Come questing with bold siblings twain,
    Prime thieves of ravaged Earth;
Next journey to the Fireworld,
    Land of volcanoes' birth.
Waves without number—Water's realm—
    But 'ware of evils there;
Last, ride the Air's winds heaven-high
    To claim a prize most rare.

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Swordquest

The ultimate Search for the ultimate treasure!
But there is life among the rooftops of these huddled buildings...

...life which moves as silently as the shadows themselves.

Or nearly so...

SKATCHE

TARRA...?
Men call it Darkspire Castle, they who dare speak of it at all.

Like a great black spider it broods atop Mount Mandragor, high above the medieval city whose lesser buildings dot the three seaward sides of the massive peak.

Who else, dear brother?

I followed you after you slipped out of our room.

I should have guessed you’d come here.

A thief has been here, but eating isn’t all. You’ve got on your mind, is it, Torr?
YOU'RE STILL BROODING ABOUT REVENGE!
AND WHY NOT?

BECAUSE OF KING TYRANNUS, OUR PARENTS ARE DEAD. HE AND THAT WIZARD KONJURO KILLED THEM--

--AS SURELY AS IF THEY'D DONE THE DEED THEMSELVES!
GOOD THIEVES DON'T BEAR GRUDGES, TORR!

AS FOR TYRANNUS, HIS CASTLE IS A FORTRESS-- NOT EVEN AN EXPERIENCED THIEF WOULD TRY TO STEAL INSIDE DARKSPIRE.

NOT WHEN THE SORCERER KONJURO'S KEEP STANDS UNGUARDED ON THE GRAY SEA'S SHORE!

NOR DO THEY LEAP WHEN THEY CAN WALK!

I'VE GOT MORE EXPERIENCE THAN YOU THINK, SISTER-- AND I'M NOT PLANNING TO STEAL FROM TYRANNUS.

KONJURO?
YOU ARE MAD!
For an instant, their eyes lock on that lonely tower...

And it's as if an unsuspected dam were opened in their hearts, flooding them with emotion, as they recall the story of their orphaning...

Their father was a mighty warrior named Tarr, a faithful marshal of old King Revillo's army...

And proud as he was of his many victories on the battlefield, his proudest moment came on the dawn of the last day of his final campaign...

Two sons, my lady? You've given me two sons to carry forth my name? Better than that, my lord.

So they are. What shall we name them, wife? Well, my lord, I've been thinking...

A son and a daughter, as alike as two flowers from the same cutting!
Not long after the twins' birth, the old king, Reullo, sickened and died...

...and some would insist it was no natural death which claimed that beloved liege.

Before the turning of the new moon, Lord Tarr and his wife, Lady Wyla, were summoned to an audience with the new king, Reullo's dark-browed son, Tyrannus.

They went happily, believing their newborns were to receive the king's blessing.

Tyrannus, however, had other ideas...

So these are your whelps, eh, Tarr?

Two blond babes, still pewling and mewling.

My leige! I don't understand...

Do you understand treachery, Tarr?

Not treachery here and now, but treachery to come?

Treachery as yet unborn -- or should I say, newborn?
LAST NIGHT, I RECEIVED A WARNING, A PROPHECY, IF YOU WILL, FROM A MAN STEEPED IN THE WISDOM OF DARK MAGIC.

HIS WORDS:

"BEWARE THE CHILDREN WITH HAIR OF GOLD--TWO THEY ARE, BORN THE SON AND DAUGHTER OF A NOBLE WARRIOR!"

"WHEN THOU ART OLD AND FEEBLE, THEY SHALL CLAIM THY THRONE, WITH A SWORD SHINING BRIGHTLY AS SUMMER'S SUN!"

WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THIS, TARR--

"--IF NOT TREACHERY, MOST FOUL!"

YOUR MAJESTY CANNOT BE SERIOUS!

WHO SPEAKS THUS?

SUCH PROPHECY IS MADNESS!

LET HIM SHOW HIMSELF, IF HE DARE!
IN TIME PAST, MY FATHER WAS COUNSELED BY TWO MYSTIC MAGES--

--BUT SINCE THEY VANISHED FROM THE KEN OF MEN WHEN I WAS STILL A CHILD, I HAVE HAD TO TURN TO A MORE EARTHLY SOURCE OF WISDOM.

