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|  | Desert Saga **Chapter I**    **Cast**  Qumi ……….……**Prime Saga Master**, Original Idea  Lord Marko………………….. **Gigel** (human, farmer)  Dane…………………… **Himself** (human, inquisitor)  j0hN\_UsKgLa55….…….**John Hastings** (/, librarian)  Sentry……………… **Hiekatthanasul** (elf, summoner)   **~ The City of the Seven Oasis ~**     Beyond the southern borders of the Empire, far beyond the grasp of the Imperial central authority lies a human city quite deep in the arid lands that once housed the civilization of the Alkmaar. These, once a great civilization, fell tragically under the malicious plans of Mortis – The Fleshless Godess. Today only ruins decorate the arid landscape and where undead still roam fanaticaly atuned to the whispers of Mortis. Here’s were the city of Sandburg is found.    Two underground rivers quench the thirst of the population while the seven oasis that suround the city provide much needed food. This area was an important route for merchandise that came from the South Sea. But Sandburg originaly was founded as a mining colony to supply workers to the diamon mines in the western mountains. Two hundred years before the First Great War human colonist founded Sandburg. They, among others, tried to reclaim this land for their own use. Life was harsh but generation after generation built this city into the jewel that it is today. The darkest moment was when the minions of the Fleshless Godess awoke to comple her plan to punish the dwarven god, Wotan. The city was almost destroyed by a part of the army of undead minions heading for the Empire lands, in search for a staff, stolen from them. Many settlements fell, its dweling destoyed and population brought back as undead warriors. The end was in sight, but one pact saved the denizen of Sandburg. Forced to unite under one banner, sandburgians and the local greenskins fought the undead army and survived.  Since that day the pact has been kept between Sandburg and the greenskins in the nearby city of Hagfang. They trade and try to live peacefully, but younger citizens of both cities aren't so happy about this alliance... The local greenskins are a different breed then their more savage cousins we are all acustomed to. Once part of a royal bloodline, these greenskins where exiled. Thanks to their exile they were able to keep a higher level of civilization.    The situation between the two cities is becoming worse every day. Both towns lost many citizens in mysterious ways, and both of them say that the other has done it. With that situation all guilds prepared a team of their best members to investigate this mystery. The coordonation duties of the guild members was placed upon a Chapter House of the Inquisitor Order. This Chapter House was very old and recenlty gained a lot of prestige and influence among the other local guilds. They’ve decided to send a group of guildsmen to Dante Masion to investigate the disaparence of a number of citizens. Dante Mansion is found just a couple of ursh (1ursh=1kilometer) from Sandburg and in truth it looked more like a citadel then a mansion. Built on top of one of the Seven Oasis by a rich aristocrat of the Dante family, it is rumored that the mansion itself was built on some ancient ruins. Most lost people in the area were Dante servants.       ~ The Gathering ~     The adventurers came to Sandburg and awaited further orders. They have asembled from different guilds both local and foreign. Pay was good, fifty gold globes now and another fifty after the completion of the tasks, for work done around Sandburg. This indeed gathered a large amount of guilds and adventurers. It proved more then a chalange for the local town guard, to keep order among the free willed adventurers. To add to the tension, word got out that some guilds negotiated a higher pay. The local authority was quick to deny such events form happening and declared that the pay will be public and in front of all the guilds. It helped cool spirits, but still when dealing with more then one guild things can unfold in manners that not always suits your plans. So the local authority of Sandburg enlisted the help of the Inquisitors and expecialy their leader– bishop  Geoffrey Bethune –a master of organization and an elite leader, bringing his Chapter House from a position of obscurity to a place where it was consulted on every turn in local affairs and praised in the General Asembly of The Order in the Imperial Capital  Bishop Bethune housed different guilds in separte areas of the city and held meetings with all the guild leaders. During these meetings the first group was singled out to begin the investigation. They met shortly in the courtyard of the building that housed