

October 6
The Rumor and the Impachi

I awoke with a start. Such visions of horror and pain, what do they mean? A village in which I've never seen, in flames, people running in terror as a large figure roams freely. Maybe this is a warning. Or maybe this is happening somewhere right now! I jumped to my feet, grabbed my staff, and ran. Running was not a big deal anymore. After I gained these cursed powers, my speed, agility, strength and senses all got incredibly better. Right now, my senses told me East, and so I ran East.

It's been a month since I last parted from Bristol, and the familiar comfort of my new and old friends, on my quest for the Crystal Claw Staff. And lately, I've been so far off track that I feel as if I haven't moved at all. Over the next hill, I saw smoke. Too much to be from a campfire. I quickened my already blinding speed, and made it to the top of the hill in mere seconds. And there, I saw it. The small village in my dream, currently ablaze. And there was a large flaming figure running through it after screaming villagers. I recognized the beast as an Impachi. As far as I know, The Impachi is not a very threatening creature. Made entirely of wood, it takes a mortal shape. And with it, it can burst into flame at a given time, making it deadly, if angered. How this creature became mad and attacked the villagers is a mystery. I wonder if...

I shook the thought. Time is wasting here, and people are dying. I ran into the town. The Impachi seemed to notice me coming. It let out a tremendous roar, and charged me. I quickly dodged it with ease. It turned around and through a fiery punch at me. I dodged again, and turned. I knew a way to tame this beast, it is not a way I prefer, but it will prevent further harm from befalling these people. I kneeled down and began to chant.

Power of Water, Day be Day
Grant me the Power to Crush those in my way.
Water so cold, waves to submerge,
I command thee, Now, Water Spirit, Emerge!

As I finished the chant, a large torrent of water busted from a nearby well, and splashed before me on the ground. It rose again, this time to form a human-like figure. Forgive me, Nais, for using the Element in such a barbaric manor.

"Now go, Extinguish the Impachi!" I commanded it. It charged, like a wave would crash against a boat, at the Impachi. It collided, and there was a loud hissing. The Impachi was put out. It returned to its normal, wooden state, slightly wet. It looked around confused, and with a small grunt, turned and lumbered off. I turned away, only to see the Elemental creature I summoned standing idol. If only I could tame these elements better...

"Put out the Fires!" I commanded. It exploded on spot. Not what I meant. Only a moment later, it began to rain. I shrugged at this, and looked around. It seems I had an audience. One elderly man stepped forward.

"As the village elder, I extend our thanks to you for saving us in our time of need."

"'Twas nothing, sir, as I am merely doing what I swore to do." I replied.

"Please, accept this as a token of our gratitude." The man held up a small silver square. I took it,

knowing that a refusal would be an insult to these people. I examined the small object. It had strange markings on it.

“What is it, if I may?” I asked.

“Why, this is a rare Tharenian Spell Card. By understanding this language, and reading it while you hold it, it cast spells so powerful, even the mightiest of mages could not cast themselves.”

“I can’t thank you enough, but can you tell me what it says?” I asked. He shook his head.

“Alas, I cannot. But I know a Sage who may be able to help. Travel due north until you reach the shore, then go West and you will see a village. He is there, and can help you. Should take ye about a days walk.”

“Thank you again, I will pay a visit to him.” I said, as I turned to leave. I stopped abruptly and faced the man.

“Perchance, do you know of the whereabouts of the Temple Of Chaos?” I inquired. The man looked shocked at this statement.

“You do not wish to find and enter this Place, do you?” He asked in a warning kind of way. I nodded.

“Aye, I do. I carry with me a burden, and as rumors have lead me to believe, this Temple holds the key to releasing this dark curse.” I explained.

“Wait, you are... the Keeper of the Darkness?” He asked. The small group started to whisper amongst themselves. I swallowed hard.

“I am.” I declared. At this statement, the whole group knelt before me, almost in unison. I shook my head.

