SIGH ONIC- Background Story-Journal Excerpt

Should the stereotype of a scholar be ‘weak of body, strong of mind’, then I am the living embodiment of that stereotype. Born in Baldur’s Gate of a human mother and an elf father, I was always a sickly child. At five years of age, I lost my father; a City Watch member killed during a coup. My mother supplemented the meagre survivor pension as a cook in the kitchens of the renowned Elfsong Tavern. Then I started school. That began my two years of discontent. I was an easy victim for the bullies; fatherless, a ‘half-breed’, physically weak and a lover of learning- a ‘teacher’s pet’. Many were the times I was assaulted, made took the brunt of cruel jokes. No one dared be my friend. I was a pariah.

I became acquainted with my first ever ‘friend’ on my seventh birthday. I use the term ‘friend’ loosely. In my youngster years, he? she? it? was. Now as an adult I suspect its motives. After school, sitting in the backyard, I was feeling sad and sorry for myself, bemoaning the fact that no one liked me, wondering why I could not be like the others. I had been punched, kicked, harassed, and mocked more than usual, my ‘birthday present’.

I heard a voice, as if in my ear but mostly in my head. It sounded as my father’s voice. “I will be your friend. I will play with you; many games.” I looked around but saw no one. “Up here Sigh, up here. In the tree.”

There it was! Visualize a cat. Now imagine the cat as a smooth oval lacking external features and appendages. Now cover the oval with long, thick, soft, bright blue fur. That is what I saw. I blinked. Now it was in my lap. I could not feel fear. I did not question what this odd creature was; what it was doing here; how it knew my name. Instead, it all felt proper. I had feelings of warmth and affection for this creature. I know now that it must have been controlling my emotions, but I was a child then.

“I will be your friend”, it repeated inside my head. We will play. I will open your mind, release its potential. You are my experiment.” I did not understand any of that, only that I now had a friend. I rubbed my hand through its luxurious, lavish fur.

“You need a name” were my first words to it. “Fuzzy-Wuzzy. I am going to call you Fuzzy-Wuzzy. You will help me fight off the bullies?”

“Alas, little humanoid. I will not aid you directly but will open the ability of your mind so you can do that for yourself, should you wish.”

And so began our association. In those early years, due to its influence, it seemed normal that only I could see it, hear it feel it. It was non-existent to anyone else. My mind did begin to change from that day onward to what it is today, the psionic talent to use the force of my consciousness to manifest magic. I do not need to study as would a wizard, nor need a deity to grant me divine abilities. Not for me the making of a pact with some out-worldly power or opening my spirit to the circles of the Green. I could do it all by myself and more as my mind increased in power. But I get ahead of my retelling.

For years Fuzzy-Wuzzy was with me, changing me. Outwardly all seemed the same. All the while my mother was gaining a reputation as a fabulous cook at the Elfsong Tavern. So much so, that travellers, visitors as well as the locals would dine there just to sample her cuisine. As her reputation spread, so too did job-offers. At first it was just other more prominent and wealthy inns and hotels in Baldur’s Gate, but soon offers from other places became more abundant, even some from faraway Waterdeep itself.

By this time, I had started to display psionic attributes, just small ones. I could send one or two words into a person’s mind. I could form a ray that would lower the temperature of my target by a few degrees or produce a bolt of fire that would warm it up by a few degrees. My biggest success, once only, was a single missile of force, which happened to fizzle out after travelling 30 feet. Fuzzy-Wuzzy kept stirring my mind, releasing my power. It was becoming more natural to me.

I was fifteen when she excitedly told me that she had accepted a position at Candlekeep. She would be a kitchen staff member for the monks, scholars, and mages there. It was an enviable position. There had been hundreds of applicants. She explained to me how beneficial it would be for us; job security for her as well as a handsome pension when she was unable to work or retired, healthcare for us both, a secure place of residence and best of all, she described that this was Candlekeep, where my education would continue, free of charge with the most highly regarded teachers in all Faerun. This would be a betterment for us. I was just glad to be leaving the bullies and the city behind. We would be trekking, in a caravan, the hundred and odd miles, south-west to the coast, to Candlekeep, in a week’s time.

The week was spent in preparation. Unlike my mother, who had friends and co-workers, I had no one to say good-bye to. Naturally I assumed that Fuzzy-Wuzzy would come along. The departure morning arrived but it was gone. No Fuzzy-Wuzzy anywhere. I looked and called to no avail. I have not seen it since.

My life at Candlekeep was just the inverse of that in Baldur’s gate. Learning was encouraged. Being a ‘teacher’s pet’ was a badge of honor. Not that I was the smartest, far from it. Learning was a co-operative effort between students and instructors. No one bullied. It would not have been tolerated. The monks emphasized physical fitness as important as ‘book learning’. I was always last and not competent, but they were satisfied with the fact that I did not shirk it and always did my best. On the other hand, my mental powers expanded. I also found I had a talent for library work. The monks and priests noticed this, and year after year, I was given work to reshelving, labeling, fetching, copying, and classifying books, scrolls, and other documents. I was adept in the ways of library work and was allowed in almost all the wings, including some restricted ones.

In this way, I was alone for long periods of time with complete access to the knowledge stored at Candlekeep. Year after year I did, in secret, my personal research. I was compelled; driven to unlock the mystery of Fuzzy-Wuzzy. What was it? Where did it come from? Why did it select me? What did it mean by I was its ‘experiment’? I focused on psionics. I copied material, which became my book on that topic, on its origins, abilities, spells, creatures. I determined that I was an becoming an aberrant mind sorcerer. Yet nowhere could I find anything remotely to do with the likes of Fuzzy-Wuzzy. If Candlekeep could not provide my answer, then it had not been uncovered. The answer was somewhere, waiting to be disclosed. I would seek it out, perhaps in the ruins of elder empires, in forgotten hoards of long-gone ancient dragons or under an ocean in some sunken city. I did not know where my path would take me, but I knew I had to go.

Knowing my mother would be well taken care of, I bid her farewell. I set out and eventually fell in with five other strange but interesting characters.