

To the heroes who represent the last of all hope for life on Tauren.

I'm sorry for your circumstances, and I'm sorry that I won't be there to assist you in your quest to defeat the Lich, but I know this letter will find you, that herein you will find the flawless diamond you need to resurrect your friend, and that within the caves to which you retreat you'll find a cleric to perform the ritual. I hope this, and the fact that I convinced the Duerger to save your life, makes up for my attempts to delay you and the nasty wound Ryncor took. You too will do what you must to save Tauren from the Lich. I will now share with you the vision that led me to take such action:

When I hired you, I had recently had my first prophetic dream of the Lich: I saw a black Helm in the likeness of a demon's head, and it filled with smoke, and from the smoke a head appeared, and from the head a neck, and so on until the Lich again stood. He who was defeated and dead had arisen.

During our travels, I had a second prophetic dream. I saw the Lich in the center of a pentagon drawn in blood, and at each of the five points of the pentagon was an artifact of great evil. At the top of the pentagon was the black Helm that revived the Lich, but I did not see the other items, nor did I see what the ritual does, but I smelled sulfur and my skin blistered from the heat, and I felt in my bones that it meant doom for all life in Tauren.

On the eve of our arrival in Alexandria, I had my third prophetic dream, and I saw the second of the Lich's five ritual components: a heap of black coins, and I heard the screams of the damned whose souls were trapped within. From the screams emerged a whisper, and that whisper said my name into the Lich's ear, and so doomed me. I saw that same coin inside a box, and I saw that box opened by Orryn who unwittingly sealed my fate.

Since then, I have had three more prophetic dreams.

In the first, I saw a dreadful sentient staff that was hell-bent on corruption, enslavement, and destruction, and I saw that staff wielded by the high priestess of the Drow on her throne in the east, which I fear has already fallen to the Lich, most of the poor souls trapped within the heap of black coins.

In the second, I saw a great and terrible black ring with the power to make its wearer nearly invulnerable, and to steal the souls of those it's unholy beam felled. I saw the ring surrounded by a lake of magma, and I heard the rumbling of giant steps. Head south, deeper into the Underdark, and you will find the resting place of the ring.

In the third, I saw a talisman of ultimate evil, and I saw the Lich using it to open a fissure to the Nine Hells, and I saw his enemies fall through. I saw the talisman in a chest in the center of an Illithid hive, deep in the bowels of the Underdark where Mind Flayers roam.

If the Lich assembles these five items and completes his ritual, I fear for the fate of the world.

By the time you read this, I'll be dead. The Lich will have spoken my name, and the Power Word will have destroyed me.

You are Tauren's final hope.

Hopefully,

Samuel Bear Banksy

A/K/A - the Old Man