



By: Charlie

EASER

The Sword Bearer

by Charlie

Chapter 1

Moving. Fern thought he would never see his house again. Actually he knew so. He was climbing the ladder to the attic. He wanted to see every part of the house before he left; even the attic; the dreaded attic. The rule of never going into the attic had been passed down for generations, but his parents were talking with the real estate agent, so he knew he had a chance. There was an eerie darkness. He lit a lamp from the corner of the room. The dim light of the lamp illuminated a small trap door in the wall. He went in.

Fern crawled down the long dark shaft. It seemed endless. After what felt like an hour of crawling, Fern saw light. He rapidly sped up. But to his disappointment, the light was just a candle, faintly illuminating a quickly handwritten note. It read:

Help. It is coming. Lies by the Golem's eye.
III Right
IX Left
VII Straight
I Up
Start at XXXVIII

Etched into the floor were an eye and a phrase: "Dragon death at Golem's eye." On the back of the handwritten note he discovered one more clue "Golem: Statue with life."

Fern noticed some torches lining the wall. Each one bore an intricate design resembling a dragon and the symbol of the eye he saw by the note.

A thunderous roar pierced the silence. A wave of heat rushed in. A pipe on the ceiling burst open, and with its contents released, extinguished the torches. He peered into one of the torches. He saw a number: XXXIV. He figured that's what "Start at XXXVIII" referred to. Four more torches. He cautiously kept on walking, but after four more torches, he saw no place to turn right. He checked the torch. It said XXX. He turned around and went about 1000 feet until he reached XXXVIII. The numbers were going down as he walked forward. Fern thought, "This is all starting to make sense. I'll just follow the clues that come and I'll make it."

One problem - still no place to turn. He felt around the right side of the wall. A circular panel swung around showing the shape of a hand. He lined up his hand with the shape. It burned. A hidden door swung open. He walked through.

Chapter 2

Fern surveyed the ceiling, which looked to be about fifty feet high, whereas dividers separating the room into a maze were about fifteen feet high. He followed the instructions, but about halfway through, he hindered for a moment to rest. He leaned against a wall with “rest” painted on it. Denying all physical laws it began to topple over on top of him, where with most phenomena it would fall away from him, tilting away from the source of the force.

He ran, but the wall kept on falling. Wherever he went, there was no place to turn off, and even if there was, turning would have taken him in the wrong direction.

It was coming closer, closer yet. He had to turn but the wall in the passage that he would have liked to turn off to burst into an enormous pile of debris, due to the falling wall being attached to it. The wall hit the next over and ground to a halt about a foot away from the floor, leaving only a miniscule passage to crawl through.

He wriggled through until he came to a blockade. The face of a dragon cast in stone protruded from the wall. Etched into the bottom was a riddle: “I wither the years forever, but I never show my face. I cannot be seen. I cannot be touched. But I am with everyone forever. What am I?”

He thought for several moments, but couldn't imagine what the answer could be. He looked around and saw a clock as part of the statue. With that, Fern came to the answer: “Time.” The clock had to lead to some passage. He remembered: “Golem, statue with life.”

If this was the Golem, where was the life in the statue? But for now, how to get through was the question. There was no door.

Chapter 3

The answer to the riddle was: Time. So, maybe he had to do something with the clock. Set it, perhaps? As soon as Fern checked his watch, and set the clock to the correct time, it clicked into place and opened to a towering spiral staircase plastered with intricate designs. He went up. The air got warmer as he advanced. He saw a door.

Fern slowly and cautiously opened the door. An oppressive heat rushed in. He, a boy of a mere 12 years, found himself standing face to face with a being, which had slain hundreds of great warriors and lords.

A dragon.

The gargantuan red beast was utterly gruesome from its long sharp claws; its gem-splattered chest, its colossal wings, to its head with enormously deadly fangs, and searing saliva trickling down from its mouth to its mane, evaporating into a mist of stench along the way, and tail wrapped with certainly lethal spikes. Here was the life in the statue.

He would have much preferred it to be only the statue. How would he ever defeat it? His uncombed white blond hair fluttered with each guttural rumbling roar emitted by the dragon. He frantically ran around the room, evading huge bursts of flame, until he came to an armory at the back of the chamber. There he found a sack of throwing knives, a quiver full of arrows, and a bow. Perfect.

He had excelled at the archery range while at summer camp. The dragon should be as easy as the moving target bull's eye at Level 13. He would think of

it that way, even though he knew it was wishful thinking. It was perplexing trying to simultaneously attain two objectives: Finding a place to aim, which would have an effect on the savage brute, while still evading the fiery beast.

Fern realized he didn't stand a chance without a strategy, and absolute precision. With no time for observation or planning, he would have to rely solely on intuition. Something told him this dragon was different from those told in legends and tales. Capitalizing on the dragon's natural predatory instinct, he ran, enticing the dragon to chase after him. At the point where he felt the hairs on the back of his neck incinerate, coupled with the ear-splitting shriek of the dragon, and to his dismay, the burning of all but one of his arrows, he knew he was close enough. Fern turned around and dove face first towards the dragon. The monster's inertia caused the dragon to pass over Fern. As the dragon did so, Fern rolled on his back, and without time to stand up, he sat up forward just enough to notch his single undamaged arrow, drew back, constantly shifting his aim as the dragon came to a stop, and as the beast got up on his hind legs and pulled in his wings together in preparation to turn about face and attack anew, he saw that the scales of the dragon had lifted up just enough to uncover small patches of flesh the size of an arrowhead.