the Inquisitors headquarters. A large stone building with three towers. The entry point was a grand sandstone portal decorated with two life sized statues of the inquisitiorial warrior monks. Pass these doors lay a square courtyard, green and beautifull, a needed change from the urban surrounding that central Sandburg had to offer. Many plants grew here, thru the care of the Order members, they grew here an impresive amount of herbs used by the Order in its holy rituals, expecialy the Herth Rose. Flanking the courtyard where a number of doorways that probably lead to different aspect of life in the Orders daily routine. What captured your attention was the main building ahead of you. The bell tower of the basilica rang mid-day as you walked to join the group that asembled near the steps leading in the main building. The gathered adventurers made quite a noise, each trying to out do the other in heroic stories and things they’ve seen. “Hill Giants…” – howled on armour covered adventurer – “…now those are a sturdy enemy.” The boast was taken in with awe by some, but then another, an marksman of sorts, said: “You haven’t seen a fight if you haven’t fought a griffin standing on a short cliff.” From the crowd one magic wielder began to clap his hands and spoke: “What a delightfull situation, but Griffins seam mild when you are trying to escape a ruined tower, leg wounded, hands tied up and ocultist on your trail…”. One hooded adventurer with a rogue-ish style to him, laughed and replyed to the magic wielder: “You must be my boss, no one can lie like him” – the individuals near the rogue bursted into a booming laughter. Harsh words flew from one side to the other, mostly centered on mothers and inteligence levels. You entered the group near the magic wielder. You knew that there will be no fight, in the courtyard the presence of the Orders Witch Hunters regined supreme, because of this adventurers were content to argue only with words. The Hunters weren’t many, about a dozen you have counted, but any man that stands his ground in front of a demon must be a fierce oponent. You could not shake the feeling that this was all part of the old bishops plan, making sure the guildmembers and adventurers meet in small groups and under reliable observation.  The group went silent. The doors of the main building swung open by the help of two Witch Hunters. From inside emerged the old bishop Geoffrey Bethune, gray hair came from under his bishops hat. Sharp features made up his face, but his blue eyes gave him a friendly look. Around him moved a red wall of four inquisitor warrior monks, a number of guild leaders and a noble from the local authority, closest to the bishop was the man whos sole purpose was the protection of the bishop, part of the line of grand inquisitors, this man was the last line of defense the bishop could count on, in this world. The bishop and his loyal grand inquisitor bodyguard took one step forward.  “Highfather be praised, good to see all of you healthy.” – the grand inquisitor, the most trused of the bishops warriors, quickly glimpsed thru the courtyard giving the Hunters leader a head nod, the bishop continued – “… we have decided on our first step in solving the mistrey that has gripped our great city and its loyal citizens, the information has been passed to the leaders of the first adventuring party …” – the bishop turned his head as two guild emerged from behind the grand inquisitor – “… these are your leaders, trust them as you would me. So, as time is precious, it’s time to let you get under way…” – the bishop called one of his inquisitor from his entourage –“… Dane you know your mission, good luck and Highfathers blessing” –he whispered to the red dressed holy warrior keeping one hand on his shoulder. “I know your holliness, my the power of heaven keep your mind clear.” – Dane bowed his head – “… So be it !” – concluded the bishop Bethune.  Inquisitor Dane joined the group of adventures as they were calling out names of the adventures assigned to the first party, to your surprise you were chosen. Dane took up his place near the two guildleaders. In about an hour the party reached the Red Gates, passing them left the part of adventurers outside the city of Sandburg and on their way to Dante Estate. They headed twards Cali’manash, one of the settlement closest to Dante Estate and from where the only good road existed to the mansion.       **~ The Dante Mansion ~**     Once in Cali’manash you encountered a first problem, the party got lost in the widing streets of the oasis based settlement. Luckly a peasant was there and was willing to take you to the mansion.    *"Dante Mansion?"