



YOU ARE HIM, AREN'T YOU?

LORD SKATH.

YOU RECOGNIZED THIS SWORD, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS LOST.



YOU...YOU JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS, GIRL. THE SWORD'S FATE WAS IN PLAIN SIGHT DURING A MASSIVE BATTLE. MANY MEN WERE THERE. MANY MEN SAW IT FLY OFF IN THE CHEST OF A DRAGON.

WHY WOULD MY RECOLLECTION MAKE YOU THINK ME TO BE SKATH?



I COULD TELL BY THE TONE OF YOUR VOICE. A WARRIOR FORMS A BOND WITH THEIR WEAPON. THEY REVERE THE ONE THAT SERVES THEM WELL IN BATTLE.



I HEARD THAT REVERENCE IN YOUR VOICE. I--

zurp!



HRRAAGGGH ULEEE...

SPLACHH



Oh FOR...



!koff!
!koff!

FINISHED?

FOR NOW.



SO. IT IS A WOMAN'S INTUITION YOU RELY ON TO IDENTIFY ME, THEN?

IT IS THE APPRAISAL OF A WARRIOR. WILL YOU INSULT ME BY TELLING ME I'M WRONG?




I--

--I WILL NOT. I SIMPLY...I'VE LOST EVERYTHING THAT MADE ME WHO I WAS. I'M NO LONGER USED TO BEING RECOGNIZED. EVEN MY OWN PEOPLE HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL BUT THE LEGEND.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?




DO YOU TRULY CARE, OR ARE YOU SIMPLY LOOKING TO AVOID A SIMILAR FATE?



"I HAD DEALT THE DRAGON A FATAL BLOW, BUT STILL IT WON. THE BEAST MADE OFF WITH MY BLESSED BLADE BURIED IN ITS HEART. AND WITH THE BLADE, I SUSPECT, A PIECE OF MY BEING. I COULD FEEL ITS ABSENCE.


"I KNEW, SOMEHOW, THAT MY GOOD FORTUNE WAS AT AN END. I SOON RETURNED WESTWARD, TO CIMMERIA.

"LIFE HAD LOST MUCH OF ITS LUSTER, BUT I WAS STILL IN NO HURRY TO SURRENDER TO DEATH...INSTEAD, I SURRENDERED MORE FULLY TO DRINK. THE PLEASANT BREW HELPED FILL IN THAT MISSING PIECE OF MYSELF.




"MORE THAN ONCE MY HEAD, MY PRIDE, DEMANDED I MOUNT A QUEST AND SEARCH FOR WHAT I HAD LOST.

"NEWS OF A DRAGON HOARD SENT ME HALFWAY ACROSS THE WORLD, HOPING ONE OF THE BEASTS HAD DISCOVERED MY SWORD IN THE CORPSE OF ONE OF THEIR OWN AND TAKEN IT FOR THEMSELVES.



"MY SEARCHES DID LITTLE MORE THAN HELP ME PASS THE YEARS. I FOUND MANY DRAGON HOARDS...



"BUT THE TREASURES THEY CONTAINED WERE ONLY SO IN THE MINDS OF DUMB BEASTS."

"I RETURNED HOME FROM MY FINAL QUEST TO DISCOVER SANDAK WAITING FOR ME."

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?!

WHO ARE YOU?

I AM SANDAK, THE NEW MASTER OF THESE LANDS.

LIKE HELL YOU ARE! THESE LANDS ARE MINE! I AM SKATH OF THE NINE WOLVES! SURVIVOR OF DEATH'S PIT AND THE VICTOR OF THE BATTLE OF THE VALLEY OF THE SUN! I--