“Please, arise. I am no different from yourselves. I am just another mortal with a gift.” More like a curse, I reminded myself.

“Words of a truly good soul. Then, do not let us keep you from your task. This sage you will find, he may know the location of the Temple.” The man said. I nodded.

“I appreciate your help. I hope your village stays safe.” I said. I turned and began walking. The man called out from behind me.

“Be cautious, for every time Evil is destroyed, it leaves a void for a greater Evil to fill its spot.”

“I will remember this.” I called back. Once I was out of sight of the village, I took off again at the blinding speed. This trip should take me no more than the night, at this speed. I smiled to myself. Another village safe from harm. Another lead, bringing me closer to my goal. This may be the beginning of a truly great adventure.

I wonder what angered the Impachi...

October 7

The Three Questions Out Of Many

I reached the village by dawn, ‘Twas not a hard task. It seemed harmless, quiet and peaceful. In the center of town, there was a robed man standing. This must be the sage, I thought. I walked towards the man, and I could see him smile.

“Greetings, Caius.” He said. I stopped mid stride.

“How do you...” I started.

“Know who you are?” He finished. I nodded. “I am the Sage you seek. I know all and See all. I know why you are here, and I see the path you will take.”

“Great! I could use some help. Can you tell me where the Temple of Chaos is?” I asked, continuing forward now. He nodded.

“All will be revealed soon. Follow me.” He motioned. And I followed. He lead me to a small shack not to far from his spot. I assume this is his shrine, sort of. It looked too old and beaten to be a shrine. I entered the small hut, and was surprised. Everything inside was shiny and new, like polished gold. The outside appearance was merely to through people off. Clever.

“Thanks, I’m glad you like it.” I chuckled to myself. He offered me a seat, and I took it, folding my cloak neatly over the back of it. He took a seat opposite me. A large crystal ball sat on the table.

“Now, ask me your questions.” He offered.

“I have so many, first...” I started, but he held up his hand to silence me.

“You may only ask me three questions. Normally, I only allow one, but because you are The Chosen One, I will allow three. Choose carefully.” He explained.

“Why?” I asked. I slapped my head. I hope that didn’t count.

“Yes, it does count. My services are helpful to all people who come to seek it, but it comes with a price. The power it takes me to do this does not recharge so quickly. So I must limit myself.”

“That makes sense.” I said. I thought to myself. I have two questions left. What are the two most important things I need now. I need to know the location of the Temple of Chaos, but I need enough information to explain how to get there, all in one in one question.

“What is the easiest way to get to the Temple of Chaos?” I asked. The Sage smiled.

“Well thought out. ‘Tis quite easy. Go North across the ocean. You will come to a large village known as Copenhagen. From there, travel East for a spell and you will reach Windy Pass. From there, ‘tis just a short distance to Rock Falls. The way from there will be revealed at high noon.” These directions seem easy enough. Should take me no more than a few months to reach it, even at a high speed.

“Thank you, now for my second, I mean, last question, I...” I stopped myself. Again, I must think of the perfect way to word this, otherwise, I will not get what I need.

“Where can I learn everything about Tharenian?” I asked. He looked at me with an amused look.

“Unfortunately, there is no such place. Tharenian is acquired, say, more than learned. It will be revealed to you in time. On your journey to the Temple, I see you figuring out and using the Tharenian Spell Card to get you out of a situation. You refuse to use the Dark powers you have, but you take the hard way, and don’t. I must say, you have not been using your powers. You fear if you use them to much, you will lose control again. This is possible...” The Sage seemed to wonder off in thought. I knew my que to leave.

“Thank you, you have helped me so much.” I bowed to him. He waved his hand.

“You are most certainly welcome. Now, I will offer you one small question. A look into the future, if you say it as such.” I stopped. There is one thing I wouldn’t mind knowing.

“What events will occur on the day of my return to Bristol?” I asked. The man laughed.

“This I cannot reveal to you, for it would not be fun for you to know what is coming.” I nodded in agreement.

