

Wheelsong of the Great Dragon

When ancient Dragon tailed by hosts of heaven,
First in rank among the radiant Stars,
Did rise in wrath to judge with the Eleven
Old Goat whose deeping-host was waging war,
Alighted she upon a lofty mountain
Whose pinnacle her painted coils wrapped,
While verdancy on every slope surrounding
Had withered white, and all the trees were snapped;
Still more, the mournful earth was broken open,
The gentle Southern slopes and balmy breezes
Turned to toothy peaks and whipping whirlwinds,
The days did scorch and every e'en did freeze;
And from the frozen copal copses halsers
Hailed her, long-lost sun's bedighted crown,
Unlearned yet in song they loudly called her, and
So do we now sing Great Dragon down

Arise, O radiant lady!
Heed us from thy home in heaven
Who weep on withered earth
And make her grain to grow again

That devil from the depths draws out his curses,
Miasma-mothered monsters from his nest,
While Cock his song upon the heights rehearses
and Dragon fans the furnace in her breast;
Rise up and fly, thou mighty skybound power,
Go forth to war and conquer as thou didst
When once thou dashed to dust the tyrant's towers,
Blow forth thy fire into The Abyss

Arise, O radiant lady!
Alight as living ember
In the leaves to fuel inferno,
Make all the world thy name remember

All ruthless, coldly cruel was old Thorn-Sower
Who coaxed the crooked earth to bring forth pain,
Corruption sprouted outward from his tower
To be daily slaked by brackish rain;
His biting barbs and burning, stinging thistles
Dealt death to all the fair and fruitful stock,
Their twisted limbs brought blisters with their bristles,
Made every meadow misery to walk;
His overgrowth did overthrow the forests,
His vile ivy climbed up every tree,
It siphoned all the sap and drank to sawdust

Oak and elm and shagbark hickory;
Yet noble Ash alone remained untainted,
The virtue in his wood was working life,
The gardens guarded by his roots remained there,
They leaned on lordly Ash to hold the line;
A dozen times the Dragon blessed the Ash tree
By all the hundred names of heaven's hearth,
"For thou hast checked the cold Abyss," she gloried,
"And hast become the pillars of the earth"

Arise, O radiant lady!
Raise thine ashen banner high
Against the spiteful sower,
Doom his hostile crop to die

Behold the bitter burning of betrayal,
Her steaming tears in ire and sorrow mixed,
When sweetly tempting tongues proved sorely fatal
And scores of Dragon's Stars were thus transfixed;
With sycophantic silver streams he lured them,
Awakening their native vanity,
With promises of power he procured them
Then set the hook with skillful flattery;
And nary nine with her remained unwavering,
Nor eight, but scarcely seven Stars stood firm
While unto death the rest had chosen slavery,
What once was dragon there became the wyrm;
Ah, how can song express such sharp rejection?
How can ink her anguish illustrate?
The Stars she loved with consummate affection
From firmament to earth did abdicate;
In casting off the mistress for the master,
In trading twinkling crowns for crooked rods,
Their forms were turned to portents of disaster,
Unhappy folk were forced to feel their claws;
For what once soared could do no more than slither,
Their burning breath became bewitching fumes,
Their hides to wasp hive husks dried up and withered,
and shed a snow of ash in acrid plumes;
Before such crass corruption she recoiled,
In horror she beheld this travesty,
While justly in her jaws a fire boiled
Against the Goat and his depravity;
The crib of folkish kind that savage soiled,
Vast fields of flowers trampled underhoof,
The rivers ran with slicks of viscous oil,
The whole world wailed to suffer his abuse;
The morning-molded mountains he did shatter,
Broke the sunstone thrones of shepherd Stars,

He snapped and ground them all to skyward daggers,
A symbol of his heaven-hating war;
No life in that fair place remained untainted
And nary blade of grass but faded brown,
The name to him awarded he had wasted,
Ungrateful Goat had forfeited his crown;
And so the Dragon rose with fury frightening,
Deliberation done and now resolved,
The dreaded doom from heaven fell as lightning:
Black Goat expelled forever from the Twelve;
Stripped of all his finery and status,
Squelched, snuffed out and dimmed his diadem,
A Star who once shone out among the greatest
Fittingly was found by Stars condemned;
And having then set forth their hard pronouncement,
A sentence meet and just was jointly passed:
On that unholy host of countless thousands
Naked rays of Flame the sun must cast

