







WELCOME  
BACK TO THE  
LAND OF THE  
TEMPORARILY  
LIVING,  
WIZARD!

DID YOU *MISS*  
ME?

PUCK?!













MOLLY...  
NO...NO...!

THIS CAN'T BE  
REAL, IT CAN'T BE  
HAPPENING...



OOOHHHHH,  
HARRRRRY!

STOP HIM,  
DRESDEN--  
DON'T WORRY  
ABOUT  
ME!

AH, BUT  
KARRIN...THAT'S  
ALL HE DOES.  
WORRY ABOUT YOU,  
HIS APPRENTICE,  
ALL THE SAD LITTLE  
PEOPLE OF  
THIS CITY.

HE  
THINKS HE'S  
STRONG ENOUGH  
TO IMPOSE ORDER  
ON CHAOS. HE  
THINKS HE CAN  
PROTECT  
YOU ALL.

HE'S  
WRONG.









¡GASPE!

I BURST FROM THE DREAM LIKE A DROWNING MAN FROM THE DEPTHS, BUT THE DIM LIGHT OF EARLY MORNING DOES NOTHING TO CHASE AWAY MY SENSE OF LOOMING CATASTROPHE...



**RUFFY!**

...OR MY FEELING OF POWERLESSNESS.

MOUSE IS WORRIED ABOUT ME. I DON'T BLAME HIM.



YEAH, YEAH...

HE'S BEEN FOLLOWING ME AROUND LIKE A MOTHER HEN FOR WEEKS.



DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT. I KNOW THE PLACE IS A MESS.

THINGS HAD BEEN ROUGH LATELY.

BETWEEN FENDING OFF IMMORTAL LUNATICS, THWARTING THE MACHINATIONS OF RIVAL FAERIE COURTS, AND NAVIGATING THE PERILOUS DIVIDE BETWEEN THE CITY'S DISPARATE POWER BROKERS, THERE HADN'T BEEN MUCH TIME FOR CLEANING OR SHOPPING.

I DON'T NEED TO SPEAK CANINE TO KNOW HE WANTS ME TO BUCK UP AND EAT SOMETHING.



**KNOCK KNOCK**



I'LL MAKE A RUN TO THE STORE TODAY, AND CLEAN UP A BIT.

PROMISE.





I WASN'T  
EXPECTING ANY  
VISITORS--NOR,  
IN MY STATE OF  
MIND, DID I  
WANT ANY--

--BUT AT THE VERY  
LEAST, MOUSE'S  
DEMEANOR TOLD ME  
IT WASN'T SOMEONE  
WHO MEANT US  
IMMEDIATE HARM.

**RFF!**

THAT BEING  
SAID, WHEN YOUR  
VISITOR IS A  
SENIOR MEMBER  
OF THE WHITE  
COUNCIL...

...YOU CAN  
NEVER BE  
SURE.

LISTENS-  
TO-WIND...?

GOOD  
MORNING,  
WARDEN DRESDEN.  
MAY I COME  
IN?

I'D ONLY MET  
LISTENS-TO-WIND--  
OR "INJUN JOE,"  
AS MY MENTOR  
EBENEZAR MCCOY  
CALLS HIM. I  
LIKELY OWED  
HIM MY LIFE.\*

AND DEBTS  
ARE TREATED  
WITH DEADLY  
SERIOUSNESS  
IN OUR WORLD.

\*IT HAPPENED IN  
SUMMER KNIGHT.  
--ANTHONY



A FRIEND OF EBENEZAR'S WAS A FRIEND OF MINE...BUT NONETHELESS, MY INSTINCT WAS TO PLAY THINGS CLOSE TO MY CHEST.





LISTENS-TO-WIND, IN ADDITION TO BEING A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL, HAD CENTURIES OF EXPERIENCE ON ME.

YOU NEED MY HELP?

THAT FIRST MEETING OF OURS BEGAN WITH HIM EMERGING FROM A VEIL SO POWERFUL HIS PRESENCE HAD BEEN COMPLETELY MASKED.

I'D THEN PROCEEDED TO FALL ON MY ASS.

I'D BE LEAVING MY CITY VULNERABLE. AFTER ALL WE'VE FACED RECENTLY...

A LOT OF PEOPLE DEPEND ON ME HERE.

SOMETIMES, DISTANCE IS HEALTHY, WARDEN. GET AWAY FROM ALL THIS STEEL AND CEMENT.

LEAVE YOUR ANGER HERE, AND SAVE LIVES IN THE PROCESS.

A...SITUATION IN RURAL MISSISSIPPI HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION. SEVERAL PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED IN BRUTAL FASHION.

THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE NOT EQUIPPED TO CATCH THE PERPETRATORS, WHOMEVER OR WHATEVER THEY ARE.

SOUNDS BAD, BUT AGAIN, WHY ME?

YOU HAVE DEALT WITH SITUATIONS LIKE THIS IN SETTINGS LIKE THE ONE IN MISSISSIPPI.

AND WHILE MY KNOWLEDGE IS VAST, I AM NOT ACCUSTOMED TO PLAYING DETECTIVE.

I WASN'T ABOUT TO TURN DOWN ONE OF MY FEW ALLIES ON THE COUNCIL--

--OR IGNORE INNOCENTS IN DANGER--

--BUT SOME PRIDEFUL PART OF ME DEMANDED IT BE ON MY TERMS.

OKAY, OBI-WAN, I'LL BITE.

BUT I'M DRIVING.



HOURS LATER...

HOW A MAN OF YOUR STATURE CAN SPEND SO MUCH TIME IN A VEHICLE THIS SMALL IS BEYOND ME.

SHE GETS ME WHERE I NEED TO GO. AND BESIDES, I'M ONE OF THOSE GUYS WHO CAN'T STAND TO BE A PASSENGER.

SO I NOTICED.

HAVE YOU SEEN MUCH OF THIS CONTINENT, WARDEN?

I'VE BEEN WHEREVER BUSINESS HAS TAKEN ME. I TEND TO STICK CLOSE TO HOME.

THAT IS A SHAME. THOUGH THE MARCH OF CIVILIZATION AND INDUSTRY HAS CHANGED THE LANDSCAPE, MUCH BEAUTY REMAINS.

IT WILL NOT LAST FOREVER. NOTHING DOES...

...SAVE, PERHAPS, FOR REGRET.

BUT NOW IS NOT THE TIME FOR SUCH TALK. WHAT AWAITS US IN TAYLOR REQUIRES OUR FULL ATTENTION, AND OUR COMBINED POWER TO STOP.

IT WAS THE MOST HE'D SAID IN THE LAST FIVE HOURS. "INTJUN JOE" WAS THE VERY DEFINITION OF INSCRUTABLE.

IN TERMS OF INTEL, HE'D GIVEN ME THE BARE MINIMUM--FOUR MISSING, PRESUMED DEAD, SIGNS OF SUPERNATURAL VIOLENCE.

STOP THE CAR!

BUT--

JUST DO IT!





I LEAPT FROM THE BEETLE LIKE A MADMAN, MY ADRENALINE SURGING FROM PENT UP ANGER AND FRUSTRATION.