He held his breath to steady himself and released. The arrow soared through the thick air and disappeared. What if he had missed? As the dragon completed its 180°, he wondered if he would have to use the knives, which he had no practice in and assumed he couldn't throw with any accuracy more than a yard due to their weight. He heard a small object fall to the ground, and looked up to see that the tip of his arrow had taken the place of one of the gems on the dragon's chest, and ironically was a brighter hue of red than the jewel itself. The dragon let out one last horrible shriek of a roar and crumpled to the ground with an earth shattering thud.

“Little strokes fell great oaks,” said a voice in the back. Fern whirled around.

Chapter 4

“Welcome, young traveler of Teralle Comnor. You have reached Kyrem-Ban. Tell me your name, and what brings you through this treacherous passage through two worlds.” Said a formidable young man with midnight black hair and blue eyes

“I am Ealornín, but I go by Fern.”

“Is it true Ealornín, son of Mestial, heir to Theinstinor, Lord of Kyrem-Ban?”

“I am not usually referred to as that, but my father is Mestial. But I don't know much about Theinstinor, other than that he had disappeared.”

“Well, Theinstinor had disappeared to here, to Kyrem-Ban. And so it was that our first king had come, but he died in battle, and his 325th heir left for Teralle Comnor, so his heirs had lived there until now, when you came. Hail Lord Ealornín, the king of Kyrem-Ban has returned. You will take the place of Elarthon, who has taken leadership of this land until the heir of Theinstinor comes back. You will take leadership at your coming of age. Be careful. We have seen suspicious acts from Elarthon. Now come to the palace in Citelas.” He beckoned Fern to come along.

Chapter 5

As Fern walked with the man, this person said, “I am Deramor, leader of the high council of Kyrem-Ban. We will meet with Elarthon.”

The two walked on until they came to a great citadel. Its walls were dark black with three white towers. One of them was colossal. It was in the shape of a cone with two wide spirals running up it to form three spikes jutting out of the center tower, and sending beams of light to the center of the tower. It looked exactly as he had imagined Barad-dur from *Lord of the Rings* to be like.

A radiant streak of light suddenly shot out and reflected in the ocean, and then a beacon far away on the other side of the sea lit as a reply.

Deramor said, “That beacon is a message to the palace of Morduroi. A signal that Elarthon has allied himself with Morduroi, and betrayed us. Now let me recite you a poem explaining your quest as it runs in your tongue:

Ere Earth was forged in fire and clay
Lay bleak fields of deathly gray
The mountains rose great guarding walls
The palace built the great stone halls
All was fresh, all was new
Until the end of the first Epoch

The second Epoch was anew
But the great peace was askew
Morduroi was rising.
He stole the treasure of the Elves
The blade the Elves forged

Theinstínor bore the weapon
Morduroí stole the blade
'Tis the toil of the 500th heir of Theinstínor

It was the end of the Epoch,
When his 325th heir left for Teralle Comnor.

Now we live in darkness,
And are waiting for his 500th heir to take what is ours.
Ealornín, the great Ealornín.

“Why is my name at the end?” Fern asked.

“In our tongue, Ealornín means Sword-Bearer, and you are to be the
Sword-Bearer because you are his 500th heir.”

“But why was I named Ealornín? Did my parents know about all of this?”
he pondered.

“They received a letter suggesting the name.”

Chapter 6

They walked into the grand throne room. The back of the throne was hundreds of feet high. On the seat sat a man, grand and powerful. He bore a great staff. This man was the traitorous holder of the throne, Elarthon.

“Sir! Seeing as you’ve sent signals of allegiance to Morduroi I think it is time I take my seat of power. But I will hand the leadership to Deramor as I have to retrieve the blade from Morduroi.” Fern said, realizing he should fulfill the message of the poem, to prevent evil from taking over. This was what he was destined to do, so he couldn’t let people down. He tasted a newfound rush of courage.

“MWA-HA-HA!” cackled the false king. “It is my duty to take the throne if the king has to go off, so I am afraid we can’t let Deramor do it. I will have to continue to be in power.”

“But as king, I assign Deramor because you have allied yourself with Morduroi.”

“I think Deramor and I will have to duel to settle this.”

Deramor said, “Go Fern. Gather three others for your quest.”

Fern decided that the best place to start looking for people was the Swordmanship Guild. After dueling many strong opponents, Fern found 2 who stood out, their names: Jalornis and Lilas. He invited them along. Then they went to the apothecary, and found a young boy trained in medicine, his name, Talatius. Then they set off.

Chapter 7

Ealornin, Jalornis, Talatius, and Lilas walked out to the gates of Citelas.

Lilas, who went by Lilac, said, "Here we go, journey into the impossible."