KONJURO, WIZARD OF SEA KEEP, STEP FORTH--

TELL THE LORD TARR WHAT YOU TOLD ME.

NO!

THE INFANTS MUST DIE.

THEN YOU SHALL DIE BESIDE THEM.

THE KING GAVE A SUBTLE SIGNAL--

--AND AT ONCE, THE CHAMBER SWARRED WITH ARMED MEN:

YOU LEAVE ME WITH BUT ONE THING TO SAY, YOUR MAJESTY...
DEATH TO TYRANNUS!

DEATH TO THE KING!

HE ALMOST REACHED THE THRONE.

ALMOST, BUT NOT QUITE!

RUN, Wyla!

"--Run!"

FOR THE LOVE OF OUR CHILDREN --
Was there ever such a battle as this?

One against a score, and that one armed with little more than a sword and a noble heart?

Wizard, do something! Of all my guards, only these could I trust with such a deed!

If he gets past them...

Muttered words in a tongue alien to the mouth of man...

Kathu Morus Mahkto!

He shall not.

--And then, he had not even the sword with which to defend himself--
--AND AGAINST STEEL SPEARS AND IRON-TIPPED LANCES, A NOBLE HEART MADE POOR ARMOR INDEED.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN GLOATING, YOUR MAJESTY, MIGHT I REMIND YOU... MOTHER AND CHILDREN YET LIVE.

A TEMPORARY CONDITION, AT WORST. YOU MEN-- FIND THE MOTHER AND BRING THE CHILDREN TO ME. AND THE MOTHER--?

WHAT DO YOU THINK, FOOL?

"SLAY HER WHERE SHE STANDS!"

Ah, but first they had to find her, and in a darkened city filled with black moon shadows, that task might prove more difficult than it might seem...

THE KING'S GUARDS!

That can only mean... TARR is...
She choked back a sob; this was no time for tears.

As the chatter of horsehooves beat a hunter's march on the cobbles of the city, growing faint and loud by turns, she let memory guide her to a small house just inside the city's walls...

Freeman Garth, you were once my husband's faithful scout.

Are you faithful still?

It's you who shouldn't be seen with me, Freeman. Listen...

Words tumbled out, and now the tears could not be held back...

Milord Tarr killed?

Stay, milady, and I'll get my dagger.

I don't think she came here seeking that kind of help, husband.

It's the children... isn't it, milady?

Yes...

Tears welled in her eyes as she asked another question.

You shouldn't be seen here, milady, not in the house of a thief!

Let her in, Garth--can't you see she's terrified?

With me, they are marked for death.

But in your house, raised as your son and daughter...

Aye, it's worth a try.

We always wanted young 'uns... but what about you, milady?
WITHOUT MY CHILDREN—WITHOUT MY HUSBAND—MY LIFE IS A DRY SHELL.
TO SAVE THEM, I MUST ABANDON THEM.

AND YOU ASK—WHAT ABOUT ME?

CARE FOR THEM.

LOVE THEM AS YOU WOULD YOUR OWN.

GROW THEM STRONG AND BRAVE... THAT'S ALL I ASK.

AS FOR ME, I HAVE ONE LAST DUTY TO PERFORM...

...AND THEN I MAY REST ONCE MORE...

...IN MY LOVING HUSBAND'S ARMS!
THERE SHE IS!

WE HAVE HER NOW, BY HEAVEN!

THAT PATH LEADS TO THE EDGE OF MERCY CLIFF!

"THERE'S NO WAY DOWN... NO WAY TO CUT BACK ON HER TRAIL!"

"SHE CANNOT ESCAPE US!"

BUT, THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO ESCAPE DESPOTIC OPPRESSION, AS THE CAPTAIN OF TYRANNUS' PALACE GUARD SOON DISCOVERED TO HIS UNBELIEVING HORROR...

NAY, IT CANNOT BE!

...ONE ESCAPE, FOR THOSE WITH NOWHERE ELSE TO GO...
Mother and children were reported dead, their bodies claimed by a greedy sea.

Safe, protected by anonymity, the twins grew and learned; and, by a twist of fate, became thieves to survive, when their foster-parents died...

