

I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I WANDERED, MAD, IN THE DESERT. THE KINDLY PRIESTS OF THIS TEMPLE FOUND ME, BROUGHT ME WITH THEM ON THEIR PILGRIMAGE, AND NURSED ME BACK TO... LIFE, IF NOT HEALTH, SENSE, IF NOT HAPPINESS.

I KILLED HER. I KNOW THAT, YET CANNOT GRASP IT. THE LIGHT, THE BRIGHTEST JOY OF MY MORTAL LIFE, AND I KILLED HER. EVERYTHING SHE CARRIED WITH HER SNUFFED LIKE A CANDLE.

PERHAPS, ORB HAS FORGIVEN ME, SEEN THAT I NEVER MEANT FOR IT TO HAPPEN. I THINK SO, FOR HE SAVED ME IN THE DESERT, LED THE PRIESTS TO ME. AND, WITH THEIR CARE, AND MY SENSES REGAINED, HE ONCE AGAIN GRACES ME WITH HIS LIGHT. I AM NOT FORSAKEN.

I AM GOING TO DIE.

THE GUARDIANS OF THIS TEMPLE, AS THEY HAVE BECOME, HAVE ASSURED ME OF THIS FACT. MY OWN DIVINATIONS CONFIRM IT. MY STRENGTH FLED LONG AGO, AND IT WILL NOT RETURN.

I AM NOT SADDENED. IT IS TRUE, AND TRUTH IS, WITHIN ITSELF, BEAUTY.

THE TEMPLE HERE IS OLD, BEYOND MY RECKONING. THE GUARDIANS TELL ME THEY RETURNED TO IT AFTER A LONG ABSENCE. FALLEN TO RUIN AFTER CENTURIES OF DISUSE, THEY HAVE REPAIRED IT AND ENLARGED IT IN RECENT YEARS, CREATING ANEW AN ENTIRE LEVEL. TOGETHER, WE RE-CONSECRATED THEIR SHRINE IN THE NAME OF ORB, AND ALL THE OLD GODS – GODS THAT HAVEN'T BEEN INVOKED FOR CENTURIES.

THEY WISH TO INTER ME IN A PLACE OF HONOR, AS A KINDRED SPIRIT, FOR, IN MY STUDIES, I HAVE FOUND A MEASURE OF THAT WITH WHICH THEY GLEAM. THE HIGH MAGIC. THIS PLACE IS FILLED WITH IT, WITH THE MINGLING OF ARCANUM AND DIVINITY. IT IS THEIR PURPOSE, THEIR BURDEN. IT HAS MADE THEM MORE THAN MORTAL – IF THEY EVER WERE, TO BEGIN WITH.

THEY HAVE ALLOWED ME TO STUDY THEM, TO STUDY THE RELICS THEY CARRY. MY INTEREST AND MY THEORIES SEEM TO AMUSE THEM, THOUGH THEY ASSURE ME I AM ON THE RIGHT TRACK. I AM A CHILD, UP PAST MY BEDTIME, TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE LEAST OF THE ADULT'S CONVERSATION. A BLIND MAN TRAPPED IN A RAINBOW.

IF ONLY I HAD MORE TIME.

BUT I WILL NOT PURSUE THAT PATH. MORTAL DEATH IS MY RELEASE, AND MY DESERVED FATE. IT IS, PERHAPS, TOO KIND FOR AN OLD SINNER LIKE ME.

THE THEURGISTS, AS THEY CALL THEMSELVES, HAVE BEEN GUARDING AN ANCIENT RELIC – THE NUCLAE TERRAN (TRANSLATED, THE HEART OF THE EARTH). TODAY, THEY SACRIFICE THEMSELVES TO ETERNITY, ASSUMING FOR ALL TIME THE BURDEN OF GUARDING IT AGAINST THE RETURN OF THOSE WHO HAVE NEED OF IT, AND ARE WORTHY OF BEARING IT.

THEY HAVE NOT ASKED ME TO JOIN THEM IN THEIR SACRIFICE. NOR DO I THINK THEY WOULD ACCEPT IT WERE I TO OFFER. THIS IS THEIR BURDEN.

NONETHELESS, TODAY IS THE LAST DAY OF MY LIFE, AS WELL. I SAT ON THE TERRACE THIS MORNING AND WATCHED OUR LORD RISE FROM THE EAST AS HE ALWAYS DOES. HE WILL GO ON ETERNAL. I SHALL NOT. I FEEL MY STRENGTH EBBING, AND LAY MYSELF TO REST IN THIS CHAPEL.

IT IS TIME.

A WARNING, TO THOSE WHO FIND MY REMAINS. TAKE WHAT YOU WILL OF THE TREASURES ON THIS LEVEL, OF MY WORLDLY GOODS.

BUT MEDDLE NOT WITH THE ETERNAL GUARDIANS. THEY ALONE SHALL DETERMINE WHO CARRIES THEIR BURDEN INTO THE SUNLIGHT ONCE AGAIN. THOSE THEY DEEM UNWORTHY SHALL BE CONDEMNED TO DEATH MOST FOUL.

BEWARE. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.