

The Tragic Tale of the Ageless One

Herein and hidden from my players, I detail the behind-the-scenes story of the true villain of Waterdeep: Dragon Heist.

As readers of my blog will know, Andrew, who plays the fighter Regizar in our campaign, wanted his character to turn evil. I gave him a magic item that appeared to be an ordinary pair of *Goggles of Infravision*. In reality, this is a legendary homebrew item called *The Zeitbrille*, which is German for Time Goggles. It has several magic abilities, and one serious side effect. It slowly turns the player's alignment into Chaotic Evil. And later becomes possessed by Talos, the evil god of Chaos.

As the story has progressed, Regizar started off as Lawful Neutral, then turned Neutral, and then Andrew struggled to play him as Chaotic Neutral. In addition, as Regizar becomes more attuned to the item, new abilities open up. Chief among these has been the ability to reroll any one outcome per day. I always describe this event as a sense of *déjà vu*. All the other players see Regizar fail at something, but in the same moment they also see him succeed. They remember both events occurring, but the success is the one that had any effect.

All the other players have written this off as some sort of "Luck" ability and they assume that Regizar's worsening behavior is merely the player, Andrew, being a jerk. Soon, I hope they come the false opinion that this is some sort of curse and it can be cured by a *Remove Curse* spell. It can't.

In addition, I've dropped numerous hints about something called The Ageless One. In the Forgotten Realms, each year is given a formal name. 1479DR is called The Year of The Ageless One. Canonically, this refers to Elminster, who is the protagonist

of numerous Forgotten Realms novel. I ignore this piece of lore. 1479 is also the last year of the 4th Edition of D&D. To transition into 5th Edition, Wizards of the Coast, made an event, the Second Sundering, which is a mumble-jumble of time and space that essentially reset the clock in the Forgotten Realms. I want my players to be the catalyst that causes this Second Sundering, bringing into existence all that came after.

So now we come to the moment that the true nature of the *Zeitbrille* is revealed and The Ageless One is born.

Regizar Imperium, a landless noble, is on a quest to regain his title. He has heard a rumor that Oszbur Malanka, a simple wine merchant, is actually a Masked Lord, one of the secret leaders of Waterdeep. Ostensibly, Regizar is going to this merchant to buy some wine for their newly opened Trollskull Tavern, but really to see if Oszbur can be used to help him regain his title.

En route to the merchant, Regizar passes Garrick Agundar, their friend, noble, and occasional bard companion. Garrick states, "Well met, Regizar. I was just on my way to your manor, to see how it went last night. And maybe to see Elsa too." Regizar says that he will return to the Tavern shortly and meet him there, and they part ways.

Once at Oszbur's Fine Spirits, I ask Andrew if Regizar is wearing his *Zeitbrille* Goggles, and he replies that Regizar is always wearing his goggles. Regizar enters the store to find it empty except for Oszbur, who is sweeping the floor. They have a few minutes of chit-chat about Elverquisst, Zzar, Firewine Brandy, and Guldathan Nectar.

Regizar then ham-fistedly segues into asking Oszbur about the Masked Lords. Oszbur is taken aback and denies knowing anything about them. Regizar passes an

Intuition check and suspects that he is lying. Regizar accuses Oszbur of lying and demands that he tell the truth. Oszbur orders Regizar to leave his store or he will call the Watch. I ask the player if Regizar is angry. He says yes. Excellent. Give into your hate.

Suddenly, Regizar is no longer a solid person. He is still part of this world and yet somehow not. He is ethereal, in what I call the Time Plane. As he watches the world around him, he sees himself and Oszbur standing in the shop, arguing. Then the world starts moving backwards. Regizar and Oszbur are once again having a conversation about wine, and then Regizar One is walking backwards out of the shop, while Oszbur is moving about unsweeping his floor. Now Regizar is no longer in the shop and Oszbur is still going about his business, untidying up his store. During this time, no one else entered or rather, exited, the shop. At this moment, Oszbur is standing directly in front of Regizar's position with his back turned to him. I ask the player what Regizar does.

"I attack and execute Oszbur." Roll to hit with advantage. He rolls a 19 which is a critical hit for him. Regizar Two suddenly reappears out of the Time Plane and plunges his sword deep into the back of Oszbur the wine merchant. He dies instantly.

"I quickly search him." You don't find anything of note except a few gold pieces in a purse. "I leave that, and search his bedroom." In his bedroom, you find the usual stuff; table, bed, chest and a very large wardrobe. "I search that, looking for secret doors." Roll with advantage. "Success." You find a secret wall, behind which you find one of the outfits that the Masked Lords use while out in public. You also find a journal. "I take everything here." Andrew continues, "How much time do I have?"

Andrew, you can travel through time. *You have all the time in the world.*

"Can I re-enter the Time Plane?" I don't want him abusing this power just yet, so I tell him that he can't quite remember the steps that he used to get there. But it is still over 10 minutes before Regizar even had his conversation with Garrick.

"I clean the blood off my sword, and exit out the back door. Then I run to where I met Garrick earlier and I hide the outfit in a rain barrel nearby. Does anyone see me?" Not that you are aware of.

Regizar arrives just in time to see Garrick and himself talking and then parting ways. Andrew/Regizar thickens this already dense plot. "I go up to Garrick and ask him to accompany me back to the wine merchant to help me get a better price for the tavern." Up to now, this is the kid whose best role-playing is to hit something with his sword. But once murder and mayhem are involved, he's like Mr. Moriarty, the Napoleon of Crime. I am very concerned.

Garrick is momentarily confused as Regizar approaches from a different direction, "Didn't we just talk a few seconds ago? You just went that way to talk to some wine merchant."

Regizar ignores this bewilderment, "That's right, I am going to a wine merchant. Do you mind coming along? I could use your noble art of persuasion to get a better price. Then we can go back to The Skull together, and you can flirt with Elsa."

Garrick has no reason to mistrust his friend, so off they go to the merchant. They arrive at the wine shop about five minutes later. There is a huge crowd out front, trying to peek into the windows, while several of the Watch are keeping them all out. Regizar asks, "What's going on?"

"Some guy got murdered in his own shop. But the killer just vanished."

And thus, The Ageless One is born and begins his descent into depravity.