

Handout 2 Brother Wulfram's Journal

Second of Winter's Ebb

Tonight, the soldier Dolf called on me in my study. I was expecting him if truth be told. After he returned from foraging with news that his companion, Piri, had been savaged by an owlbear, he had grown distant and isolated. His soul was troubled, but I did not wish to force my help on him. I knew he would come in time.

But Dolf did not come to discuss Piri's death. Instead, he told me a singular tale and brought me a strange artifact. He said that, after Piri was dragged away, he had sought shelter in a hillside cave. There, he said, he found the bones of the ancient dead. Unsurprising given that these lands are lousy with the barrows of the Sunderlander clansmen who ruled them. But in that particular burial cave, he found a fabulous, jeweled dagger.

He had kept the dagger hidden away for the two weeks since his return. He claims that he thought of it often. That he feared for its safety so much that he checked on it constantly. He mistrusts it, he said, and fears that he has angered the spirits of the dead by taking it. My intuition told me there were details he was withholding. There is guilt in his eyes, more than befits robbing the ancient dead. But I did not push him. It seemed to take great strength of will for him to tell me his story and greater strength still to leave me the dagger.

The dagger. I dislike it. It has the feel of magic, though I dared not touch it with my bare skin. I bade him lay it on my desk. I will show it to Bartoz on the morrow. He is as keenly interested in history as he is a talented smith, and he may recognize it.

Fifth of Winter's Ebb

What a dream I had! I have never put much stock in dreams. Some of my fellows seem to think the gods speak to us in dreams, but I have always thought of them as the hallucinations of strained mind trying to put itself in order. Mortal things. But this dream! I refuse to believe this dream came from my mind, though it certainly did not come from the Shining King or His Court. Already, the details are fading from my mind. But not the meaning.

I was alone. I remember that I was more alone than ever I have been. The Shining King and his Saints were nowhere in that total darkness. They had abandoned me. Abandoned the world. We had been left to fend for ourselves against the fiends of Hell. But I was not sad. No. I was angry. I was angry at the gods for turning against me who had always been so faithful.

I came then upon Brother Aravis in the darkness. And I could think of nothing except that he had filled my head with lies. That it was his influence that made me waste my life in the service of callous gods that care nothing for the suffering of the mortals under their care. I came up behind him then. He did not see me. I raised my hand to strike him dead. And in my fist was that dagger. With its golden hilt and green jewels.

These are not my thoughts. I have wavered in my faith in my life. All men do. But I have never lost my faith, nor have I ever held such anger for any living person before. Least of all, Brother Aravis. Brother Aravis who was a father to me after mine had been taken from me so cruelly. Wise, kind Brother Aravis.

That dagger is an object of evil. Of that I have no doubt. Were the weather fairer, I would have it removed to the temple of my order in Blackwater Bridge. I would make the trek myself. But it will be a month before the winter breaks yet and this winter has been brutal with its sudden storms. Yet, the dagger cannot remain here. Perhaps it must be melted down and its remains buried in the deep woods. I will ask Sir Arpaad to call upon me tomorrow and discuss the matter with him.