

*Treunas* bounded back to his feet quickly, although his movements clearly betrayed the lingering damage of *Mosach's* assault. He shook himself and charged forward again, pulling up shy of striking range and leaping into a flying kick. The force of the impact created a visible shockwave around the two, auras flaring, tall grass ripping free of its roots. *Mosach* left a furrow of plowed earth in his wake as he slid head- first across the ground, regaining his feet as promptly as his opponent had.

From there the movements became difficult to follow. Even with all of my talent focused on their every action, the strikes were too fast and the swirling auras too thick. All I could see for certain was that after meeting for the fourth pass, neither gave ground for over an hour. Shockwaves from strikes successful and blocked alike ravaged the immediate area, gradually expanding a crater from under their feet. Eventually they drew back matching punches deliberately enough that they slowed to my vision.

Fists met in the middle and instead of the expected shockwave a powerful explosion resounded. The crater's depth and width trebled as both celestials shot away from the epicenter, their flight only slightly impeded by contact with the crater walls behind them. Each tumbled up the slope and flew from the lip like a marble flicked off a ramp, crashing groundward a hundred yards on either side of the crater's lip.

Without hesitation they launched forward once again, meeting mid- air at the very point from which they had blown back. Each strike came with a matching shockwave, the quick succession of these forces extending their suspension and actually driving them further skyward. By the time their pace regained such expedience that I once again lost track of their movements, the ground had fallen out of sight, obscured by low- hanging clouds. Their auras were becoming visibly depleted as their rise continued, their skin paling markedly from its customary deep olive, innumerable bruises suddenly showing a vibrant purple.

*Mosach's* hands struck out to take hold of *Treunas's* neck, but he miscalculated his reach, instead leaving his own upper body open for clenching. Swatting the grasping hands aside, *Treunas* drew *Mosach* in until he was close enough to wrap his legs around the other celestial's waist. Blows rained down on *Mosach*, the resulting shockwaves reversing their momentum, soon distinctly accelerating the fall they precipitated. Just when he looked to be losing consciousness *Mosach* slipped his head aside of a blow, the deflecting strike to his shoulder flipping their positions in the empty air.

Now on top, as much as such a thing applies that far above the surface, *Mosach* managed to transfer the initiative back to himself once again. Blocking a succession of punches, he landed a pair of his own and another protracted assault was begun. He hammered down with his elbows, lashed with fists, even drove a few headbutts into *Treunas's* face. And then *Treunas* bellowed. Not of rage or pain, but of necessity. I don't know if he knew what would happen, but his voice emanated at such a volume – or frequency, perhaps – that both auras flared and another explosion ignited.

By some instinctual reaction they both threw a strike behind themselves, affecting a shockwave without impact which stopped their rearward progress and shot them back to the center. When the exchange of blows resumed so did their rise, the ground never quite materializing from the haze of the clouds which surrounded them at their lowest point. Black fire flared from *Mosach's* hands and this time *Treunas's* cry was one of pain. Blue aura flared and rushed forward to engulf *Mosach*, constricting sharply once he was within its grasp. *Mosach's* scream lasted until he succeeded in casting *Treunas's* *anma* from about him.

The fight shifted from physical to metaphysical as they clenched once again, *anma* being used as bludgeon. Their descent resumed as short strikes bearing massive shockwaves began passing between the pair, accelerating its rate with each impact. Horror rose in me as the pace of devastating blows increased until it sounded as if one endless explosion were occurring. The speed of their descent increased exponentially from there.

As if sensing where I was watching from – which he may well have done – *Treunas* rose his gaze and stared directly where my eyes would have been, had I been physically present. I do not think I will ever get that expression out of my mind, nor stop attempting to decipher the meaning of the conflicting emotions it portrayed. Acceptance. Anguish. Fulfillment. Anger. Death. Contentment.

*Treunas* brought both hands above his head, clasped them into a hammerfist and, by means I cannot explain, concentrated the totality of his aura – and *anma* – around that spot. It did not cause a shockwave when his clasped hands struck the midst of *Mosach's* chest...no, it was similar to the fireworks which many *bocain* have become so proficient with. Rockets which shoot a rush of sparks and fire out behind as they propel themselves into the sky. The last several hundred feet of their descent passed in an instant.

A ball of *anma* raged blue and black around the impact, expanding until it breached a dozen yards in diameter, at which point all matter within its borders violently exploded. Earth flew hundreds of feet into the air as the force of the explosion tore hundreds of feet down down into it. Three- fourths of the island's landmass all but vaporized in the wake of the shockwave, *Treunas* and *Mosach* with it. As that landmass was shattered into many pieces, so was their *anma* and karmic imprints.

*Treunas* sacrificed himself in order to save this world from *Mosach's* rule, but in doing so trapped their essences in this plane. I do not know how this will change the Corporeal Plane, but there is no doubt in my mind that things have changed. Drastically. I can feel it in my bones. As the orbit reacts and draws my plane farther from this one, corporeal *anma* grows weaker and less reactive. In turn the veil grows thicker and harder to penetrate, even with thought. I must return home.

The Celestial Plane will no doubt be changing in the wake of these events just as this realm has and I must be there to help my brethren understand why. We must safeguard this knowledge for as long as possible. The order must not be upset. The close orbit is a test. A test of our nature, to see if we are capable of creating a higher existence for our corporeal counterparts.

Instead of raising their awareness of the nature of the universe we have all but destroyed civilization. Two empires have already collapsed in upon themselves since the battle the War of Gods ended. More will fail under the hardship these endless wars have left them with, on the Small Continent most prolifically. As the focus of this realm it truly bore the brunt of our misguided actions. It may take a dozen eons before the Evolved Races there recover to what they were before our arrival.

I have lingered here too long. This tome, while important, has drawn too much of my attention. The orbit is altering rapidly and I am uncertain as to my chances of return. I have decided to cross to a faerie realm in the ethereal and attempt transfer to the celestial from there. I can only hope that the way we have twisted the planar karma of the corporeal has not terribly effected those realms in kind. They are ever a direct reflection of this realm and that much pain and woe could have wreaked utter havoc among their number. A thousand hell realms were likely born of this conflict.

I must reach my own plane. I must ensure these mistakes will not be repeated. To any of the Evolved who happen upon this work, please accept my sorrowful regret for how my people have effected your realm's future. Many great things shall be lost from the Celestial Intrusion, but with the truth at your side you shall eventually right your existence.

However, I assure you that the conflict will continue. *Mosach's* taint will remain. Pieces of his essence shall ever be springing up seeking to achieve his goals, never understanding the fell ambition driving them. But, take heart. As long as *Mosach* is part of this plane so shall be *Treunas*. This false duality shall be the path of your realm, the avaricious facing off against the virtuous in every facet of life.

Know the truth. Good and evil have always been a construct of the Corporeal Plane, a necessary result of putting sentience in such an existence. It is the Balance which is of importance. It is through Balance that the corporeal will regain its true nature. Only through Balance will you regain the karmic flexibility which is your most valuable birthright.

~The Watcher

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This is the truth as I know it. You make your mind up as you wish, but this is the reality behind the legends of the Age of Gods and the nature of our existence. The empires succeed because of the Imperial Code, a code which is designed to preserve the Balance of civilization. This is the source of what peace we of the Evolved Races have found in this existence. This is why so much of sorcery has become legend. Not because it is fiction, but because *anma* is not as it once was. We must preserve the Balance so that we can regain our true potential. Spread the truth, my brothers and sisters. Spread it to all who will lend their ear.

*Raonall Fathunn*