

SAULog.exe

SAU447 of unimatrix 3, analyzing sequence 6225 of activity intercept E1RT8.

Downloading raw Sleeve data...

Converting data to binary sequence...

Analyzing binary sequence...

Error: system anomaly. Abort sequence analysis.

Error: Virus detected.

HMPProtocol.exe

System override, authorization MORA.

Transmitting sequence to primary Seeker Console...

ISLE OF TWISTED UNDER-WOOD, APOCRYPHA

A Seeker glides above black-mossy stone and earth, approaching dutifully the amorphous aggregation at the Isle's center. It presents itself, hovering still before the thing as a slick, black tentacle reaches toward it. The arm bursts forth and into the Seeker's body, several others following suit, creating a new orifice for each one they pierced. The tentacles drank of the Seeker, collapsing the dutiful servant into a brittle, dry husk, and through the Seeker's suffering novel words and knowledge formed within the amalgamation's mind...

“—An Excerpt from the Journal of Laurence of Canterbury, *circa* 598 CE—

I rejoice to write that my master Augustine is settling into his new role as the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the sacred work of our mission proceeds unimpeded since King Ethelbert was baptized and brought into our holy faith this last Christmas. Succeeding the royal conversion were the mass baptisms of thousands of his citizens, noble and common alike. How far we have come in so short a time! When we first arrived at this benighted land we were confined to Thanet Island, off the coast of Kent, yet Providence swiftly moved the King's soul, to grant us entry into the kingdom and his royal freedom to preach and convert as many as we were able. His Majesty thereafter gifted us with the construction of the abbey and cathedral of Canterbury, and what was once a wreckage is now transformed into a sanctuary from whence our missionaries are launched into the countryside, bearing with them all materials necessary to bring light to the darkened. Thanks be to our Lord Jesus for the accommodation of the King, the

diligence of the Archbishop, and the wisdom of His Holiness, Pope Gregory. The kingdom of Kent has been grafted into our Holy Mother Church, and it seems inevitable the rest of this great island shall soon belong to His Holiness and God, as the Gospel marches ever onward.

The Archbishop is indefatigable in his efforts to illumine the people and further the cause of our Holy Church, and it is my solemn duty to ensure his energy is only directed toward projects of great import; with that charge comes the need to determine what matters do and do not merit his attention, and such judgment on my part was necessary today.

Though it is not unheard of, our missionaries do not usually entrust the simple natives with the role of courier—preferring instead to return to Canterbury to take a brief time of respite from their labors while we sort out whatever matters they bring back with them from their travels. Today's happening, however, was quite unprecedented: there were delivered two letters from our farthest-travelling missionary team, led by Philip, a young but eager brother who insisted on sojourning westward—not far from the shores of the great ocean—to a Briton village called Eckham, on the edge of the Wychwood Forest in the Hwicce kingdom. I understand a battle of no small importance was fought between the Britons and the West Saxons not far from the Wychwood a little more than 20 years ago, and apparently the Britons of Eckham still harbor resentment toward their West Saxon overlords. I digress.

In keeping with the Archbishop's instructions (at the insistence of His Holiness), Philip and his missionary team settled to permanently live with the heathen villagers, and his first message back to Canterbury carries glad tidings. Being settled on the edge of Christendom, the people were unsurprisingly initially reluctant to part from their long-held superstitions, but after some months the Gospel seed has begun to take root in their hearts. The second letter, however, reads like a pagan myth, and its disconcerting content does not bear detailed repeating in my personal records. It suffices to say that, apparently, the sacred mission in Eckham has been interrupted by a series of murders of, as Philip descriptively writes, "infernal gruesomeness."

Our young Philip requests the Archbishop read his letters and answer them with support of a garrison of men armed with Cross and sword; he further petitions my master to pass along the messages to His Holiness in Rome so that he might be informed of the Devil's presence in Britain and opposition to our mission. Of course, I cannot in good conscience allow these letters to reach the Archbishop, who has no tears to waste on a handful of lost peasants in a woodsy village outside the embrace of our Holy Mother Church. What would I tell him, that there is a murderer roaming amidst the pagans? Would I go on to inform him that serpents bite and scorpions sting? I love Philip, and my prayers go with him, but I fear his spiritual enthusiasm has drifted into melodrama, for, in his zeal to root out the Devil, he has seemingly forgotten that these Briton pagans are rude barbarians, worshippers of brutish idols. The murders are doubtless the rotten fruit of a life beyond Christendom, and thus no great source of wonder."

The Prince knew not what to make of this information, yet nonetheless commanded the Seekers absorb it into the archive of Apocrypha.

(Credit to Mack McGehee for the quoted material)