* – asked Gigel the peasant in a bored way *."Yes sure, I know where it is. If mylords care to wait, I shall take them there, just lemme finish moving these hay ballots."*    As quick as possible the adventurers were back on the trail and soon reached Dante Mansion, the building is huge and makes you feel small. Made from sandstone, its exterior still keeps some elements of the old ruins that “scared” the natural landscape. Dante is known for his historian hobby and it is said that his library can rival the Great Imperial Library in the Capital. There were also rumors about some dark dealing within his house, an ocult sect some say, but no one dared to investigate this matter. Lord Dante is a very rich nobleman and this is enough to make people turn a blind eye to his excentric activities. The whole mansion had fort like elements, thick sandstone walls, archer towers and great Darkstone gates rebuilt to resemble the original ruins that were here. As the adventurers stand before those great Darkstone gates a single servant appears. He looks very frightened, weak and old. He moved in your direction, but after four steps he fell on his face. He gave you one last look, his eyes are white, he is blind. Then he lost his consciousness. You stand just a few steps before him, the gates are opend, but no one else comes.    The adventurers quickly go to the body and try to do something for him.    *"Allright Gigel, steady...steady...don't panic, what would your father say if you screamed"* – the farmer Gigel said to himself holding tight his walking stick...    The servant looks even more old than you all thought, he did not awaken, but if someone isn’t going to help him soon he will die. His skin also looked very dry, but this is rather normal when someone live near the desert.     ~ An elven child ~     *"As the sun set down we continued through the arid vegetation. I could see almost nothing but my guide did not seem to have any problem with the lack of light. He led me ahead and I followed him blindly. I could see the anxiety of my leader in the brief moments when the moon lit his face. He told me nothing today when I asked him about it. He just said that he has a "bad feeling". I think he is hiding something from me…*  "I think the uneasinest of his face could be because he had never come here before. There are rumours that there are demons in this far end of the Empire, old demons. I still don't know why we are here and I wonder why my queen made sure I am secure out of the reach of the dwarf invasion. She even negotiated me a passage through Empire's lands and ordered one of her best Ice Royal guards to come with me. Perhaps I will recieve an answer to my questions once we reach that old mansion on the top of the far hill.  *"However, Musty is not feeling good today."*    "Are you writing again in that stupid diary?" asked Alen and pushed some more woods in the fire.  "Yeah, I am... I just need to write my thoughts... sometimes I feel there are too many of them in my head."  "Fine, young one, I understand. But be fast! I don't want to stay a long time here, we have to move soon." said the sentry.  "Are we headed to the castle on top of that hill over there?" asked the boy.  "Dante Manshion? No. That is a bad place. Don't go there... unless you have no other choice."  "I..." the thought was left unfinished, interrupted by a sudden roar.  The sentry jumped right on his feed and grabbed his bow.  "I knew it! We had been followed! We should not have lit the fire." he cried.  The boy got the hilt of his light sword, but did not took it out of the scabbard. He just waited. A heavy stamping echoed into the silent night. A small shadow runned out of nowhere and entered the boy's bag. The stomping grew stronger and stronger and then a roar tore the air an lit the sky. A giant demon appeared out of nowhere with a blazing flash. His hoofs eagerly burrowed the ground. He swung his sword over his curved horns and screamed:  "Your blood will feed me tonight!"  "Not a smart scream, horny." said Alen. At the same time he jogged his follower, saying quitely "When I act, run boy, this one I cannot handle easily. At least you’ll survive."  The boy nodded but still holded his hand on his sword. It would not help him if he drew it out when the demon rushed towards them. The fear prevailed and the boy grabbed his bag and flung away from the source of his future nightmares. He heard the wistle of the arrow shot by Alen and then he heard the thump of the sword in the elven armor and the terrified scream of the sentry.  He ran and ran and ran, not daring to look back. The demons lust, long stopped pursuing him. Maybe he wasn't that fast after all or maybe his friends body was enough for the hell creature to feed. He did not stop until he reached the threshold of the manshion. Then he falled before it, gasping in pain. After a few minutes he managed to get over and pushed the door. No one can tell his surprise when he saw a group of adventurers standing before an old dying man.    "By Highfathers Beard there is something coming thru the door." - cried out Gigel the farmer when he heard the door opening behind him...He quickly grabed his walking stick and pointed it bravely at the creature that was coming thru the door. "A stick..." - he tought - "... isn't a very good weapon, but I have to be on my guard even if the creature is a ....small boy, an elf boy… ?!?"    "What are you doing here boy?" -Gigel asks    The young elf jumped forward and tried to stay calm. As the wind calmed slightly he managed to say that he is lost and looking for shelter, but after that the wind grew stronger again and blurred his words. The adventurers read fear and request on his face. One good dressed man got closer to the boy and took his hand. He pointed the mashion to the other adventurers and all nodded one after an another. Then everyone almost simultaniously headed to the huge central building leaving the wall of the yard behind them.    Gates from main building began to open just by themselves, tempting to any curious person, perhaps a trap, but who can resist the temptation of curiosity. Behind gates there is no living soul, no one awaits you, everything is quiet and calm, inside yourself things are happening, fear is brewing, you try to be brave saying a prayer or something to keep you focused, but you can’t shake the feeling of  the unnatural. And to add to this eerie setting the wind picked up again and blew harder and stronger, you know this sensation very well- sandstorm is coming, you better hide yourself in the mansion before you will be lost under golden desert sands... there is no way you could go back, sadly time has run out...     ~ People of Dante Masion ~     "Enter, friends," said a clear voice of an almost metallically-efficient quality "A bad spell of weather is brewing and sandstorms are arguably not the best of events to participate in"    All members of the exploring party looked up and saw a charmingly dressed gentlemen standing at the mansion's richly-carved double-doors - the voice no doubt belonged to him. He had an ironic sort of expression with an outlandish eye-colour - gray, like rain. He smiled in an almost - almost - patronizing manner, revealing two slightly pointed canines. By all possible means of observation, he does not look a day over 30 years of age.    He approached the the assembly with leisurely, languid strides. A wrinkle appeared at the bridge of his aquiline nose as he studied the unconscious old man with distaste. "I suppose you better help this... elderly chap... into the mansion as well. Do make haste"    He turned to walk away but paused at the doorstep - in the manner of someone who has just recalled something he had forgotten - and turned around saying; "And I do apologize for not giving you gentlemen a formal introduction of myself. I am John Hastings, caretaker and cataloguer of Lord Dante's many documents, trinkets and oddments - a scholar of sorts, if you please."    "I really don't like that ... Hast…ings fellow..." -said Gigel the farmer to one of the adventurers - "....to pompous for my simple taste. All these noble-folk are all alike, they use many words and say a lot of things but, you know they don't really say anything... aha ... not like us simple folk, we let our work do the talking, now that is something to be proud of. Work. Not some castel you inherited from someone.... "- Gigel stops seeing that the adventurer doesn't bother to listen or even care. "Hmpf ... I wonder what made his day sour ??"- said the farmer in his head."I hope they have something to eat, forgot to do that at home...."    As you enter the mansion, one weird tought springs into your mind, such a big mansion and no other people are here, no servants, only John Hastings. As you move further thru the building, passing, an inner countryard decorated by dead or dying arbores, you observ that sand is the predominant feature here, it is almost everywhere, in the building, in the main hall, on stairs, furnitures, just everywhere.    "Allow me to apologize in Lord Dante's place for the quality of this place's hospitality - which, I assure you, had seen better days," said Hastings as he led the motley assembly of people into the mansion. "Our staff of servants have dwindled in number and those who disappeared were most impertinent fellows indeed who should know better sense than to leave without leave - bloody peasant-types (added John as an afterthought, eyeing Gigel as he did so).    