

CUT CAREFULLY

Thank goodness for the Dragon pearl. For without it, the Last Dragon would not have been able to get his message to Amsel. The Dragon pearl is a powerful object in that it tells of the past, and can even predict the future.

Soon after Amsel read the desperate message from the Last Dragon, the Dragon pearl's misty chambers cleared. At first, Amsel thought the message was over. Just then, a series of strange and unfamiliar images appeared within the misty pearl. Amsel witnessed Tasran the tailor hard at work. He saw the Duke of Darkness. Thalos the Armorer. And Prince Alyn.

Who were these people? Where did they come from? And combined with the urgent message to go help the Last Dragon, what did it all mean?

Amsel sat, his head buried in his hands. So much had already happened. He needed to collect his thoughts. He needed to organize the past. Perhaps it would help him in the future. And so, he began to write a diary:

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I am truly grateful for this notebook, for without it I would not be able to document the recent events of my life. A life which until recently was driven by the pursuit of science and the understanding of nature and its laws.

That has all changed. In fact, I've changed. I've learned much

about life and the nature of things. I've discovered that there is no stronger bond than the one which results from a collective effort during times of crises. And it is this special bond which Hawkwind, the Last Dragon and I share. We are friends for life. And here is the story of how that friendship came to be:

One day, while I was not looking, a young friend of mine borrowed my Flying Wing. While in flight, Johan was attacked by a dragon-like creature called a coldrake. Johan's father immediately blamed the neighboring Simbalese people for his son's death. Without delay, the elders of Fandora declared war on Simbala: a war for which I held myself responsible. For it was careless of me to leave my wing where a small boy's curiosity could easily get the best of him.

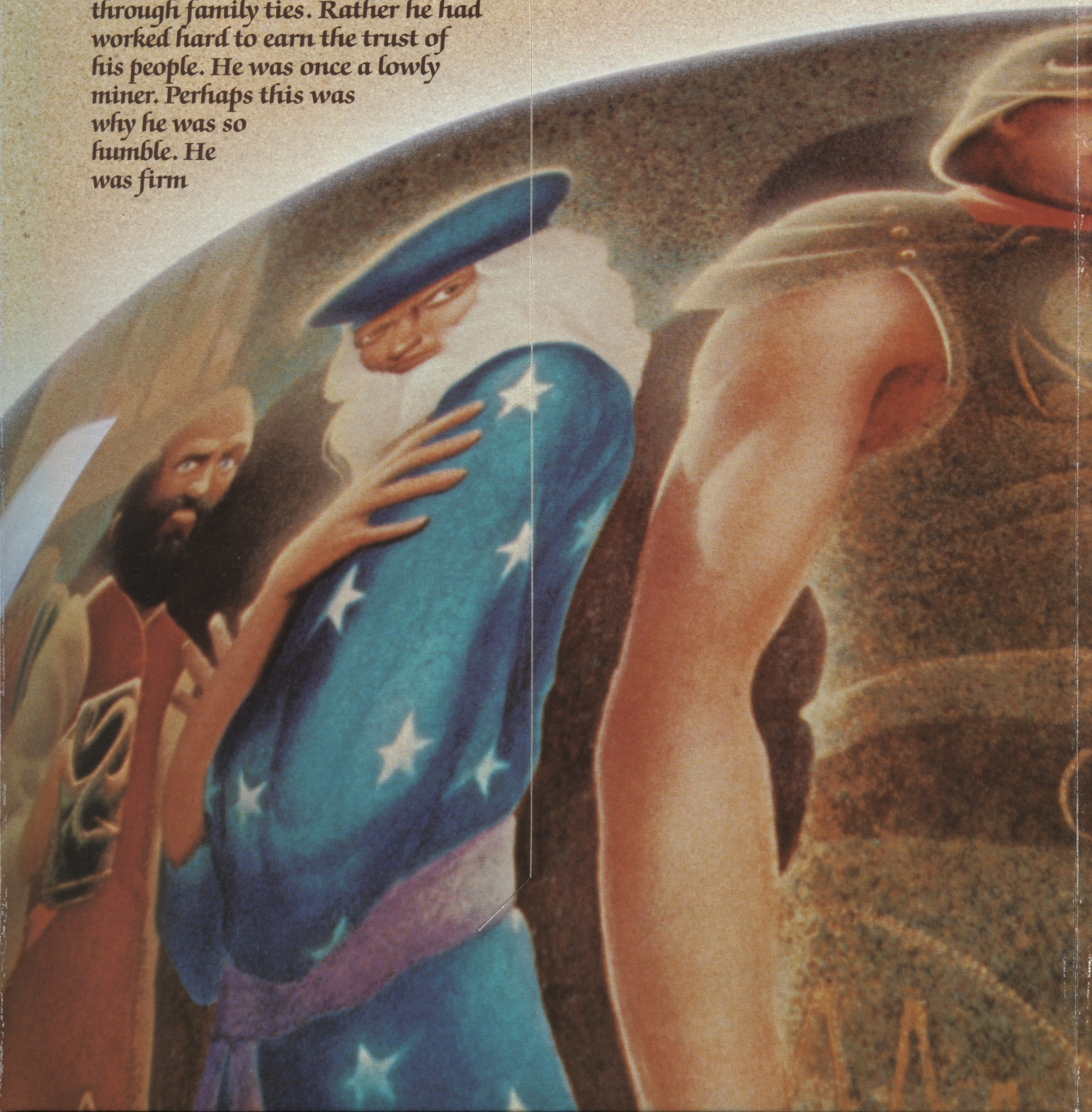
Almost simultaneously, a young girl had been killed in Simbala. The suspicions between the countries grew. War seemed imminent. I had to do what I could to avert this disaster. I set sail for Simbala.