...and they turn their attention to more immediate concerns, such as the scaling of the wizard's "impenetrable" tower...

An opening in the tower's crown leads down into a darkness made lighter by a faint glimmering...

Pssst, Torr! Can you see anything?

Pssst, Torr! Can you see anything?

It's a treasure house!

That dark wizard must have collected a fortune from the king for his counseling all these years!

We're rich!

Why, there's gold enough here to buy us a kingdom of our own, if we wanted...

Now memory fades...
Too much of that yellow metal can weigh a thief down, Torr.

ME, I prefer a more portable treasure.

This strange jewel, for instance. I wager it's worth more than all the golden goblets in the world --

You are right, child. Its worth is far greater than your pitiful mortal mind may fathom.

"Torr"?

By the seven hells, is it possible?

They yet live!

Aye, but not for long...

Replace it at once, and I promise you an easy death.

The wizard!

To the rope, Torr -- Hurry!

Why don't we kill him?

Why are we fleeing?

If you want to know why, look up...

--but don't stop running!
It looms out of the starry sky, at first so distant it seems no larger than a small bird...

...but as it rapidly closes in, its true size becomes apparent...

RAAARR

JUMP!

Mercy cliff up ahead...

...and Torr no longer questions the wisdom of flight!
Above them, Konjuro's mystically-summoned demon rages with unnatural fury...

...flinging bolt after bolt of witchfire at the fleeing shadows beneath the grey sea's surface...

But, the trouble with chasing shadows---

---is that your true targets often slip away...

Gasp!...Feel like my brain's about to burst...!

Are you all right?

I'll live.

Konjuro's demon...?
He's still circling around between us and the mainland.

But he's drawing closer to shore with each circle...

At least we got something out of this fiasco.

What are you talking about?

Almost as if he could sense our presence!

This.

The wizard's jewel!

That must be how the demon's tracking us!

He can smell that jewel!

Oh!

Chink!

Torr, have you lost your senses?

Of all the stupid—get rid of it!

Torr, have you lost your senses?

Don't worry, Tarra--I see it too!
W-Who are you? What are you going to do to us?

Once, we had human names, even as you.

But that was before our transfiguration to a higher stage of sentient life.

You may call us Mentorr and Mentarra, as did King Ruello when we were his most respected counselors—decades past, before the black wizard Konjur did imprison us in yonder shattered jewel!

But it is not of this we wish to speak...

Rather, we would tell you of your destiny—a destiny that will take you across four worlds!
SURLYMOUNTING

THSE CHALLENGES

WILL MAKE YOU

STRONGER, WISER,

MORE COURAGEOUS.

--AND IN THE

END, WILL GIVE

YOU YOUR

HEART'S

DESIRE!

A WORLD OF

EARTH SPIRITS...

A WORLD OF FIRE...

A WORLD OF WATER

SPRITES... AND

LAST, A WORLD OF

AIR!

ON EACH WORLD,

YOU WILL ENCOUNTER

A CHALLENGE--

PERHAPS MORE

THAN ONE!

REVENGE!

YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT

REVENGE AGAINST

TYRANNUS

AND THE

WIZARD!
These are your words, not ours.

To achieve your goal, you must be willing to learn what each world can teach you.

You must have open minds, and yes, open hearts as well.

You must put aside your anger and your hate.

You must learn to think before acting.

You must learn to judge before responding.

Remember this—the most direct route is not necessarily the correct one.

The greatest warrior is not always the strongest.

Now observe the prize that awaits you—

—the sword of ultimate sorcery!

The talisman of the penultimate truth!
THUNDER ROCKS THE QUIET GLADE, AND WHEN IT PASSES, AND THE SMOKE LIFTS TWISTING INTO THE TWILIGHT SKY...

A PIT!

THIS WASN'T HERE A MOMENT AGO!

Wise words, Torr, and truer than you know.

Descend, and you will enter the first of the four worlds you must conquer... Earthworld!

Have they?

I wish I was as sure as you are, Torr...

Observe... Learn... and triumph!

They're fading away!

Let them.

It looks deep enough to reach the very heart of the world!

They've told us all we need to know.

What are you afraid of?
WELL, FOR ONE THING--THAT!

