

Grimwald's thoughts part 36

Our leaders decide we should turn towards the Blighters lair. One puzzling item of the Blighter is a pendant showing an insane face, fire and a broken tree. If the broken tree indicates the Blighter, the insane face could indicate a Duergar. The fire could be a red Dragon or an Fire Elemental or a Sorcerer or some such. It is still a bit vague, but clear enough to make me pray for Dumathoin to shield us from fire every dusk.

Among the items recovered from the Blighter is a gem pendant. When I wear it the voices of the ancestors become even clearer and my thoughts deeper. This must be an amulet of wisdom! I can see the party as a whole better now and my earlier foolishness of trying to turn them all into strong warriors. I feel more control over the ancestral whispers telling me about all that has gone before.

My thoughts stretch further into the future. I have learned how to work the metals Dumathoin has hidden under the mountains and have managed to retrieve his most treasured gifts. I am well on my way towards finishing my graduation weapon and the plans are laid for my graduation armor. In a few years I can become a master smith. My knowledge of the runes is deepening and although much still lies ahead of me I master the theory if not the practice. It has become clear that even though I started with many years of military training ahead of my companions their single minded drive has given them many skills and they have become so battle hardened my use in the front line is diminishing compared to the shattering blows of Jay and the charges and threat of Cuura and her horse. Now that the group is becoming safe with the protection I crafted for them and the prayers which sustain our mission and they are reasonably well equip ed I have to redefine my role.

Our short trip down the mine shows clearly that the others are quite incapable of fending for themselves in these environments. They will have to rely on my knowledge and I shall ask my ancestors for more guidance in this field. Even though I have had thorough training in religious affairs, it is clear that I cannot hold a candle to the Voice of the Gods in this field so I will leave her to specialize in this. The arcane is more the realm of Felina and I shall content myself with the basics. The party knows little of history and none have the aid of the ancestors I have, Reed and Jay are even completely unfamiliar with the events in this part of the world, so I shall shoulder this burden for them. The knowledge of the rejects Moradin cast out of the earth is best left to Kendalan.

Although Snake probably knows something of the other planes, he is the last person I want to rely on when his doom catches up with him or his taint overcomes him. I must prepare for that day. Besides the harder I study the sooner I will be able to fathom the depths of the Book. The Book which has not been read for hundreds of years. The secrets hidden within the mind of... What was I thinking? Ah yes perfect my defenses against outer planar powers. When we are back on the road I should spend some more time studying the books which bind the Book.

Our journey is cut short when some nature being requests a detour. Messy nature always getting in the way of organization. We trudge through the green stuff for a while when I notice there is some kind of system of logic hidden in the green stuff. I cannot quite put my finger on it, but I start seeing how things relate, how Kendalan's claims show some underlying logic. Even though the surface of the earth consists of rejects on the road to crafting dwarves even those rejects were crafted by Moradin with some goal and purpose! It is imperfect and has strayed further through out the ages but underneath I sense the deeper thoughts.

Snake informs me this forest has as its purpose to clean the earth from deep taints in the land and is slowly marching. Apparently akin to some Lantanese invention called a vacuum cleaner, which apparently seeks to harness some kind of void magic or air elementals sweeping things into Limbo. I had always dismissed stories of Lantanese inventions as being impractical and harmless, but this is quite a terrifying creation. Apparently it is even worse than disintegration where at least dust is left, but here nothing remains. Brr. Seems more like something Talos would inspire rather than Gond.

We arrive at the Ghaleb Dhur the others told me about. It is really huge and weathered, ancient. The Ghaleb Dhur deigns to speak to us and hits me with the words "New Shanatar rising". After hearing this my mind is unhinged. The ancient home of our people we abandoned thousands of years ago to rise again. This is an event my mind cannot truly grasp. The many wars we fought against dragons, drow, cloaklers, elementals and Djinn to be finally be brought down by treacherous humans, our former allies. To return triumphant after being pummeled and dwindled down through out thousands of years. Could this come to pass?

But the price is a terrible one. A vow must be broken. Words are a mere reflection of knowledge and knowledge is the glue that holds our universe together. A broken vow means the loss of place and purpose in the universe. Being lost, doomed, outcast or as Reed would put it bad karma. Still is it not worth it? Can good come out of sacrilege or will it doom and taint all that comes of it? Will I doom merely myself, this company or even my entire clan or even hold by doing this, yet is it not all a small price to be paid gladly for our return to our ancestral halls renewed in strength, numbers and glory?

Is this the result of traveling with others like Reed and Snake that slowly we all fall to a curse and taint? Have I been a fool to accept the company of outcasts and now become like them? Is this the burden I must bear? Will they teach me or will I teach them how to deal with doom and taint? I can still escape. I hear it in the words. I can still escape and become a honorable crafts-dwarf, I swore no oath to our leaders, Felina doesn't even like leading anyway. Perhaps I should run, but won't I be doomed even deeper for allowing evil to fester in our ancestral holds?

The others seem to be having discussions of their own and try to help me, but they do not understand. Nobody but the Ghaleb Durh understands, they are too young to understand. My life seemed to be going so well, on my way to becoming a master smith and rune caster. A respected member of my clan and the dwarven people. Now this happens. After preparing for 40 years I am only a few years away only to have it all snatched away.

Will I sacrifice myself and even my belief in the sanctity of vows and knowledge to restore fallen Shanatar? I regretfully feel I must say yes. I go along fearful of how far the doom will spread and if I will be able to turn back when it turns out to engulf more than I want it to and even if I will ever know...

Even though I have set myself on this path towards my doom my Lord has not forsaken me yet and supports us in battle with a Bullette. That evening as I pray many more secrets are revealed to me. The miraculous prayers which can shape even the hardest metal (I had been wondering how I could work the adamantine nuggets) and transmute stone, but also how to draw in the power of our heroic ancestors, the legendary warriors in Dumathoins halls. Dumathoin apparently agrees with my sacrifice and wishes for us to complete it. But I wonder in what role I will be allowed to continue serving his wards.