John Hasting's voice seemed to be magnified several times in the chamberous mansion, echoing manifold about the place. But an odd feeling crepth through the adventurers; some of them reverberating voices appeared to belong to someone - something - else... but no one can be sure of that. The darkest corners of the anteroom they are traversing seem to house soft, wicked whispers, speaking of secrets and of evil plots.    "Sand had gotten in alarmingly large quantities and I'm afraid we've not the manpower to purge its presence from so large a mansion," Hastings continued, sweeping a layer of fine sand from a mantlepiece as he passes it. "Currently, it's only Albert the Librarian, his youngest son Olrich - whom serves us as an errand-boy - and I who still remained in Lord Dante's employ - and of course, this old man (I can never recall his name) as well, who is Lord Dante's porter and man-servant; highly inadequate for his position I must say, being old and feeble as he is."    You final come to a stop in a large hall with a glass dome. "Do place him on a chair over there - the wooden one. My Lord is partial towards that high-backed cushion one and I am sure he would not like to find his dirty porter griming that up." said Hastings, a wrinkle of disdain appeared on the bridge of his nose again. He then studied the porter with a candle and remarked almost to himself, "This is strange... I could swear that he looked at least... many years younger yesterday than he did... today... It's as if he has grown 10 years older overnight..." The old man recived attention from an adventurer. As he fixed him upon the chair, a most peculiar and alarming event took place; a scream filled the mansion, shaking the rafters and disturbing a great amount of dust, emitted from the direction of the kitchen - a child's scream. And almost immediately following it, another deeper, louder scream – a man's, no doubt – came from the Library in the floor above. Then, silence reliquished its reign - a watchful sort of silence. Then the old man woke up, took a deep breath said something in a unreconizable blaber and fell without any grace from the chair upon the ground coated by a smoth layer of sand powder.    "Great Gods of Nevendaar - that's my teacher Albert! And his son!" blurted a startled Hastings. "I must attend to him! Gentlemen, if it would not be that much of a trouble, half of you have better visit the kitchen as well to see to little Olrich - whom I believe the scream belonged to.     ~ From whom the screams ~     "Can somebody help me to pick, the old one off the ground" - said Gigel pulling the old man. "Oh...nevermind I made it."- Gigel crossed his arms in sadisfaction that he'd done something more then the adventurers. "So any of you, fine warriors wish to acompany me to the kitchen, by request of mylord Hastings, of course, to see what has happened there." - Gigel was next to the door calling as many adventurers as he could, to go with him. "Sure ..." - he tought - "...a chilling scream came from there, but food, think of the food man, such a big mansion must have large quantities of the best food the soil can provide and besides that, what can go wrong with these fine guildsmen gentelmen by my side." - he stops to observe one warriors blade and says looking at him: "Hope that's sharp, good sir !". The guildman looked at Gigel with a puzzled face, then the farmer continued - "...we don't want to kill monsters with blunt weapons, do we?" - Gigel approched the warrior and said - ".. take it from me killing with blunt weapons is hard and unnecessary work..."    The the young elf measured the peasant and said he will participate to the kitchen. "That farmer hides something" he thought. But who was he to share his omnitions with the these people. Non the less, he should keep his eyes on that man.    Old man is dead, that’s for sure. Sandstorm has began, but what is odd is the fact that everything is so still, calm and quiet, just like if nothing happened. Gigel went to the window and almost screamed “What the...”. The mansion seems to have some kind of shield that prevent the sand and noise to get into the mansion. You heard about it from the local folk, but didn't think it is true, there were many rumors about Dante mansion, but as it seems most of them are true...        Hastings practically raced up an antique, marble stairwell - ascending to, presumably the Library of Lord Dante - with several members of the investigating party in tow. His footfalls on the cold stone sounded unnaturally loud - in contrast to the deadly silence of the vast mansion. A constant stream of polite curses flowed from Hasting's lips like honeyed-poison from a bejewelled wine-goblet.    