THE SHAFT ENDS OVER SOME KIND OF CIRCULAR DOME--WITH TWELVE CHAMBERS AROUND THE OUTSIDE RING!

THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY MUST BE IN ONE OF THOSE CHAMBERS--THAT'S OBVIOUS!

FINDING IT IS JUST A PROCESS OF ELIMINATION!

CHILD'S PLAY!

THINK YOU SO, YELLOW-HAIRED WHelp?

HERMINUS THE THIEF HAS BEEN TRYING TO FIND THAT SWORD FOR ALMOST TWELVE MOONS!

I'VE INVESTED TOO MUCH TIME AND PAIN IN THE SEARCH TO WELCOME A PAIR OF RIVALS!

EVEN SUCH A PAIR OF FOOLS AS YOU!

SNIK!
UNNNH... IF WE'D DROPPED ANY FARTHER, THE FALL MIGHT HAVE KILLED US!
THE GRAPPLING HOOK MUST HAVE COME LOOSE!
WRONG! TAKE A LOOK. THIS ROPE'S BEEN CUT.

CUT?

SOMEONE DOWN HERE DOESN'T LIKE US, BROTHER. I SUGGEST WE SPLIT UP-- EACH LOOK FOR A WAY INTO THIS DOME.
AND KEEP OUR DAGGERS VERY HANDY. BE CAREFUL, TARRA.

THEN THAT MEANS--
UH-HUH.

I'M NOT THE IMPETUOUS ONE, TORR. LET'S BOTH BE CAREFUL.... AND PRAY THAT BEING CAREFUL IS ENOUGH!
There's the rest of the rope. The hook must've slipped when we fell.

I might as well collect it and--

Eh?

Hounds of Darkspire!

The roof's giving way! I'm--

Oof!

That was stupid.

All that talk about being careful and the first thing I do is fall through a roof!

Do not chide yourself, child. Huh?
ONLY THROUGH A CHAMBER BELONGING TO AN EARTH SIGN MAY YOU ENTER THIS MYSTIC REALM OF OURS—YOUR ENTRY WAS SIMPLY MORE DRAMATIC THAN MOST.

BUT, I SEE THAT I HAVE StartLED YOU... AND THIS SHAMES ME.

ORDINARILY, I AM MOST DEMURE, I ASSURE YOU.

PLEASE BE AT EASE... RELAX, AND LET THE SOOTHING MUSIC OF MY CHAMBER BE A BALM FOR YOUR WEARY SOUL.

I AM VIRGO. PLEASE CONSIDER YOURSELF MY GUEST.
I've circled this huge dome twice—
—And the only thing even approaching a door that I've found is this crevice.

Whuff... It's a good thing thieves don't eat too regularly...
—or I'd never make it through!

There! I'm in!

Now to—

Thump

Ham!

Of course, boy!

The crevice—it slammed shut behind me!

I get so few visitors...
—I like to make sure that those who stumble in... stay a while!

Who are you—what are you?
YOU DON'T KNOW?
AH, THEN YOU'RE IGNORANT AS WELL AS PRESUMPTUOUS!
YOU'VE ENTERED THE EARTH-SIGN CHAMBER, BOY!

TWO DOORS LEAD FROM THIS CHAMBER TO THOSE ON EITHER SIDE, BUT THOSE DOORS ARE LOCKED AND I HAVE THE ONLY KEY!
AND WHO AM I?

I AM TAURUS, THE BULL-- AND YOU ARE MY PRISONER!
AND I AM TORR, SON OF TARR, THE GREATEST WARRIOR WHO EVER LIVED!

YOU DON'T FRIGHTEN ME, TAURUS!

NOT WHILE I HAVE THIS!

BOY--

--YOU IRRITATE ME!

BTHAM!

WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?

I AM A LIVING INCARNATION OF ZODIACAL MYSTICISM!

M--MY DAGGER WENT IN TO THE HILT...

...BUT YOU'RE NOT EVEN BLEEDING!

YOUR METAL CANNOT HARM ME--
--BUT I CAN HARM YOU!

WHAT--?

THE KEY! CURSE YOU, YOU'VE STOLEN THE KEY!

HIS CHARGE IS CARRYING HIM CLEAR ACROSS THE CHAMBER!

