

From the end of Chapter 10

Par's escape from the abbey was originally a bit longer

The Abbot winked, and his image faded. "Hurry now. The gods be with you, Enius Marius and Parynius Ignatius."

Par ran behind Enio through the cemetery. They cleared the monuments and headstones and raced into the moonlight. Ahead, the hill dropped to the river.

A shout from behind. "I see them!"

"Faster!" Par yelled. "Any closer and they'll invoke!"

The two boys flew around the corner of the abbey's west tower, bounding down the rocky slope along the wall.

"Stop!" the shout repeated.

Enio reached the docks, Par still on his heels. They dashed to the Sea Dog.

As Par dove into the canoe, cries of distress erupted from behind. He risked a glance back.

The two monks in pursuit slipped and tumbled down the hill. Above them, just visible in the moonlight, a figure stood in a window dumping out a pail.

"Buckets!" Enio laughed as he pushed the little boat into the river. He shoved a paddle into Par's hands.

Par rowed hard and fast into the darkness. Several figures holding lanterns issued from the abbey onto the landing.

"Duck down," Enio hissed. "The river will take us from here."

Just then, glories wrapped the monk's heads. Their lanterns flashed into strong, directed beams over the river.

But thankfully, Enio knew the currents. Within seconds, the canoe drifted into

the folds of the night and out of range of the lamps.

“Okay,” Enio whispered, “I think we’re—”

High above, in the abbey’s bell tower, a light blazed out with the radiance of a captured star. The rays focused onto the river.

Par gasped. “The Prior!”

“Crap!” Enio leapt to the bow.

The bright beam searched the water in front of the docks and across to the far banks. Enio dug in his paddle and heaved the boat forwards. Par watched in horror as the beacon swung in their direction. But before it reached them, Enio quickly steered the canoe beneath a line of sagging willows. The beam skimmed the branches before turning back to the river. The canoe continued to hug the bank, and soon they were out of range.

They resumed paddling, keeping silent. When the canoe passed by Enio’s shanty near the warehouse, Par said nothing, and neither did Enio.

At last, they floated past the southern edge of town. Par watched the lights there as long as he could—the lights of the place where he’d been born and had lived his entire life.

His hand went to his chest, to his Lustering medal. He gripped the last thing he had of his home and his family, and the reminder of his unworthiness before the gods.

And then the lights were gone.