

44: Knowledge

This day passed rather uneventful. On our way to the dwarven tower we passed through a Gnomish village. The village blended in with nature in an almost eerie way. No paved streets, the buildings almost exclusively build underground to form a forest like, but ultimately defensible living space. After finding directions to the inn we drove toward the outermost regions of the village to find a big barn that was used as inn for us big people.

Almost immediately a few gnomes appeared and showed us how to care for our horses and kindly asked whether or not this would be a long or a short stay. I assumed they wanted to know if we left the next morning, later on I understood that the gnomes perception of a short time is completely different then ours. Anything shorter then a few weeks is considered a short stay with them. Anyway, we were more then welcome to stay and in the evening people would arrive to trade with us.

We used the remainder of the day to care for the horses and hone our fighting skills. We also found out that this inn was located in the anti scrying area surrounding the tower that the crow lady talked about. Perhaps it makes sense that village is placed just outside the sphere of magical influence, but close enough so that this inn is placed exactly where it is.

Later on after the nigh fell, the gnome elders and traders arrived. These helped us gaining some clue about what secrets lurked inside the tower that awaited us. In short, it was dangerous, fewer people returned then came in. Almost all looked restless and some even looked content in a strange manner. The thing virtually all of them shared was the fact neither of them wanted to discuss what happened inside.

Besides these facts the gnomes weren't able to tell much about the current occupants of the tower. They remembered the party that cleansed the tower some 15 years ago and told us a story of an old man carrying lots of chests and a big stone inside the tower and later came out carrying nothing. But again, these shards of information do not provide us with much to work with. One small clue was left in the vicinity though. The large rock that the old man carried was planted in not to far away from the village and Kendalan, Zhae and I decided to take a look. It took us a 15 minutes walk to find the stone planted in the middle of a copse of trees. Kendalan found it strange that the rocks wasn't covered with moss, but to my eyes it seemed like a normal rock. We returned to the village to tell our companions and in the village I was able to trade the forget drugs from I retrieved from the Shar followers during the fair against some doses of anti fatigue potion and a big floppy hat that held a strange allure to me. The hat was a bit to big, but the gnomish ladies quickly fixed that and wearing that new hat on my head just right. I also caught a glance from Rebecca, she definitely approves of the hat too.

The next morning we left for the village and decided to pay a second visit to he rock. I can't remembered what happened exactly but somehow people started touching the stone, according to Reed this rock wasn't from this plane. We all took turns and touched the stone. When it was my turn I prayed to Tymora and took my chance, when I touched the stone I felt something living inside. A voice spoke to me in my head. "Luck has nothing to do with it" it said. So much for my prayers to Tymora. To confuse me even more it spoke about choices and it told me to show mercy to those who didn't deserve it. With all this wisdom imparted in my head I retreated from the stone. What wisdom has the stone shared with me. Fortunately for my I wasn't the only one confused about the stones message. Kendalan was clearly confused as well, yet Grimwald seemed to grasp more about the knowledge he received.

We started to travel towards the tower but the strange words echoed trough my mind. I started a discussion with Grimwald about the concept of mercy and goodness. Off course I

exaggerated my moral issues a bit, hoping to confuse the dwarf. I tried to convince the dwarf that goodness is being pursued out of selfish reasons. Doing good grants you chances of fame and glory and ultimately delivers you a good reputation, women and a good future for your soul in the afterlife. Again I exaggerated my points, for somehow just doing good without acting purely for personal gains somehow feels compelling. More and more I must admit feel that it is possible to have fun doing good things. Surely it delivers me respectable fights, plenty of opportunities to hone my fighting skills, the respect of women and good bounty. Still the entire discussion ended differently than I expected. I tried to rock the dwarf and Reeds firm believes in goodness as an entirely selfless way of sacrifice. But besides from utterly failing in that part, my debate trying to undermine the moral foundations of goodness only convinced Kendalan that he was pursuing the wrong goals. Somehow I managed to turn Kendalan to the good side.

Come to think of that, an outcast with an infernal heritage turning a lonely elf to the good side. Clearly these people are beyond me and did I mention seeing a strange smile on Reeds face?