HAVE TO UNLOCK THIS DOOR BEFORE HE CAN TURN ABOUT--!

A TWIST OF METAL IN METAL AND THE HUGE VAULT-LIKE DOOR SWINGS OPEN A MOMENT LATER...

I'M THROUGH-- AND THE DOOR'S SHUT TIGHTLY AS A WIZARD'S PURSE!

STRANGE CORRIDOR... IT SEEMS TO BE MOVING PAST FASTER THAN I'M RUNNING!

THE ONLY THING YOU'LL FIND IN THERE, YOU YOUNG CUTFURSE...

...IS A SPEEDY DEATH!

LET'S SEE TAURUS GET PAST THAT!

ANOTHER DOOR UP AHEAD...

WILL I FIND THE SWORD IN THERE?
IN THE CHAMBER OF VIRGO...

IT WAS WRITTEN THAT ONE DAY YOU WOULD COME—YOU AND A FAIR-HAIRED BOY, WHO TOGETHER WOULD FORGE A GREAT DESTINY.

SO... YOU SEEK THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY.

BUT YOU WILL NEED help—a way to travel between the zodiacal chambers—

AND YOU WILL FIND IT THERE, IN THE STAR OF PASSAGE!

IT'S BEAUTIFUL. BUT HOW CAN I GET IT OUT OF THAT GLOBE?

PERHAPS BREAK THE GLASS WITH MY DASSER?

-- LIKE THE LEATHERY WHISPER OF INHUMAN WINGS...

SOME SIXTH SENSE FREEZES HER HAND, AS SHE HEARS A STRANGE RUSTLE BEHIND HER—
HOT BREATH WARMS HER NECK.

PART OF HER SCREAMS A WARNING - "USE THE DAGGER! DEFEND YOURSELF!"

...TRUSTING TO SHEER WILL TO ACHIEVE HER GOAL.

GOOD.

YOU'VE PASSED THE FIRST TEST. VIRGO! BUT I THOUGHT YOU'D BECOME SOME KIND OF--OF MONSTER!

WAS THAT AN ILLUSION?

NO, CHILD. I SIMPLY RESPONDED TO POTENTIAL VIOLENCE.

HAD YOU PERSISTED, I MIGHT HAVE KILLED YOU--OR YOU MIGHT HAVE KILLED ME.

NOW LET THE STAR TAKE YOU WHERE IT WILL.... AND MAY THE LORDS OF THE ZODIAC KEEP YOU SAFE!

BUT A GENTLER ASPECT OF HER SOUL REBELS, AND THRUSTS BLADE BACK INTO SHEATHE...
A moment of blinding light and, when it fades, Tarra finds herself in a sweet-smelling garden...

...listening to the music of a very strange piper indeed.

Ah, a visitor. How delightful.

Play with me--

--or die!

Come play with Capricorn, my dear.

No thanks, goat. I'm looking for my brother, and I can't stop to play until I--

--find him...
Torr blinks twice and shakes his head as if to clear it, not quite sure if he’s lost his mind.

The corridor from the chamber of Taurus led him to another locked door, which opened at a touch of his key; he stepped through...

...into a scene of sheer nightmare.

Who enters the mirrored hall of Gemini? Identify yourself, and perhaps I shall let you live!

I think I’ll just take my chances with Taurus, if you don’t mind—
There is a flicker of shadow in the mirror behind the bizarre white creature, but Torr has only a glimpse of it before Gemini attacks.

If I've learned one thing about this mad land—

--It's that every chamber in it has two doors!

---You will never leave this chamber alive!

---But if I can just reach the other--

---You may have sealed one--

---You will never leave this chamber alive!

Forgive me. I'm afraid I must have made a terrible first impression.

Eh?

He always does, you know.
I can sense you're a twin... so you must understand my frustration.

He and I have opposite personalities--but we're stuck with each other, I'm afraid.

Your reflection in that mirror...

Confusing, isn't it? I guess it simply means you'd better stay on my good side.

One side, you're a shadow...

A little Gemini jest.

Here... allow me to make amends for attacking you...

With this lamp it has no magical powers that I'm aware of, but it might help you if things get dark.

You'll find the second door behind you.