“Aye, this is true. Thank you again, sir” I said. I walked towards the docks. A large boat was preparing to part. I caught up with the captain and requested to accompany him across the ocean. He agreed, as long as I am able to assist when needed. With this agreement made, the boat set sail an hour later. ‘Twas truly exciting, knowing now that I was so close to achieving my goal, and finally being free of this curse! But with the winter season approaching, I wonder how difficult it will be to travel. Only one way to find out.

With that thought, I settled into my bunk and fell fast asleep. After all, I didn't get much sleep last night!

October 31

The Art of Bluffing

I arrived at port early in the morn. The ship did provide safe passage for me to cross the water. As it appeared, this small town looked like it was celebrating something. Today is All Hollow's Eve, maybe that is why. I headed towards the inn to room for the day, and to find my land legs. 'Tis a most unusual feeling to walk on land after spending near a month on board a ship. As I neared the Inn, I heard a voice calling me.

"Oy! Traveler!" I turned towards the familiar voice. Lady Snowfire approached me, and a small group of travelers followed behind her.

"Good day. I haven't seen you since we parted ways near Bristol." I responded to her. She nodded.

"Myself and a few friends were heading to my land not too far from here for a few drinks and some relaxation, would you be interested?" She asked me. I nodded and responded almost too fast.

"Aye." She smiled.

"Great, follow us then." And so, I followed.

Not even an hours walk away, we reached a small cottage on a hill. By the looks of it, it had not been used in years, or it was decorated far too well. I approached it with the group, thinking nothing of it. As we stepped inside of the small house, I saw perhaps the second wondrous thing in the world. The interior was filled with barrels labeled "ALE." I stared in disbelief.

"Wow..." I said. Lady Snowfire laughed.

"Why the speechlessness? We need a little relaxation every now and again." I nodded in agreement. And so, with a full mug of Ale, we all toasted, and so began the celebration. All but one of these people were unfamiliar to me, but we made acquaintances quite fast. I found it quite strange that the group that followed Lady Snowfire were all on the same quest. To find someone they've been searching for for a while. But I knew not why Lady Snowfire was questing. So, with curiosity bottling up, I asked.

"So, why are you out and about? I thought for sure you'd stay in Bristol to Protect the Egg." I asked.

"Egg... oh! No, I had to find... something." She sounded unsure of herself. I don't know if it was the Ale getting to me, as I finished of my fourth mug, or just her reassuring expression that made me cast the thought aside like a stone to a pond.

"Aye, were all on a quest, then." I stated.

As the day turned into night, I felt really good. By then, I've had quite a few mugs, and was beginning to get tired. I stretched, and finished off my drink.

"I think I'm going to rest a while. I have to keep going tomorrow. It's a long trip yet." I said. Although it didn't really sound like that to the others. My speech was horrible. Blame the ale, I thought. No, don't blame the ale, its innocent, I argued back. This was when I knew I was done, I'm arguing with myself. I stood up and headed towards the door.

"I thank you for the entertainment, Lady Snowfire, but I must be off." She arose to her feet

instantly.

“Oh, please! Don’t leave quite yet. We were just getting to the fun part.” She said with an awkward smile. Normally, when she smiles, it leaves me weak in the knees. But this was different. For some reason, I didn’t have my emotions take over, and stare. Why is this?

“What kind of ‘fun’?” I asked, looking for something I didn’t know what was yet. She smiled again, and I noticed something that I didn’t ever see before.

“When did you get a gold tooth?” I asked. I don’t remember her having that, as many times as I’ve seen her smile. She immediately stopped smiling and got a serious look on her face.

“I’ve always had this.” she said. And still, I could tell that something was not right. I didn’t know if it was the ale, or what. Damn this obsessive drinking. I think even Thoren would frown upon my condition now. And that man can drink! I have to figure this out. I’ll ask a question, and depending how she answers, well, It may help. I just hope this isn’t some kind of joke. I thought back to when I was in the presence of the sage, and had to ask the right question. I have to get one that will help.

