

Dear Cousin

Yes, it's me! Bet you thought I'd be swallowed up in the Wastes for good! Well, you lose that bet. I can't begin to tell you what a great life I have found here in Mitteldorf! When I left our village, I confess, I weren't sure if'n I had done the right thing. You know what my father would have said - "There's no crop sown from wandering seed!"

Well, I'll tell you now, I've seen more sights and done more things in three months than I would have seen in a lifetime back in Wheatdale! Tell your uncle he can give my share of the pig to my sisters - I'm gonna make it rich on my own!

No word of a lie, Cousin, you can make money just walkin' the streets of this great city! I swear on my mother's grave, I never saw so many rich people, with their own boots and all!

Mitteldorf was built on a dead volcano years ago. You can see the mountain jus' outside town - it's like living under a normous storm cloud! The town has girt big walls, and buildins stacked on top of each other. I bin stayin in a place called The Boardins - can you believe it, I got me own bed and a change of linen every month! It is warm here, and there's plenty of good food. They serve a better rat on a stick here than yor mamma ever skewered!

And the people, cousin! So many of em! Many merchants call here, for Mitteldorf is known as a rich trading town. The King's bodyguard keep a stern peace, and the Guilds crack a few heads likewise. You're a fool to get into trouble here! On my third day I wuz hauled off to prison for the night! All I did was peek through a window, an all.

And the women, cousin! They hurts yer eyes just to look at! They say the most beautiful was Queen Jocasta, she who was married to the King's brother, Wilf. She lives back on the mainland now. She and King Farley never didn't see eye to eye, so they say. Oh, yes - I knows everythin thas goin on here, an no mistake!

Tell my father and my sisters I'm well, but tell em I'm not ever comin home. Hilda will find herself a good husband to run the farm. I'm stayin here to make my fortune! There are a duzen ways to turn a groat in Mitteldorf - I know, I have tried them all! But fear not, for I have met up with some fellows who say that we shall all be rich by Midsummer!

How? I'll tell you! Beneath the City there are these caverns, hewn from the rock. They be cursed by fell night-creatures, who swarm like rats in a barn. They steal and murder, an everyone wud have them slayed. Well, one merchant we heard tell of was robbed of a precious jewel, and my companions and I shall fetch it back to claim his reward! Fear not for my safety, for my companions are famus heroes, who have no fear of goblins or lizard men! Nor I! And see here, one of them sold me this book. 'Twas written by some old adventurer, and it tells of the creatures he says he battled. But I rek'kon t'is only fairy stories! Hobgoblins and spooks! Hah!

Anyway, I thot I'd send the book to you, so youz may have a souvenir of my success! Better than that, why don't you follow me! Leave the valley behind, an cum get rich! Find sumplace to stay, then seek word of me. I oftmes takes an ale in The Snakes, watchin' the Roach races. I'll leave a message there. Youz can find work on the notice boards, and in the Town Gazette too, while you find your feet. I swear, cousin. I'll never regret the day I came here. When the merchant's jewel has made me rich, I shall send money home. But I'll not come back. Rather, t'is you who should come join me!

Well, I'm off now to wet me whistle fore we go huntin goblins! I've grown right partial to ox-blood this last week. Dunno why! Spec I've got the taste for the finer things in life now!

Your loving cousin

Sven