written in Celestial. The Hidden Keeper teaches us that knowledge can be laid in the path of the worthy, but also attained by hard labor. At the end if his resolve does not peter out he will wrest the knowledge from the book, but has he the besides the will also the strength needed to overcome the obstacles on the road to wisdom?

I spend some time working on ammunition and designing a powerful suit of dwarven armor to shield me from the storm of blades we will have to weather. When while performing my prayers the saga of Hrimbir springs to mind. How Hrimbir and his companions were trapped on the great glacier by some many tentacled monster and how they were never able to strike a death blow, but merely to lop of tentacles coming for them until they found a way to escape the ice caves in which the beast had trapped them. Yes this is the same, our enemies cannot be defeated, but their tentacles can be lopped of. Weapons rather than armor should be my focus for the times ahead.

It will take the Red Wizards two months at best to find out we ransacked their hold, but by then the trail will have run cold. There is no rumor of dragons living in the proximity. The soldiers here are from the foul country of Amn where much darkness is. The very humans who crushed the empire of High Shannatar, but it is unlikely they know much of what happens in the far north and our mission to Candlekeep. This is the best time to make our preparations.

Apparently the mayor has to grant permission for me to purchase the deep ores which can be used to make cold wrought iron weapons. Weapons whose strength comes directly from the earth rather than from the working of the metal. Proud weapons to bear. I hope Felina will succeed soon. Meanwhile I shall start on the ritual for Dumathoin to bless my tools and working on the silvering

and a good stash of Dragon's breath bolts and arrows with Paul, since he might decide to move on with another caravan having experienced how dangerous our company is.

I often try to speak to Jay to guide him, since he may have to become our new warleader if Cuura's corruption continues. Alas ever since he learned there is going to be a tournament he just practices his stances and moves. Worthy indeed is such dedication to his craft, but as usual with him rather short sighted. Perhaps after his trials he will be humbled and calm enough to listen to my advice. I am worried though since trying to temper metal overly much may cause it to break. Of late Jay has seemed rather absent, perhaps a victory will restore his strength.

I am asking Cuura to spend some more time in the smithy. I have been able to hire some helpers for a few gold per day for the lot of them so I don't really need her that much. On the pretext of enchanting her shield and later her hammer and sword I will try to open her clouded eyes again. Her shield I crafted into a beautiful, bas relief, rearing black stallion she can witness that Dumathoin too is a god of beauty, and much more practical beauty than the mere human gods! My craft, in the honor of Dumathoin, will make her gear the envy of many a man of arms!