Once there, I

befriended one of the wisest men I have ever known. A man at ease with statesmen and warriors alike. His name was Hawkwind and he was the leader of Simbala. He did not arrive at his station in life through family ties. Rather he had worked hard to earn the trust of his people. He was once a lowly miner. Perhaps this was why he was so humble. He was firm

when leadership was called for, yet gentle when comfort was needed.

Working as brothers in search of the truth, Hawkwind and I pondered the situation at hand. The



coldrakes had attacked the children
of both of our countries. There had
to be a reason. We agreed that the
solution could only be
found by
locating

the legendary Last Dragon and
convincing him to help us. Legend
had it that the Last Dragon was
alive in the Northland. He was the
cousin to and master of the coldrakes.
They would heed his commands.
But first we had to find him. And
so with a Simbalan Windship I
sailed North of the Dragon-
sea. After many hard-
ships I was ready to
give up. Then,
almost by
accident,



I stumbled upon the Last Dragon.

Deep in the hollows of a cold and desolate cave the Last Dragon lay shackled to a rock. He was a pitiful sight. A look of resignation seemed permanently affixed to his face. He spoke in a deep and resonant whisper. He was old. Very old. He had been shackled to this rock by evil men who stole the mystical Dragon pearls. He was resigned and unemotional in his description of the plight that had befallen him.

But I saw something in him that was very proud, very genuine and very kind. For a moment I thought of how I had found those qualities in Hawkwind as well. Indeed, Hawkwind and the Dragon were alike. Together, the three of us could put an end to the bloodshed. I had to convince the Last Dragon to help me if it was the last thing I would do. I told him of my young friend's death. And how the coldrakes had attacked me during my journey North. He became furious, for according to his orders the coldrakes were never to attack. His pride would not allow him to sit idly by and watch them defy his orders. He agreed to help.

We flew to Simbala and

found the coldrakes perched and ready to attack the ships of both countries. The Last Dragon prepared to do battle with the leader of the coldrakes. And when it was over, the Last Dragon emerged victorious. He looked at Hawkwind and me, and at that moment we all knew. Words were not spoken. Yet we knew we would be friends for life.

I've returned to Fandora with the glowing Dragonpearl. Deep in its misty chambers a message from the Last Dragon has appeared. He has been drugged and kidnapped and is being held captive deep in the Southland of Simbala. There are other images, too. Images I have never seen before. The Dragon trying to warn me. Who are these people found in the Dragonpearl? Are they friend or foe? I do not know. I only know what I must do: Locate Hawkwind and together we must rescue the Last Dragon. For we are friends until death.

I only hope we're not too late.

CUT