

I was born in 1215 DR in Cormyr during the light of a red moon eclipse. My father, Terrapene Cryptodira, was the major domo of the royal family. In 1229, a band of assassins called Fire Knives kidnapped my mother, Chelonia, and me to coerce my father to allow them into the royal palace. They killed my mother when he refused. After he did as told, and the royal family was murdered, Terrapene rescued me and fled the city in fear and shame.

We fled to Kara-Tur, far to the east, where we joined a monastery, the Five Stars School, with my father as the keeper of the koi pond on the condition that he never reveal my past (or eat the fish). The monks called me Yeeman, and in time I forgot my birth name. I was a wild youth and never bothered to learn their ways. At age 24, I stole from the monks. The theft was discovered and I lied and blamed another. He was to be expelled when my father uncovered the truth. I was forced to denounce myself. I was not expelled but in penance I took a vow of silence, to never speak a lie again. From that moment, I was only called Anjing Shang, for Silent Monk.

In 1347, during the light of another red eclipse, my father died. On his death bed, he told me the truth about my mother, the royal family, the Fire Knives, and our family's dishonor. He revealed my true name to be Testudino. The fact that he had lied to me all these years filled me with rage. For the first time in over a hundred years I spoke. I swore at my father and vowed never to follow anything he ever taught me, and I would avenge my mother as he never could. As I walked away, the look of disappointment and loss just before he died fills me with shame and regret to this day. I left the monastery, never to return.

I walked for a decade, intent on returning to Cormyr, vowing to kill any member of the Fire Knives if I found them. In 1358, I was in Tantras, when I thought I had found my first victim. At a local bar, I loudly demanded to find any member of the Fire Knives. The terrified barkeep, pointed out a young man, who upon seeing me quickly exited the bar. I caught him in an alley and attacked him. He tried to run but I stabbed him through the heart with his own dagger. As he died, he revealed that he was just a young urchin in a gang that picked pockets, stole food, and called themselves the Fire Blades. He had nothing to do with my vengeance. I had killed an innocent boy, because my hatred had allowed me to speak without thinking for the third time in fear, anger, and hatred. I have never spoken a word since.

At that moment, a terrible battle waged in the streets and skies of Tantras. I had never cared for the gods, believing them to be arrogant children with undeserved power. Now the gods were running amuck in our world, without a thought for the fools who worshipped them. The gods were Torm, and allegedly good deity, and Bane a decidedly evil one. Convinced that my evil act had manifested this battle of good and evil, I watched intently. Evil and his minions were winning, but there were several humans who fought alongside good. Then over a thousand devoted souls allowed themselves to be martyred to provide Torm the power to defeat evil. Both Torm and Bane were destroyed and half the city was ruined, but good prevailed, for half the town was saved. Perhaps, I could be saved too. Humbled by their sacrifice while I did nothing, I tried to follow the humans and join their cause.

I followed them for thousands of miles through Cormyr and into the Sword Coast. But I never fully caught up with them. Through no fault of their own, death and destruction hounded them and I found myself helping the areas that were afflicted by their passing. Along the way, I learned that they were trying to regain the Tablets of Fate and deliver them to the gods so that the world may be set right again. I met up with a group of adventurers who were also trying to join with these Tablet bearers and I journeyed with them to Waterdeep.

In Waterdeep, the groups aligned and together we fought our way through the city of Waterdeep which was under siege from the forces of Myrkul, another evil god made mortal. We fought to the top of Mount Waterdeep, where we helped deliver the Tablets and one of the companions, a woman

named Midnight defeated and killed Myrkul. Afterward she ascended as the new god of magic, Mystra. These days, many think this story is myth, but I was there.

For decades after, I walked the land, helping those in need to atone for my foolish youth. I last remember being in the far southern land of Chult, when madness struck me. It was 1385, and another cataclysm struck the land. Blue fire erupted in the village I was in. This blue fire affected the entire world, but I did not know that at the time. The blue fire disintegrated the two shamans in the village and I could feel it tear my soul apart and I blacked out.

I awoke 90 years later, in 1475, in the far northern city of Luskan. I have no memory of my actions for all that time or how I came to be so far from where I started. Apparently, I had joined a circus, the Sea Maiden Faire, which travelled up and down the Sword Coast on ships, providing entertainment to the harbor cities. It was run by a jovial, boisterous man, named Zardoz Zod, and he was a good master. Never one to question fate, I remained with the circus for four years and became friends with several of the other curiosities of the show.

Six months ago, in the spring of 1479, we were docked at Neverwinter, when the world witnessed another red eclipse and I knew that change was eminent. When my companions told me that they were leaving the circus to become adventurers, I knew that I would join them.