

the street and conquer the world over.

But it was also as a member of this band that I met with my first sight of the bowels of a prison, for I was captured in a wagon raid that went afoul, and was shut up in a cell that was barely long enough for me to stretch out upon the damp, straw-covered stone floor that served as my bed. That was a wretched time, fending off famished rats day after day, and in constant doubt of whether the jailers would bring my meager nourishment. Yet I suffered in silence, and made no attempt at escape; I saw now the folly of the path I had chosen and determined to accept retribution for my wrongs. After the passage of five seasons I was finally released, with an oath upon my lips that never again would I resort to brigandry. But when I told Thenno of my resolve he merely laughed and told me that *he* would decide when I'd leave his company. The arrogant fool! He'd seen my strength and prowess numerous times, and I more than half again his size. I challenged him then and there, before the lot of his cutthroats, and within a minute's time I was pulling my blade from his quivering flesh.

I had heard that the town overlords had declared a reward for his death, and being in need of the impractical nuisance of money, I carried his lifeless body to the nearest guard post and dropped it at their feet. That reward showed me a more worthy way I could earn this troublesome burden of coins by which cities live, and make my way through the world. Thus I set to putting my skills to the task of hunting down other ruffians and outlaws like Thenno and taking them to justice, for which I received enough gold and silver to survive in the civilized lands.

*Worlds fabulously old . . .*

We trotted forward along the trail, which led off across the stream towards the strange structure. As we cautiously approached the distant form we began to make out something of its nature. It was a building of some kind, wrought of massive blocks of dull sandstone, but laid all to withering ruins by the merciless bane of Time. There were the remains of what had once been a kind of colonnade with square-hewn pillars, now mostly tumbled to earth and strewn about the waving grass. It