

Journal of Ambrron Arneion, Nobleborn, Spellblade

Book the Fourteenth

With Credit to

Avalon Games, for the parchment background

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Chapter the Thirteenth

It has been some few months since I set forth on this so far fruitless journey, which was so very recently plagued by disaster.

For most of the journey, the weather was reasonably pleasant, and water crossings were generally placid and easy enough.

There were bandits and wild, diseased animals, but both brutes were quickly dealt with by sword and spell, in which I played some part, among a seasoned crew.

However, after weeks of crossing the Illiac Bay, our fortunes turned against us, and a storm swept up out of nowhere. The crew fought a brave and desperate battle, which I could hear, now and again, over the sound of the storm, as I had been ordered out of the way, having no skill in the arts of sailing.

Sad as it is to report, after several hours' desperate battle, the ship capsized with a loud rending, which I heard opposite my cabin.

Of my survival in this, I can thank, as in many things, the harsh but fair training I received at the hands of my Mother and Father. Yes, even the possibility of a ship

capsizing had they given me some, albeit brief, instruction.

And so it was that I stood and, grabbing my stool, opened the port-hole of my cabin, and thrust first the stool and then myself, carrying only my silver staff, with thoughts of using it as a tool and my day pack, through.

It is hanging to that stool, and swimming as desperately away from the sinking ship as I could; for I knew that the sinking of the ship would draw nearby cargo down with it, that I survived.

I regret that I could not save others, but I feel no guilt, for I had not the opportunity; I saw few others floating on the water, clinging to their own pieces of wood, and no boat or life-raft.

From there, we were separated by the storm, and if any yet survive, I do not know.

Thanks and blessings to Arkay, who rules over Life and death, and to whom I must credit my safety.

Clinging to a piece of driftwood, I was swept onto a small cove, centered around the mouth of a cave. No sooner had I fled inside - For it does

not shame me to admit that I had quite nearly drowned, and even iron discipline could not keep me out in water any further at that time..

In any case, immediately after fleeing inside, the mouth of the cave collapsed inward.

Fortunately, there was driftwood enough to make a fire, and the floor was reasonably clean dirt.

The piled skulls in the corner made me wonder what might have called this cave its home, before the entrance collapsed.

Chapter the Fourteenth

The cave lead into a dungeon; those places where reality takes on some aspects of Daedric realms. Blunt weapons, I should not, are not something I have been trained on.

Of my spellbook, only three spells survived the tremendous weather; the circinate Shock, Slowfalling, and Chameleon.

The cave also contained iron weapons and an iron curiass. But, as you may know from reading my journals: as payment for my gifts of greater stores of magicka, regeneration, and even more rapid healing during rest, I am forbidden iron, leather, chain, and axe; all these base things.

Pestilent bats, rats, and a sorcerous imp were slain by staff and magic. Wounds and injury were taken, and places to rest were found.

A thief and taker of heads was admiring her collection; we had some disagreement over whether mine would join it, which I won through magic and a few good staff hits.

I had still found no arms I could wield besides my staff, nor armour I could wear.

Ravening vermin attacked me; I slew them. I found a steel saber on an archer, with which I slew a warrior who approached while I slept.

The howls of a maddened orc were heard as I slew a man- and mer-eating bear, then a rogue. I found a longsword; slower than a saber, but of more impact.

Another blood-encrusted bear and more diseased vermin tride to slay me; I narrowly avoided a skeletal warrior.

Two maddened archers, driven beyond tactics by the madness of the place, fell to my spells and blade.

I slew more vermin and an imp... And there, the exit.

I rest only long enough to recover my wounds, before seeing to what is outside.

Chapter the Fifteenth

Outside was only level, snowy ground, covered in tracks both humanoid and wild animal. For lack of a better direction, I consulted my compass, and travelled south.

Soon, I found myself entering the farming environs, and then the town itself, of Gothway Gardens. Here I found information of where I was, and the nearest city, one 'Chesterwark.'

From here there is little of note as I proceeded from town to town, resting at times, until reaching Chesterwark, divesting myself of useless items and receiving in turn some two thousand Septims.

Now, I ask you for a moment to picture myself in such circumstances as I had: a steel longsword, a few arrows, and a tower shield, and not but one steel auldron I could afford and wear in all of Chesterwark.

My course, then, was clear. I had to relieve my circumstances, and raise my standing. And what better way than to join the Knights of the Dragon, famed order of my Bretonian homelands, and slay an Orc Warlod?

