

DRYSTAN THE CAPTAIN

Past

When you were but a child, the Black Dragons burnt your home to ashes. It was Regent Cerdic in person that dragged you out of the flaming rubble and kept you by his side, becoming the family you had lost. Although you had never called him father, he taught you everything you know and your only aspiration is to live up to his expectations. The memory you hold dearest are the words he spoke to you on the day you were anointed Captain of Zamar, as well as his attendant: «You must be ready to do anything to protect the people of the Vale, Drystan. Never forget it».

Present

You would go on to discover at your own expense that doing the right thing is anything but easy. A few months ago, your dreams were interrupted by a vision.

A graveyard. A praying woman sings in dulcet tones as she sprinkles a corpse with ointment. The body belongs to Cerdic. You see his spirit ascend to the sky, its silhouette clear before the Sun.

Mist. A battlefield, the corpses of countless soldiers scattered about. You are petrified. Night comes, then day and night again. No immortal spirits. They exist no more.

Your ears fill with the roar of thunder as a scarlet bolt tears through the sky. A voice. Only the chosen live forever. This is the great lie.

You bolted awake and at your bedside you found two phials you had never seen before. As if moved by divine intent, you went to the kitchen and prepared Cerdic's breakfast, dousing it with the content of one phial. You were stunned: You watched yourself act from the outside, not even trying to fight back. After bringing the meal to your master's chambers you watched him eat and made friendly conversation, as you had always done before. Until the poison started acting. A spark of understanding lit up in Cerdic's eyes. He smiled at you.

«So is this my end, dear Drystan? I should have imagined it, discovering the Oracle to be a lie could have no other result. But I am happy it comes by your hand. Let me warn you one last time: The one who pushed you to kill me wishes for the death of the Vale. Live the life of the just, my son. Fight».

You waited emotionlessly for life to abandon him. Now that his spirit has found eternal peace, you are set to stand by your teachings and fight until those dulcet tones are sung for every man in the Vale.

Future

Lylie: The woman from your dream. Who else could know more about life after death?

Although you are no Regent, you have devoted your life to Cerdic's cause. The dream finally gave meaning to your prayers for the many comrades you have seen fall: There must be a life after death. Each of them deserves it. You deserve it.

Yes, you deserve to be reunited with your father. She must help you.

Giraut: A proud man, according to Cerdic. Resentment runs deep between him and his brother Renier, and they say he has defeated the Great Black Dragon.

He aims for the Regency of Zamar, but he is nothing like Cerdic: He does not live to serve a people he does not even know. You should be your father's heir. You should become Regent, you should attain life after death. But can you really keep your crime secret and turn a blind eye to the dire fate of every other man?

Renier: The most talented of Regents, according to Cerdic, but the most volatile. This is why your master was chosen over him to be the Regent of Zamar.

Now he has a chance to right what he surely saw as a wrong, squabbling with Giraut over your Fiefdom. You find you despise him, for all the acclamations as the hero who defeated the Great White Dragon. Why did you bring the second phial of poison with you? Is it meant for him? Do you have a choice or is the hand that pushed you to kill your father not done with you, yet?

Wilhelm: He is the Regent of Thunder and years ago he faced death, confronting a Dragon alone in open field.

You both escaped those monsters by a miracle and in your dream you clearly remember seeing a scarlet bolt. Simple coincidence or a sign of fate? You must learn what ties you to this man.

Ninon: A year ago her Fiefdom was devastated by a swarm of White Dragons.

The news had upset Cerdic, and made him worry for the future of the entire Vale. How can a Regent fail so thoroughly?

Faramond: According to what was explained to you, the task of the Wandering Regent is to sound the alarm and let the others prepare to defend their Fiefdoms.

If so, why did he fail to warn Regent Ninon in time?

Allen: Cerdic knew him as the Oracle's apprentice, now you have to address him by the title he has inherited. After the death of his predecessor and of the Regent of Zamar, he is looking for answers. You know your crime deserves execution.

When he confessed that the Oracle is a lie, Cerdic was not referring to him, but to his predecessor. You wonder whether Allen is different, whether he would be willing to share his knowledge: He must be the one holding the secret to life after death, now.

Solomon: Cerdic used to speak of him with respect and they shared an extensive correspondence. During his last meal, your master mentioned wanting to discuss an important matter with him.

On Cerdic's desk you found a sealed letter meant for Solomon. You have not opened it yet, but you hesitate to deliver it: His friendship to your father could prove to be a double-edged sword.

Cut this out and put it in an envelope. You decide whether to read the letter or deliver it to its recipient: Solomon.

Cerdic's last letter.

My dear Solomon,

the news of the Dragons' demise should fill my heart with joy, but my recent discovery of that manuscript still looms over my every thought, clouding every ray of sunshine like an approaching storm.

Do you remember the legends we discussed at such great length? I do not believe them to be just legends, not anymore. If three of the twelve Ancients have truly survived, this means that Zamar is still in danger and that the Dragons will return. Only the defeat of the three Ancients will put an end to our divine punishment.

I have conducted, and keep conducting still, extensive research here in Zamar, maturing new knowledge and new suspicions along the way. Did you know that the three surviving Ancients may be brothers? Many sources agree on this. I am hesitant to put this in writing, but I have read passages and found mentions that put even the true nature of our master in question.

Stay alert, my friend, for you will receive more news from Zamar when my mind is filled with more certainty than doubt.

Strength and honour,

Cerdic

Action - Restricted to Drystan

Cut this out and read the Cause section right away, then fold the paper so that only the Effect is visible. To activate it, go through the motions of pouring the poison from the phial into one of the cups at the feast. If and when someone drinks from that particular cup, give them the card.

Cause: A deadly poison, capable of killing even a Regent. The Council bans weapons and ancient barriers prevent any spells from being cast. This makes poison the only way to murder someone.

Effect: Your fingertips begin to feel numb and your thoughts progressively get more and more clouded. A cold weakness crushes you in its inescapable grip. You have been poisoned. Before the end of the Council, you must collapse to the ground and breathe your last breath. Take all the time you need to exit the scene in the way you deem most fit, for yourself and for the story.



FM 88 90 92 94 96 98 100 102 104 106 108
AM 540 600 700 800 1200 1400 1700

08 L'ERA DEGLI UOMINI | THE AGE OF MEN