

VAGABOND

I have seen the world in all its distorted, devastated beauty. My travels took me to all the corners of the realm, and I felt the land weep, suffering from the terrible wounds inflicted by the Calamity. I can feel the natural beauty of the world suppressed and tortured by the spreading corruption and I would do what I can to restore it.

I walked through the plains of the Scarred lands, disfigured by long spreading fissures, spewing noxious gas from the bowels of the earth. I have seen the trees of the great Angwald forest twisted into unnatural malicious forms, their branches covered with crooked thorns, their sap toxic and stinging. I have walked along the lakes whose waters has turned black and stale, the aquatic creatures inhabiting them growing into terrible versions of themselves, full of bloodlust and fury. It seems no corner of the world was untouched by the terrible corruption unleashed by the Calamity and every environment was infected in its own way.

Even the cities seem to suffer. As perils of the countryside grew more and more people huddled behind the cities' fortifications, creating more noise, refuse and waste. The slums of Aulstrad, far away from the majestic towers of the palace, are a labyrinth of barely standing huts, each harboring malnourished, despondent inhabitants willing to do terrible things to their fellow human to survive. Like an anthill, if the ants could loathe each other. The perils of the wilderness are nothing compared to the awful overbearing doom and gloom one feels in the city.

And so, I continue roaming the land, seeking a place free of this plague to call home. I have learned its ways and I have learned how to evade the roaming bands of creatures we call monsters. But are we so different? As far as I can tell they, in their own way, are struggling to survive in their own little hell created by the Calamity. One can learn their way and understand how to steer clear of their path, avoiding bloodshed when necessary.

My dreams have been uneasy of late. A voice calls out my name as I see the twisted plains turn into fertile meadows and forests restored to their former vibrant glory. This voice leads me deep down into a subterranean labyrinth covered in ancient ruins. It would seem that hidden among these ruins, lies the secret to the salvation of the world. I am no sage, sorcerer or warrior, but I can unearth these secrets and help health the world. I will need assistance from other brave souls in this quest. Let us hope I am not the only one who believes in a better future.