

## Reimbue Towers/Chapter One

**M**y name is Dr. Drew Kenson.  
For twenty years, I practiced  
medicine in Glauchester Province, on  
the southern tip of Lordabad.

*My career boasted full advantage  
of my skills in medicine, and - I dare  
say — afforded enviable opportunities  
for the most ambitious-minded to minister  
to both the physical and psychological  
needs of those scarred by the recent  
skirmish. Little did any of us realize just  
how devastating the War of the Doves  
would become in singlehandedly transforming  
Lordabad - and more intimately,  
Glauchester - forever.*

*There is, however, one case I look  
fondly upon even now; perhaps due to  
its irreversible impact on the course of  
my life. The strange events that led to  
the introduction of my “new patient”,  
and the subsequent thread of adventures  
that unraveled, is a story for antiquities...*



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“**D**octor Kenson! Say, Doctor Kenson!”

Rain. When it wasn't obscuring the vision or blurring streetlights into hazy blobs of yellow, it was slicking the cobblestone and chilling the air with a frosty pinch of winter. Yet for those who made Glauchester their home, rain came as natural as sun to the tropics or snow to the neighboring country of Rushnev.

Drew Kenson paused, a wool frock gathered around features pleasant and full. Gentle eyes of the most non-offensive blue, squinted to discern the jogger bearing down on him. He crossed Carsby Street and waved an umbrella, most likely to obtain the doctor's attention; at any rate, Kenson was relieved to find someone with sense enough to bring asylum from the deluge. If anything, he would beg to slip beneath the oilskin and dry out — if that were possible.

“Trusdale!” He gave a laugh and shook his cane. “My god, man! What's your hurry? This is no weather for anyone to be racing about.”

Sure enough, the figure crystallized into that of a modestly dressed Lordsmen, sporting houndstooth knickers and a matching bowler. His eyes were close-set, with a nervous habit of darting about, and the pursing of his flat lips gave him the proverbial look of one who had just “swallowed a canary.” But he was a solid citizen — as solid as they come — and Kenson found him both trustworthy and reliable.

“I had an appointment I could ill afford to cancel. So, here I am,” he offered his umbrella, much to Kenson's relief, and the two took shelter. “But what urgent business brings you out at such a bloody hour?”

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“Not an interview at Crockdale’s, I assure you. In fact, if you’re not otherwise engaged, I wouldn’t object to your joining me.”

Trusdale smiled; or so it appeared, so benign was the odd nature of his shrew-like face. He glanced at his pocket watch and sniffed.

“It seems intrigue is destined for rainy nights. Very well, I’ll tag along. But mind you, Doctor, if I should contract the denube fever, you’ll be paying my bill.”

Kenson chuckled warmly as they struck out for the Farthing district, a business sector with fancy storefronts and polished hitching posts and brass knockers. *Tap, tap.* The silver-tipped cane that he was so fond of carrying — a gift from his med school days — smote the stone beneath their feet, splatting water and adding to scuff marks that could only come from years of similar abuse. But it was fondness that drove the doctor to regard his cane in such a manner. He would use no other.

“Who is this friend of yours, Doctor?” Trusdale asked after at least a quarter mile. “Seems there’s always some chap popping up.”

The salt and pepper mustache that hugged Kenson’s upper lip twitched in amusement. He had never been the sort to run headlong into situations; even as a young man, his reasoned approach to the unexpected both impressed his teachers and annoyed his colleagues. He had the bearing of one older than his years. And now that he was mid-age, he had settled into the warm and fatherly. A bachelor by choice rather than circumstance, he lived alone, immersing himself in his work; but never to the point of ignoring his friends...or avoiding new ones.