“I can’t even think straight.” I said. I looked around, and saw a larger guy locking the door. Where did he come from? It was then that I realized it, and I was certain, even in my drunken stupor.

“Where am I originally from, Lady Snowfire?” I asked. I know she would know, because I relived that story to her so many times before.

“You never told me that...” She replied. Maybe I didn’t, I thought. Man, my head hurts.

“How many drinks have you had?” I asked. Why this mattered, I don’t have the faintest.

“You know me, I don’t drink.” She said with an uneasiness in her voice. Whoa! Ok, now drunk or not, I know she loves to drink as much as I do. I then came to these conclusions. Either she’s brainwashed, or this is a trap.

“Who are you?” I asked, with as serious a face as I could. She looked me straight in the eye.

“You know who I am.” she said. I could tell by the tone of her voice that she was getting agitated.

“Enough playing around.” Stated, in as clear of a voice as I could. It was against my morals to threaten someone, but this obviously wasn’t Lady Snowfire. I pointed my finger at the floor next to her and said, “Strike.” A dark beam of energy flew from my finger and hit the floor, leaving a small hole. The room went deathly silent. I looked at her.

“Who... Are... You?” I asked. I could see the fear in her eyes now. And that’s what reassured me that she was an imposter. After all the time we spent together, and she seeing the absolute worst I could do, there was no reason for her to be scared of such a small spell. Silence still held in the house. I have had enough.

“Darkness clouds my vision,
The Light shall purify.
With a simple task,
Reveal the truth to my eye.”

As I finished the spell, I saw her figure fade and so did the others around. An Illusion spell, I thought. As their true forms came into focus, I saw a crimson red and black color on each of their figures. It was then I knew what I had gotten myself into.

“Draco Disciples.” I said. And their was much laughter.

“Yes, and we have you.” The lady that was Lady Snowfire said. She must be the leader of this

small group. I quickly did a head count. There were eight of them. I like those odds. The more I can fight now, the better. Now with the power I have, unlike the return to Bristol the previous year, when I was ambushed by three of them, I could easily take an army of them.

“What do you want?” I asked. I stepped back and tripped over myself. It’s near impossible to keep your balance when you’re a little tipsy. I looked up and they all hovered over me.

“How can you fight when you can’t even stand?” They all laughed. So that was why they gave me Ale. They knew if I couldn’t think straight, they’d have a fighting chance. So what do I do? I had a sudden burst of inspiration.

“There’s just one problem with that.” I said. I arose to my feet as quickly and as smoothly as possible. The small group backed up a step. I turned to the head lady, and with a steady voice, I said...

“I’m not that drunk!” Immediately, I watched as a look of fear spread over her face, and the others. I rose my hand, and began to build the energy into a dark energy ball. The leader screamed, and I laughed.

“You better run away.” I taunted. Their was immediate scrambling, and the group headed for the door. Just to make it good, I yelled.

“You will learn that no one can escape the mighty wrath of Caius Shadowsworn!” And with my other hand, I began to move it in different directions, that made no pattern or path.

“Run Faster!” I yelled, “ I want somewhat of a challenge.” The last of the Draco Disciples left the door, and I stopped. I fell to the floor, unable to stand. I then began to laugh. I laughed so hard, my sides began to hurt. I can’t believe that worked! I totally bluffed them out. I sat up and looked around. In the corner there was a bed. I think I’ll stick around a while. Something tells me they won’t be back.

I walked over to the bed and sat on it. Another day, another near miss by fate. I began to worry that the Draco Disciples may actually get me one day. I saw a small piece of paper on the table. I walked over and looked at it. It was written in Draconian, or whatever Talia called that language. I’ll decipher it in the morning. It’s probably plans or something. I took the paper and put it in my bag. I went back to the bed and lay upon it. Maybe I should lock the door, just in case they’d come back. I rolled over to look at the door, about to get up. But sleep snuck up and I was out.