

# The Sundering

## A Caravan Master's Tale

31st Eleint 1485 DR

Father,


I am taken once again with the gift you presented me on the occasion of our last meeting. This device you called a compass is truly a thing o' wonder, allowing me to unerringly find my way in even the harshest weather, I nearly escaped the corrupted dwarves. Now that I am here in the halls o' the Battlehammer Clan, I find myself unconsciously holding it within my hand for strength for these good folk are all but lost in this vicious season. I must seek Silverstream's council to rescue his daughter.

The Clan is feuding. A schism has formed. Those who have turned away from Danc Silverstream now make their home in the Halls of Black Ice. Aye, it seems the rumors are true and the Dwarven Valley is the source o' this new substance, Black Ice. Those loyal to Silverstream have sworn off its use though. Only the Dwarves who dwell within the Halls of Black Ice make use of it, forging the substance to suit their needs. Zombie attacks have continued and gotten worse in the deep tunnels. Mining has been curtailed and the Dwarves of Danc Stokely, always scrambling to survive, stare into a bleak Winter that promises only dissolution. The fury of the icy weather has abated a bit, thank Moradin, and a few brave, enterprising, and, some would say, daft peddlers have traveled to the dwarves halls from Ten Towns bringing meager goods and news.

Rumors swirl of an upsurge of the Cult of Auril. Many folk of the Ten Towns begin to whisper that focused worship of the Frost Maiden is the only pathway to survive the Winter. Only by Auril's blessing do they believe the folk of Ten Towns will survive and prosper in what is to come; Winter Unending. It seems the epicenter of this new movement is coming from Bremen, one o' the Ten Towns, where a charismatic merchant is loudly proclaiming for all folk o' Icewind Dale to Worship Auril.

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However this worship has had dire consequences; already one merchant from the South lands visiting Bremen has been put to death in the name of appeasing Auril. I now believe that this cult was behind the trouble that found Hengar o' the Elk in Bryn Shandar. There must be secret cells of Auril's faithful everywhere in the Ten Towns.

I look at the compass you gifted me often and I search for a way out of this situation, however I despair that even with its guidance I shall fail. If only my stalwart companions were about, perhaps an accord could be forged between the feuding dwarves and survival assured for all. As it stands now, neither side will reach across the divide and so both face only death or subservience to the Frost Maiden.

May Moradin's forge keep you and us,

Bjorne