

Baker Anita**"The Splendour Of A Thousand Swords"**

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ALTARUS: Gaze deep into the mists with your spirit-
eyes, Xerxes... look far, and tell me
What you see.

XERXES: I see a land far to the north... a vast empire of
dark endless moors and snow-
Crowned mountains... a land of brooding citadels and
warrior-kings who hail to grim gods.

ALTARUS: Look well, Xerxes, for enlightenment hides
within the fog-swathed vales of
Hyperborea...

The King's Dream:

By the onyx sceptre of my forefathers, the air is
churning with auguries of dethronement...

Impending dread thus prophesized!

In a dream I was bade ride the argent-eyed unicorn to
the Ring of Stones...

There a torrent of viscid slime assailed me, as pipes
and horns sang the clarion of my
Dissolution...

And the usurpation of my ancient azure throne.

Assassins stalk the nighted halls of my palace...
poisoned blades and chalices surround
Me.

I thirsted for a balm, but my thirst was slaked by an
envenomed draught.

My swordarm shackled by tendrils of sloth... enthralled
by the chasmed gloom...

Borne upon wings of labyrinthine dread... I awaken!

I shall seek the counsel of the sorcerer, keeper of the
ancient scrolls of wisdom, and the
Crystals of Power...

The Words of the Sorcerer:

My liege, great and regal king... the mists disclose their
secrets... you are destined to

Wield a great dark power. Drink deep of the potions of
the apothecary, for upon thee now I

Bestow a shard of the mystic Crystal of Mera... sacred
artefact of the Atlantean mages,

Won in battle by our legions. My liege, the Crystal of
Mera shall unveil the truth lurking

Hidden in thy most fever-haunted dreams...

The Voice of the Harbinger:

The land awash with spilled blood, and viscera torn
forth from the sundered dead...

Gorge the earth with flesh darkened with the claw and
fang of war... rent open the
Ravenous maws of worms...

The King:

The Crystal illumines dark secrets, the truth is known...
a dire and ancient threat is ranged

Against me.

Hearken, the clarion is upon the winds, now the call to
arms is upon us all,

Grim warriors, take up thy spears and hone thy
gleaming swords.

Archers, string thy bows, brave knights, saddle the
steeds of war,

The glory of battle is nigh at last, our banner shall fly
this day in victory!

My warriors, a legacy shall this day be wrought by our
blades, decreed by the gods,

Blessed by the blood of vanquished foes. Our destiny
beckons...

Lord Angsaar, Dark Liege of Chaos:

Come, great king of Hyperboria, march against me
with your splendid legions and

Shimmering swords. I, the Bane of the Atlantean Kings,
the Scourge of Lemuria, Archfoe

Of the Immortals of Ultima Thule, shall Crush you! I
shall visit a thousand plagues upon

Your realm, and wreak untold havoc and bloody
carnage until I have your throne... and

Your soul!

ALTARUS: And thus, flanked by the splendour of azure
banners, a vast army marched

Forth from the great walls of the Imperial City of
Hyperborea, and at the forefront of the

Mighty legions, astride an ebon war-stallion, rode the
king, sunlight glinting upon his

Splendid armour... compelled by dreams, and guided
by the Crystal of Mera...

XERXES: Where? Where did the king's path take him?

ALTARUS: The king was compelled to lead his forces to
the shadow-haunted Mountains

Of the Dead, a grim and brooding place steeped in
dark and ancient legendry. Alone he

Rode into the gaping maw of a huge cave hewn into the
side of the tallest mountain

Countless ages past by unknown hands. For three full
days and nights he did not emerge

From the cave... until, at last, he rode forth from the
eldritch mountain once more, a terrible

Knowledge shadowed in his icy eyes, and bearing in
his gauntleted fist a huge black
Sword, a magnificent ebon blade which no human
blacksmith ever forged. Fearsome
Sorcerous power crackled within the yard of black
steel, dancing upon it's searingly honed,
Glyph-scored blade... and it's bejewelled, dragon-
carved hilt did whisper arcane secrets to
The king in a strange, elder tongue.

XERXES: But master, what powers did this blade
possess? What secrets did it hold?

ALTARUS: Many centuries ago, before even were
waged the Great Wars between the
Ancient kingdoms of Atlantis and Hyperborea, Lord
Angsaar did rise from his charnel-tomb
And do battle with a powerful immortal warrior-shaman
over the possession of the elder
Crystals of Mera, mystic gems of unparalleled magical
potency. Angsaar, his power
Swelled by forces from the vast Outer Darkness, did
smite his foe to the brink of
Destruction... but, with his fading sorceries, the
immortal mystically transferred his life-
Essence into his great black sword, and scattered the
magic crystals across the galaxy,
Leaving Angsaar with a hollow victory and forcing him
to return once more to his dark
Chamber of Slumber. The sword was lost for centuries,
as were the crystals, until the one
Gem to remain on this world was discovered deep
beneath the northern seas by an
Ancient Atlantean wizard. And the sword... legends
spoke of how it's final resting place
Would be made known by the sorceries of the last
crystal only when the blade's power
Would once again ne needed to battle the Chaos-liege.
This was the immortal's final, most
Powerful spell... upon the reawakening of Angsaar, the
sorcerous energies and undying
Lifeforce encased within the blade would be
transferred to it's wielder... aye, the one who
Discovered the Shadow-Sword would be imbued with
the power of the immortal, and by
The art of elder spellcraft, he would do battle with his
ancient nemesis once more...

XERXES: Then there looms such a cataclysmic battle!

ALTARUS: And so, from his Black Citadel, the Chaos-
liege did send forth his Horde of
Wraiths to engage the army of the king...

THE KING:

Behold, a legion of undead fiends meets us upon the

field of war.

Face me, Scourge of Lemuria, I wield thy bane, the
Shadow-Sword... (and darksome
Sorceries now empower me with thunderous might!)
Hearken, the clarion is upon the winds, now the call to
arms is upon us all,
The glory of battle is nigh at last, into the fray we ride!
XERXES: The outcome, master... who left the field
victorious? Did the king prevail?
ALTARUS: The mists begin to disperse... for now, the
images fade. That tale shall have to
Wait 'til another day...
Lyrics: Byron
Music: Jonny Maudling

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