



WITHIN THE CASTLE KEEP--

THIS CHAMBER ONCE HELD THE REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF BARONS.

NOW, A NEW COUNCIL MEETS HERE.

ITS MEMBERS SERVE THE EVIL KING.

ATTEND ME, FOOL-SLAVES OF THE BLACK CIRCLE.

THE ANOINTED SERVANT OF THE MOST HIGH KING APPROACHES!

LET YOUR TIRE SOME MUMBLINGS CEASE!



HOW I WEARY OF YOU, BOY.

LO, THESE MANY SEASONS I HAVE BEEN MADE TO SUFFER YOUR TRESOME PRESENCE.



MIND YOUR TONGUE, JACKAL. 'TIS THE ANOINTED ONE WHOM YOU DO ADDRESS.



YOU ARE MERELY A SLAVE, AS ARE WE ALL.

I SHALL STOMACH NO MORE OF YOUR BRASH MORTAL INSOLENCE--



YOU, ZEMBALOU--



--SHALL NOT STOMACH ANYTHING EVER AGAIN.

BY... SET...

WHITK!



ARE THERE ANY OTHER OBJECTIONS?

THE BOY WHISPERS A SPELL AS HE SPRINKLES THE DRIED BLOOD OF MARTYRS INTO THE ELDRITCH FLAME.



KNOW YE THIS, WIZARDS:

I AM THE FIRST SERVANT OF THE MOST HIGH KING, I--

--TAURUS.



NO MAN MAY APPROACH THE KING EXCEPT BY ME. I AM HIS VOICE AND HIS WILL.

CHALLENGE ME AT YOUR PERIL.

SOON...



I HAVE FED THE **UNHOLY FLAME**, MASTER. I HAVE DISCIPLINED YOUR FOLLOWERS AND COMPLETED MY APPOINTED TASKS.

EXCELLENT, **TAURUS**.

YOU MAY RISE.



AND **THIS** DOES ANOTHER DAY OF CURSED SUNLIGHT GIVE WAY TO THE INKY BLACKNESS OF NIGHT.

'TIS THE NIGHT THAT BLESSES ME, THAT FEEDS ME.

UNDER NIGHT'S VEIL I GROW MORE POWERFUL... MORE DEADLY... MORE FEARSOME!

AT NIGHT'S FALL, LET HEAVEN AND EARTH TREMBLE, AT THE SOUND OF MY VERY NAME...

**--THOTH--**  
**AMON,**  
**LORD OF THE**  
**BLACK**  
**CIRCLE!**



TAURUS'S MOTHER, THE QUEEN ZENOBIA, AND HIS SISTER RADEGUND, HAVE SPENT THE LAST THREE SEASONS HERE...

A MANOR HOUSE OUTSIDE TARANTIA.

THE WOODS ARE A FLAME, AS PER THOTH-AMON'S WILL.

IT'S NOT GOOD, QUEEN ZENOBIA...

THOUGH PUBLIUS, OUR KING'S ADVISOR, KEPT HIS MANOR HOUSE WELL-STOCKED WITH PROVISIONS--

-- I'M AFRAID OUR TIME'S ABOUT RUN OUT. THE ACCURSED FLAME HAS CAUSED THE EPIBLE WOOD GAME TO FLEE.

YOU'RE SAYING WE'RE ABOUT TO STARVE, EH, LYSANDER?

I'M AFRAID SO.

THOTH-AMON'S ENCHANTMENT PROHIBITS US FROM LEAVING TARANTIA, M' LADY. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FIND--

I DON'T BELIEVE IT--

RADEGUND, DAUGHTER TO THE DEPOSED KING, HAS WAITED LONG AND WISTFULLY FOR THIS MANOR HOUSE'S SINGLE OCCUPANT TO RETURN.

HE'S BEEN MISSING EVER SINCE THIS TROUBLE BEGAN. SHE'D FEARED HIM DEAD.

THE MAN SHE LOVES.

THE BLACK DRAGON NAMED LEONIDAS.

RADEGUND--  
O-- QUEEN ZENOBIA...  
LYSANDER...

... WHY ARE YOU HERE AT MY FATHER'S HOUSE?

WE COULDN'T MAKE IT THROUGH THE WOODS, BOY, AND WE SLIKE AS BE AS ES WEREN'T GOING TO RETURN TO THE CASTLE.

HOW DID YOU--

I LEFT AS SOON AS THE GREAT EVIL ARRIVED. I FLED TO WARN OUR LORD BEFORE THE WOODS BECAME UNPASSABLE.

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO COME IN, THOUGH.

I'VE FOUND OUR LIEGE, AND NOW I'VE RETURNED TO FETCH MY UNIFORM.

WE MEN SHOULD RETURN TO THE CASTLE AT ONCE.