Wait! Do you know anything about the Sword of Ultimate Sorcery...

Also called the Talisman of...

He's gone... he just faded away.

What kind of land is this? Are its people crazy, or am I?

Crazy or not, I'm going to keep opening doors until I--
THERE'S NO CORRIDOR--NOTHING ON THE OTHER SIDE BUT--

~YEEOWW!

SPASH!

OH... NO....!
ELSEWHERE...

SO AMUSING, HE OFFERED ME SOME ADVICE AND HELP WHEN HE REALIZED WHO I WAS--

--TELLING ME TO TAKE THIS CORRIDOR TO THE CHAMBER ON HIS LEFT, WHERE HE SAID TORR WOULD BE WAITING FOR ME!

TORR! IT'S TARRA!

I'VE GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU--

WHAT AN ODD CREATURE TAURUS IS... APPARENTLY, TORR BESTED HIM, AND TAURUS FOUND THAT AMUSING!

IS THAT SO, LITTLE GIRL?

AND ARIES HAS A SURPRISE FOR YOU, TOO!

THE MINOTAUR LIED!

HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE-- BEFORE ARIES CAN REACH ME TO--

ULP!

IN HER HAND, THE STAR GLOWS, AS IF SENSING HER DISTRESS, AND BETWEEN ONE BREATH AND THE NEXT--
-- She finds herself transported, out of the fire and into the furnace...

GODS OF MY MOTHER!

Ave, brave Sagittarius—the vixen called Tarra!

See? She's stolen the star of passage from sweet Virgo!

Be swift, before she can vanish again--!

TWOK!

Good shooting, brave warrior! Ha! She dropped the star!

Now's my chance, while that thick-skulled centaur keeps her pinned down--!

No!

The star!
AND, ELSEWHERE...

I MUST ADMIT, GOOD FRIEND CRAB-- YOU GAVE ME QUITE A FRIGHT BACK THERE!

NOT MY INTENTION.
AM PEACEFUL, IF NOT ATTACKED.

THOUGH NOT ALWAYS TRUE, IF STAR-SIGNS ARE AWRY.

GO AND BE WELL, YOUNG WARRIOR... AND KNOW YOU HAVE FRIEND IN CANCER.

YET ANOTHER DOOR OPENS TO THE MAGIC KEY'S TOUCH, BUT WHEN TORR STEPS THROUGH INTO THE CHAMBER BEYOND--

I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND.
WAR-CRAFT MAY BE USELESS IN THIS LAND, WHERE FOES CAN BECOME FRIENDS AND FRIENDS CAN TURN INTO FOES!

HE'S A TRICKY ONE, HE IS!

THEFT AND TRESPASSER!
HERMINUS WARNED ME THAT YOU WOULD COME, BEARING STOLEN TREASURES AND SPROUTING LIES!

--HE IS GREETED BY A ROAR OF UNBRIDLED FURY:

WATCH HIM CAREFULLY, KING LEO--
I HAVE NO PATIENCE WITH TRICKSTERS, HERMINUS!

YOU!
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU DID THIS--BUT YOU'RE GOING TO TELL HIM YOU LIED!

AT THIS POINT, YOU WHelp, I DOUBT He'D BELIEVE ME!

THAT THING MUST BE IMPORTANT IF YOU--

OOF!

UH-OH!

ROW!

TWO HANDS REACH, BUT ONE REACHES FASTER--

DOLT! YOU MADE ME DROP THE STAR--!

--AND IN A FLASH OF BLINDING LIGHT, BOTH THIEVES ARE--

GONE!
HALF A BREATH LATER...

TWChUNK

TARRA!

TORR, GET AWAY! SAGITTARIUS WON'T LISTEN TO REASON!

HE THINKS WE'RE BANDITS!

I'M FINDING YOUR RANGE, WENCH!

TARRA'S GETTING WINDED—SHE CAN'T KEEP DODGING AND, AS LONG AS THAT ARMED CENTAUR IS BETWEEN US, I CAN'T REACH HER TO HELP!

WAIT—MAYBE I CAN BLIND HIM BY TOSING THIS CLOAK OVER HIS—

SIMULTANEOUSLY...

NO SIGN OF TORR—HE MUST HAVE ESCAPED!