The greatest quests are said to contain the greatest rewards, but as I

will reveal, in this quest, my luck was not readily apparent, and I

found little of worth.

Save for the one strange thing at the end of the quest...

Chapter the Sixteenth

The dungeon was contained in a ruined castle and tower, with a name I only recall ending in Web. It was a correct and appropriate name for the dungeon, which seemed to largely consist of long, inter-connecting corridors reaching down through realms best left unnamed.

Everywhere the work of necromancers was apparent, skeletal warriors of fixed grin and fearsome aspect rising up to slay me, only to fall to sword and spell and bloody battle.

Treasure was piled here and there in the stronghold, oft guarded by the undead. But of orcs, I found few, and only at the last, and the mages named as conspirator, only some curious fragments of parchment, which found explanation at the end.

I shall transcribe here some of the words found on the parchment.

"...found wandering, speaking in words of madness..."

"...at times, the madness clears, and true and eloquent speech appears, although bereft of connection to reality."

"Ultimately, of no real use, even of

insight into the mind of an orc, as the subject has long since lost his."

"...a combination of calming spell and mental inducements, the result being the beast spoke eloquently of slaughter and conquest. Of little use."

"Our small cabel, conquer Daggerfall? The idea seems the barest madness, yet it returns in my dreams..."

"We can do it! An army of orcs! Fierce! Unstoppable! Controlled by our puppet!"

One parchment contained only the name of the Daedric prince of destruction repeated over and over

In the last and final room, I found my answer to this madness.

Orc guards, outside the room. Inside, spiders, in case the prisoner escaped. And the "Orc Warlord", in truth a grunting, near-mindless prisoner in a cage, repeating ceaseless words of slaughter.

I had found a steel longbow; eight of my arrows found use that day.

I returned to the surface, returned to our knightly guild hall in Chesterwark, and received the steel cuirass I had commissioned.

Chapter Seventeen

My parents were harsh but fair in training, and their training is why I survived that place.

I have skill in all the arcane arts, and so it seemed good and useful to join the Mage's Guild. Not under my original papers, but under new ones. Besides them having been lost, it was likely known in certain parts that I was on some sort of highborn assignment.

In addition, of the most useful spells are ones created by you, for your situation. And thus, I purchased a spell that caused a yet more rapid regeneration, and another spell for immunity to paralysis for some seconds. I had no wish to be stricken motionless by wretched spiders the size of a dinner table!

Upon approaching the quest-master of the guild, I was immediately given a quest to cast the circinate sleep spell on an important client of the guild. She had been cursed with sleeplessness, which could only be broken by a spell of slumber.

I was then asked if I knew the spell; I inquired as to the closest

magical guild to Grayway (that being her town of residence) where I could purchase it.

The travel, along road, village, town, and inn, took some nine days, which I found uncommonly restful.

The spell was acquired, and I proceeded to Grayway, negotiated entrance to the client's house, and found her, somewhat stressed, in her attic.

Her demands for the sleep spell were somewhat erratic, and I quickly acquiesced.

Along the way, I got in contact with a friend of a friend I had been referred to. Unfortunately, their business, or lack thereof, would soon take them out of Daggerfall entirely. Nevertheless, we had some discussion about certain situations of concern.

I returned to our Mage's Guild of Cheterwark, and received my payment.

Chapter the Eighteenth

There comes advantages to being a recognized knight; respect, regard...free rooms at any inn within the region. Which, I must admit of practicality, has at least as much to do with travelers feeling safer with a knight to protect against any attacker, as with regard itself.

The tangential benefit is this: I was asked to safeguard an archmage as he began meditation to enter the Astral Plane, as his body would be vulnerable while he did so.

I could definitely see the benefit.

His meditation would take some three hours, so I resolved to spend the next three hours in the entrance hall of the guild. As, otherwise, they would have to come through the walls, and that too would quickly alert me.

The entrance hall was cleared, and I made ready.

Assassins with drawn weapons and concealed faces appeared around the first hour. They would have done better to come in as ordinary travellers...

I struck the first blow, and cast my spell of Combat Regeneration. We fenced, then, the four of us, myself standing firm to stop them, trusting in my spell to keep me alive; and they, attacking furiously to slay me.

But, I survived, and they did not.

After another two hours, I was given a steel cuirass as reward, which turned out to cast Iron Will on the wearer when worn.

In the victory, I also gained a steel pauldron, and again some two thousand Septims from sale of the arms and armour of the assassins. Steel, iron, and leather being steel, iron, and leather.