

Ploughman, Honest Labourer

The tall man pushed the plough forward, hard metal blades sinking into the loamy darkness and cutting the turves before him. He focused on the end of the field through the shimmering heat, where he'd planted a stick standing up proud of the untilled earth. That was his marker, the waypoint to help him keep the furrow straight and true. The soil deserved no less for coming good again this season, after a year of lying fallow. It was fertile and rich to the touch, and thanks to that his family could plant enough seed for a plentiful harvest of strong, ripe wheat.

Ploughing wasn't a job for a man with a tendency to get bored easily, demanding patience and precision. He'd always been the best in the family at turning the ground. Other people used animals to pull the plough, but he'd never liked taking the risk - an ox could pull away and cut the turf uneven, a horse could kick. He did things the old-fashioned way. Nothing wrong with the strength of a man's back and the power of his shoulders. Hard labour kept him honest. Kept him true.

His mind drifted a little as the steps started to feel longer. He was looking forward to watching the game this weekend. Guild Ball was rare good fun, and his little brother Harrow had become quite the name nowadays, after leaving for the big leagues. The man was proud as could be of the lad and his teammates. The boy had done good by himself.

He was startled from his thoughts by a voice, and almost jumped the plough. His frown slipped away when he saw it was Harrow himself, wheeling a cart down the lane towards the field. A heavy plough with enormous blades sat in the back. It looked totally impractical for farming, the sheer size no use for running the field, and he wondered why the lad had brought it here. A tool like that would be more at home in the hands of a soldier than a farmer, better suited for brutal fighting than churning the ground.

One hand raised, he hailed his brother from afar. 'Ho, boy! What in Solthecius' name do you expect me to use that monster for? It looks like it belongs on the pitch with you, not out here in the field!'

Harrow nodded excitedly by way of reply, a huge grin beginning to break out across his features.