AT LEAST ONE OF US WILL SURVIVE!

HUUH?

...GODS HELP ME, I CAN'T RUN ANY FURTHER!

NOW I HAVE YOU!
YES, BUT CAN YOU KEEP HER?

SO... THE LUCKY BRAT FOUND THE CLOAK OF INVISIBILITY!

I’VE FOUND SOMETHING JUST AS USEFUL -- THE SHOES OF STEALTH!

WEARING THESE, I CAN BE SEEN -- BUT NOT HEARD!

THAT GIVES ME THE CHANCE I NEED TO SLIP AWAY...

NA-A-YYY! SOMEONE’S MOUNTED ME -- SOMEONE I CANNOT SEE!

... AND RETURN TO THEE ANOTHER DAY!

SEEN OR UNSEEN, MY ATTACKER HAS WEIGHT -- AND WHAT HAS WEIGHT CAN BE THROWN!

BROTHER...?

QUICK, GRAB THE STAR, AND LET’S GET --

NO TIME TO EXPLAIN, TARRA!

YOU’RE NEAR ENOUGH NOW!
-- OUT OF HERE?
SOMETHING HAPPENED WHEN WE TOUCHED THE STAR TOGETHER!
THIS ISN'T ONE OF THE ZODIACAL CHAMBERS!

TORR, LOOK UP THERE!
WE'VE MADE IT TO THE CENTRAL CHAMBER!
THAT'S IT-- THAT'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN SEEKING--

-- THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY!
AWE TAKES THEIR BREATHS AWAY.

As if forged in the fires of the sun, the sword glows with unearthly glory, sending a lance of pure energy down to the marble beneath its point.

THINGS?

NOW, SOMETHING INEXPLICABLE OCCURS...

WHERE THERE WAS ONE BLADE, THERE NOW ARE THREE: THE ORIGINAL... AND TWO OTHERS.

THE METAL FEELS WARM TO THEIR TOUCH... WARM, AND SOMEHOW ALIVE.

TORR, SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!

THAT ZODIAC DISC! WE SAW IT BEFORE, WHEN OUR MENTORS SHOWED US THE SWORD!

TOR-- I JUST REALIZED...

--WHAT IF THE SWORD AND THE TALISMAN OF WHICH THEY SPOKE ARE TWO SEPARATE--

SOMETHING, INDEED...

F1000 OOM!

THE FIRST SWORD-- IT'S BURNING A HOLE THROUGH THAT ALTAR-- INTO THE GROUND BELOW!
QUICKLY! DON'T LET IT--

YOU CANNOT LOSE THAT WHICH YOU NEVER POSSESSED, CHILD.
SWORDS YOU NOW HAVE--

THEN YOU HAVE LEARNED WELL, AND HAVE BECOME WISE SEEKERS AS WELL AS SKILLFUL THIEVES.

BETWEEN LIES THE SECOND WORLD YOU MUST FACE, AS YOU CLAIM YOUR DESTINY.

IT TOO WILL CHALLENGE YOUR WITS, AND YOUR SKILL.
WILL YOU MEET THAT CHALLENGE?

WE'VE COME THIS FAR, MENTOR!

--BUT THE TRUE SWORD WAS NOT YET YOURS.
WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THIS WORLD?

--FALL!

OH, TORR--WE'VE LOST IT!

THAT BATTLES AREN'T ALWAYS WON BY VIOLENCE!

BY THE GODS, WE WON'T STOP NOW!
AND NEITHER WILL HERMINUS, FOOL--
--EVEN IF IT MEANS FOLLOWING TO THE VERY GATES OF HADES!

AND SO IT ENDS, WITH ANOTHER BEGINNING.

TORR, YOU MAY THINK I'M MAD, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT A CHILL JUST RAN DOWN MY SPINE-- AS IF, SOMEHOW, SOMEWHERE, WE WERE BEING WATCHED!

IN HIS CASTLE KEEP, THE WIZARD KONJURO SMILES.
IT IS A SMILE WITHOUT HUMOR...

...A SMILE LIKE THE GRIN OF DEATH!

TO BE CONTINUED -- IN SWORDQUEST -- BOOK TWO: FIREWORLD!