Arise, O radiant lady!
Take up the sun against the Ever-Waiting Wolf,
Bring down the dawn of Doomsday,
Drive every demon from the world

So with their ranks arranged did the Eleven
Bow before the glorious solar hearth,
Then drew him from his hook in highest heaven
And in his monstrance brought him down to earth;
What shock, what wailing terror shook the demons,
What screaming bubbled up from blistering necks,
The conquest they had savored for a season
The sun himself descended to correct;
His light revealed a hive of flightless insects
Where formerly an iron fist was seen,
The so-called strength of Black Goat's stalwart subjects
Was burned to ashes as they turned to flee;
And flee they did, but found nowhere to cower,
The world from rim to rim with fire brimmed,
So down from thrones and down from lofty towers
They dove deep into caverns damp and dim;
Black Goat remained alone upon the surface,
The servants left their sovereign to his fate,
The cowards proved the coward's word is worthless
And traitors ever truly shall betray

Arise, O radiant lady!
With shaft of sunlight spit the foe
Who wields the leaden Angler's pole,
Like lodestone left to sink below

With mouth to mud in high humiliation
She dragged the old beast backward by his tail,
Then threw him off to wander Northern wastelands
And never more the Southern plains assail;
Yet even there the daylight did afflict him,
It burned his fur and blistered up his hide,
And though defiantly he bucked the dictum,
The purer Flame outmatched his matchless pride;
With ease it overcame his untamed hubris,
Like chaff it charred and scattered his resolve,
For in the end his coup had proven fruitless,
The dazzling Constellation had dissolved;
Woe, for the once exalted Star has fallen!
Woe, for the ocean's lamp has been snuffed out!
Woe to the ancient greatness long forgotten,
Brought low to lie in tunnels underground;
For when into the sunless earth he staggered,
The noble Goat a feeble ghost became,
From scum he scrounged a fragile form together,
For in the sun his body burned away

Arise, O radiant lady!
Repel the bearded bleater
To the lowest lonely canyon
To waste away in reaches deep

So steeped the soil was in fetid presence,
Decidedly the Dozen minus one
Saw fit to dry the Southlands into desert
And with its grit to grind its towers down;
Redress brought they that damned devastation,
Raised they the naked world to shaky feet,
And offered to the earth the consolation
Of sun to smite her head with healing heat;
The middle-mount they made to hold his monstrance,
Its summit speared the clouds and disappeared,
Then daily went he forth to skirt earth's boundaries
In circuits through the sky to sign the years;
This newfound nearness well performed its purpose,
Patrolled the sun as ever-watchful eye,
The demons would not dare to breach the surface
For fear that they should see the ray-streaked sky;
And to this day his Flame constrains the darkness,
The tyrants in their tar-pits still remain
Reviling light in sunken cells and starless,
Where earth's bright eye shall ne'er behold their shame

Arise, O radiant lady!

Blow forth thy breath like desert heat
To wither every wyvern
And bring to pass their last defeat

To thee whose scales in multifloral splendor
Flash like fired steel in stormy fray
Do we who hymn thee fly as our defender
And fortress fair find we in thy domain;
Do not despair, O weary one, nor tremble,
But to the fearsome Starry army sing:
The nightmare woven soon shall be unraveled,
The fog be blown apart by beating wings;
No servant of the enemy shall strike thee,
No pestilential devil shall harangue,
The fire of the sun shall kiss thee lightly,
Yet over them a terror shall it hang

Arise, O radiant lady!
Ring out the merry Mornsong bell
And bring the sun to rout
The host who in Abyss do dwell

Yea, verily do all thy halsers hymn thee
And gladly we extol thy glorious deeds,
We fly to thee when foul winds are raging
And seek thy sure succor in direst need;
O thou who with thy wings the lightning scatters,
Whose burning breath drives back the dread Abyss,
Descend again the inbent horns to shatter,
Compel the sordid serpents to submit;
Arise, O radiant Dragon Constellation,
Thou first and fairest, feather-robed, arise,
Incline thine ear and heed our supplication,
Draw down the Flaming Dawn again, arise!