

The Final Testament of a Dying Soldier

I record these events of horror that have plagued my soul, for I once served a noble prince who ventured into darkness.

I had been sent out with the master-at-arms and a few men to desecrate a pagan shrine that lay along the Luna River near the lovely village of Berez. We were ordered to search for a blue gem believed to contain mystical powers.

Our lord and master became obsessed with restoring his mother, the queen, when she passed. He spent many of his waking hours in search of magic that could restore her life.

When the prince learned of these gems, he sent us venturing to search for them and destroy the pagan shrines where they hid.

The prince believes that if he places the magic gems in the queen's crypt, they might bring renewed life to the once deceased. I shudder to think of such magic. The men grow weary of our lord, as his spirit continues to darken.

I was ordered to stand watch along the river as my fellow men-at-arms searched and desecrated the pagan stone circle. I cannot say whether the master-at-arms found the magic blue gem, but what happened after will haunt me forever.

As we ventured down the Luna River toward Vallaki on our return to the castle, we were besieged by a monstrous beast of a kind I have never seen. The monster flipped our boat, sending us into the water. Men screamed as they panicked and attempted to swim to the shore.

I crawled up the muddy bank and looked back to see one of the men swallowed whole by the monster, which croaked so loud I felt the ground shake.

I ran, not looking back to see if any of my fellow men had survived the ordeal. I feared to return to Castle Ravenloft, for the land had grown dark and our lord and master was plagued with darkness. He had lost his brother, his mother, and the one he loved.

I've spent my remaining years as the farmer of a small apple orchard in the village of Krezk. I changed my name and married a woman from the village, never revealing my past.

I write these words on my deathbed so that I may die with a clear conscience, and so the events are never forgotten. If you find these words, please forgive me and bless my soul. I never wished to serve darkness and have prayed daily to the Morning Lord for forgiveness.

Forgive my weakness,

Ben Otvos

Ensign Benjamin Octavious