Jalornis, who went by Bluejay, said, "She makes a good point."

Talatius said, "So, let's review the plan. March into a super powerful demon kingdom, destroy some ancient guy with a special sword, take the sword, and return. Easy enough, right?"

"Yup," said Lilac.

"Great," said Bluejay, his voice laden with sarcasm.

"Let's get going," said Fern.

They walked for days, but turned around to the sound of someone running up, but saw only, a plain, dotted with trees. Suddenly a man appeared whom they later recognized to be Deramor.

He said, "So, I fought Elarthon, and I was winning, but Morduroi came up and killed Elarthon, so that Morduroi could take the throne of Kyrem Ban, then decided to rule from Morduroi himself. That's when I knew I couldn't win. So I came here, but Morduroi's servants followed me." They heard hoof beats approaching from behind.

Chapter 8

As a small band of armed horsemen rode up, Fern drew his sword. The others followed suit. As the battle began, Fern took two of them down with wide, sweeping blows. Bluejay and Lilac grabbed the horses of those who had been smitten by Fern, and battled on horseback. Deramor slew many, but was kidnapped and ridden off with.

When the servants of Morduroi rode off, Talatius said, "Quick, follow the evil dudes. They'll lead us to Morduroi." With that, they rode off.

Chapter 9

As they rode, they passed the weakened riders who survived the battle, then they came to the town. They bought more rations and found finer, better horses. Then they granted themselves some moments for much needed rest. Fern had a dream. He heard a voice.

It said: "Alone you will lose the battle, stop, and fail to destroy the evil one."

With that, Fern woke up. "We have to go," he yelled. As they rode off, Fern explained, "I had a dream, in which someone said, 'Alone you will lose the battle, stop, and fail to destroy the evil one.'"

Lilac replied, "Meh, that's just nonsense. Let's get going."

Chapter 10

They rode for days, and came across some quilipods, five legged furry creatures filled with fury. They fought hard, but Talatius was reaching for the leader's heart, but got a big scratch on his arm. Lilac killed the leader, then the five-legged wolf-like creatures retreated to their home in Mora-Sarat.

Fern said, "We lost Deramor, and one of us is wounded. I think you guys should go home, because this is too dangerous." Fern thought the dream meant he would lose any way and he should go alone.

Bluejay said, "I think Fern is right. We should go."

Fern said, "Now don't get me wrong, you're extremely helpful, but this is too dangerous for you guys."

"Okey-Dokey," said Lilac.

"Goodbye," said Fern.

Chapter 11

Days later, Fern arrived in Mora-Sarat. He suddenly cried out, "Curse you powers of fate. You have sent me through this path of despair. You have taken away two of my friends. Curse you powers of fate, and all you have sent me through." He wept and wailed with only the lonely sky as his audience.

After a moment when he had fully regained his composure, he turned south towards the palace. Fern halted at a monstrous sea of guards. He wondered how he would ever get past them. Fern had an idea. He saw a general, quickly knocked him out, took his uniform, and went on with the rest of the troops.

When Fern came to the army, he yelled to trick the army, "Tilavor killed Commander. Hunt him down. I will alert the great lord, Morduroi."

Fern knew that Tilvaor was "sword-bearer" in the language of Mora-Sarat, because in the battle with the riders he had been called that, so he had asked Deramor what it meant. He ran to the castle, bustling through the door. Morduroi was waiting for him. He was too smart to be fooled by Fern's costume.

He said, "Reveal yourself, Tilavor."

Fern took his helmet off, then began to battle. Fern's fighting power had grown so much throughout the journey that it began to seem like he would win. Fern noticed Morduroi made most of his blows from the top. Fern ducked under, but things began to turn around. Morduroi twisted his sword around Fern's, disarming him.

Morduroi called to one of his servants, "Pin him to the wall." The servant did so.

Another servant, who brought Deramor in, said, "Here is the friend of Tilavor."

"Here it comes," said Morduroi, who began to advance his sword towards Fern's neck.

Then Deramor called out, "Servant of Morduroi, do you want to aid in saving the world or destroying it?"

A sudden change came over the servant holding Fern. He said, "True, Deramor. You know, Morduroi, I may pose an even bigger threat than Tilavor, so why not kill me instead?"

"Because Tilavor would kill me," Said Morduroi.

"If he doesn't kill you, I will."

"Servant," Morduroi bellowed. "After I kill Tilavor, you kill the one holding onto him," said Morduroi to another servant.

The servant of Morduroi holding onto Fern grabbed Morduroi's sword by the blade and swung it so the hilt knocked out the one planning to kill him, then handed it to Fern, who thrust it towards Morduroi, who screamed:

“NOOOOOOO!!!!”

Then Deramor said, “Stop. This man, Morduroi, is powerless without his sword. Spare him.”

The dream made sense. Fern had lost, but was brought to victory by someone else. He stopped Morduroi, but never killed him.

Fern did so. The servant who had been holding onto Fern said, “Come home to Citelas, and reclaim your throne.”

And so it was that the third Epoch came to close, as the 500th heir of Theinstinor brought light back to the realm of Kyrem-Ban.

THE END