

Notes on Neverember's Enigma

By late 1487 DR, it had become clear to those with the right connections that the Open Lord had begun another of his secretive enterprises. A great deal of quiet attention was turned upon this matter, not the least of which was our own.

Of course, when there are many searching for answers, it is prudent to keep as careful an eye upon the other searchers as upon that for which you search. It was from the Roanishomus we learned that Neverember had sent agents to Candlekeep to make discreet inquiries regarding 'an archmage named Golonn.' The Roanishomus mistook this intelligence, first believing that the Enigma ultimately concerned the dark elves by way of the Sarcene, Archmage of Myerghennargau, and their expending great energy in pursuing rumors of Galani, an Archmage of Ancient Netheril.

Golonn was the true name of interest, however. The Stone of Golonn. According to some histories, it was brought to Abeir-Tonil when the ancient floating city of Xripheu, capital of the Abolethic Sovereignty, first plummeted to the world and settled deep below the Sea of Fallen Stars. According to others, an aboleth who came to Abeir-Tonil before the arrival of Xripheu created the Stone. Or perhaps he fled to Abeir-Tonil carrying the Stone and Xripheu came in pursuit of their prize. Some versions of the tale claim that the Stone was forged during the primeval battles between Sharr and Selune, in the very moment that the world of Tonil was formed.

Whatever the truth, the Stone of Golonn was held by the Abolethic Sovereignty within the vaults of Xripheu as the world of Abeir, only to be lost during the Wailing Years.

Of far more interest is what the Stone is capable of. Whether it predates or co-dates the creation of Tonil, in arcane terms this gives the Stone a position of primacy, making it capable of effects which no magic item or artifact created in these younger days could possibly duplicate.

When the proper ritual is performed, the Stone can utterly eradicate a memory or piece of information, wiping it clean from scrolls and inscriptions while simultaneously stripping it from every living soul on Toril except for the person who is attuned to the Stone. The Stone itself also retains the knowledge, making it the ultimate repository of countless ages of knowledge deemed valuable enough to hide from the world. Exactly what piece of knowledge Neverember sought to claim from the Stone pales utterly in comparison to the totality of secrets which its owner can literally hold in the palm of their hands.

The ritual required for the Stone to destroy a piece of knowledge requires a second abolethic artifact, a small tetrahedron of red jade. We now believe that this artifact remains in Lord Neverember's possession.

It was those gossipmongers the Brassfeathers who first babbled out the revelation that Neverember had embezzled half a million gold dragons from the treasures of Waterdeep. Half a million dragons which had seemingly vanished from the knowledge of man, woman, and fae.

It was then that we realized that, unlike ourselves, Neverember had not been captivated by the secrets held by the Stone. He wished to forge a new secret of his own. We are now certain that he used the Stone to hide the location in which he has secreted the embezzled dragons. As such, it is virtually certain that the only path to this hoard lies through the Stone itself.

Notes on the Mplainskyer Vault

In addition to the Stone of Golann, our own researches indicated that Lord Neverember had been researching the religious mummery of the Mplainskyer dwarves.

Class Mplainskyer were the first to begin excavating under what is now Waterdeep. The earliest portions of Undermountain were, in fact, the Underhalls in which they made their homes and wrought their mithral-craft. They were worshippers of Dumathoin, the Keeper of the Mountain's Secrets.

When we learned of the Stone's relationship to the keeping of secrets, it seemed clear to us that Neverember's two esoteric pursuits must be linked. The nature of this link, however, eluded us until our attention turned to the ceremonial vaults which the Mplainskyer once built. Their cult believed that Dumathoin encoded his secrets into the veins of ore and precious stones he placed in the mountains he raised from the earth for the dwarven people. In their mining, the dwarves supposedly released Dumathoin's secrets into the world. This angered Dumathoin and created a period of discord between the dwarves and the Mplainskyer, the council of dwarven gods. In order to appease their petty gods, the Mplainskyer would mystically bind the 'secrets of the mountain' into items of finely-wrought dwarfcraft and then make offerings of it to Dumathoin by securing them within their ceremonial vaults.

One of these vaults had been built near the Underhalls, most likely somewhere beneath what is now Waterdeep. We quickly discovered, however, that the knowledge of its location has been lost. Indeed, the more we delved into this matter, the clearer it became that there was a very specific pattern to the loss of this knowledge. Although a recherche topic, once we had found the proper sources from past ages it was fairly trivial to find any number of facts regarding the Vault. The only piece of information that was systemically missing from every account was its location.

It is difficult to say for certain, but it seems overwhelmingly likely that this loss is consistent with a Golann-wipe. The knowledge lost in such a wipe is very specific, and if someone had sought to eliminate the knowledge of the Vault's location, it would nevertheless leave other lore regarding the Vault intact, in just such a fashion as we discovered it.

The first suspicion was that Neverember had been seeking the location of the Mplainskyr Vault and had similarly concluded that it was a secret which could now only be learned from the Stone.

When Neverember's true interest in the Stone became clear to us, however, we quickly concluded that it was Neverember himself who had used the Stone to hide the Vault's location. Furthermore, it is recorded that the Vault was looted during the dark elf invasion which ended the Mplainskyr civilization and its secrets, whatever they may have been, were scattered to the corners of the world. Whatever there may be of value within the Vault, therefore, must have been placed there by Neverember.

The doors of a Mplainskyr Vault were ceremonially sealed. Opening the doors required a single a dragonscale to be laid upon the bas relief of the sun and then struck while lit by sunlight. If the doors should shut upon us while we stood within the Vault, they can reputedly be opened from within by simply laying a hand upon them.

Notes on the Disposition of the Eyes

As one of numerous inquiries, we discovered a hiding place beneath the crypt of Lord Dagult's late wife. Although we initially believed the powerful magical item we discovered there to be Neverember's Enigma, its identity and purpose eluded us until we became aware of the Stone of Golann.

It is now clear that Lord Dagult had the Stone of Golann blinded by removing its Eyes, and that the artifact we recovered was Alethea's Eye. Although it seems certain that Dagult's intention was focused on increasing the difficulty of anyone uncovering his own secrets, one is nevertheless left with the impression of a small child defacing that which they cannot understand out of petty spite. Nevertheless, the complexity of the game has multiplied and we seek now not one Golann Artifact, but several.

Dagult's Eye was kept close by the Lord Protector, who carried it with him to Neverwinter and most likely had it on his person when Isral depose him as Open Lord. Nevertheless, Dagult's Eye was stolen from him by the Zheentarii and held for a time within the Kdat Towers. We attempted to seize the eye from Maershoon, but found our efforts repulsed by the energy field surrounding the Towers. Before we could obtain one of the pass-amulets which allow access, Dagult's Eye was lost when Maershoon sent it as part of an embassy to Savathan. Savathan had Maershoon's agents slain and took Dagult's Eye for himself.

Brevaer's Eye was held by Lord Dagult's son. This Eye appears to have been taken from Brevaer during his kidnapping, although it is currently unclear to us whether its ultimate disposition lies with the agents of Savathan or Maershoon.