At the end of the tortuous stairwell, a faint glow coloured the borders between a heavy-set wooden door and its frame. It was noted that the door-ring was attached to a bronze-likeness of a maladroit creature of sort - with the horns of a ram, and teeth that will put a wolf to shame. In the dimness of the landing, the bronze-likeness appeared most lifelike, and seemed to grin maliciously, threatening all those who seek entrance to the door it guarded.    Without so much as a pause, Hastings pushed the door open, spilling orange lamplight onto the eyes of the investigating party - momentarily blinding them.    Once the searchers acclimatised to the relative brightness of the library, an impressive sight greeted them. It was a large circular chamber with shelves piling up as high as two-floors combined - filled with rows upon rows of sheep-skin and leather bounded tomes. Ladders stood like watchful sentries at regular intervals against the shelves. Open books and yellowing parchments littered its black-marbled floor, literally flooding the room with ancient knowledge and forgotten texts. A religious lore painted with bold, angry colours adorned its dome-like ceiling - it depicted a wrathful image of the Highfather amongst stormclouds and Bethrezen casted off the Heavens down to the Infernal Furnace of the Underworld; shedding his feathered, angelic wings as he fell earthward in a lightning bolt. In the middle of the rotund room a large desk stood. Sitting at it was -    \*Hahh\* a sharp intake of breath was heard from John Hastings - utterly upset by what he saw there.    A man about 30 years old. You never saw him, but he looks very familiar. Dane the representative of the Inqusitors Order first mutters : Albert. Then Albert looks at your direction, he cries, but instead of tears you see seeds of sand coming from his eyes – “ I killed him” -  he says like if he couldn’t believe it – “I killed my own son. Why? Do you know why?!”- in that moment his head fell on his left shoulder, his voice became harsh and distant – “Greed is the virtue. No more tears will be shed” - he becames calm, took some air and then he burts into a cloud of sand, covering everything in the library. Only cloths left of him and a book with somekind of lock. Dane took it quickly, just after the explosion and hides it in his pocket. It looked like a small diary.        As we descented down to the kitchen, we felt the temperature drop. Gigel placed his hand on the stones of the coridor leading down. "I wonder why are the stones so cold." Then the warrior with whom Gigel had spoken said:  "We must be underground, it is very cold!"  "Too cold, sir warrior."  "And why do you say that?"  "Everybody in the village has an underground well…”- the farmaer said keeping a hand on the wall as he progresed down-“…even the deepest one isn't this cold."  "Strange." - the warrior bowed his head to avoid a lower celling  "Strange indeed. But...em..look there's the kitchen."    The group flooded the large square room. Seven torches lit the room. But there wasn't much to see. Four wooden tables. A great fire place with a couple of sooth covered metal pots. The guildsmen where placing their hands on their weapons and walking vigilent to cover the entire room. Their attention focused to pierce the dark that the torches could not light. Gigel moved near a table that he had singled out. "Ah, food at last" - he said taking up a bowl filled with red and yellow amasha apples.  "There's nothing here." - one of the adventurers said.  "Are there any doors?" - another adventurer asked.  "None that I could find." - responded several of the guildsmen.  "How about you ?" - the guildsman turned his attention to a hooded, soccerer looking individual. Gigel listened to the conversation but almost all his conciousness was focused on the bowl with amasha apples. He took one out, rubbed it against his clothes and took a bite. "Soo much juice..." - he tought trying to keep as much of the juices in his mouth - "...now Gigel don't be greedy..." - his better side explained. He moved near the young elf, who was sitting near the fireplace observing something, and said:  "Want some?" - Gigel move the bowl of apples in front of the boy. But then just like an arrow the sound of an explosion went thru the ears of the farmer. Starteld he dropped the bowl.  "What in Bethrezens ghost was that !!!!" - he said griping his walking stick. The sound thundered from above.    Out of a dark corner a boy appears, upon his face a wicked smile that chills your heart. The boy didn't move a bit, he just stood there laughing in a sharp, high pitched voice. One of the guildsmen aproached the boy but he broke in two revealing lots of sand inside and a huge explosion follows. Furniture and guildsmen were blown way. In the corner of the kitchen little doors become visible.  "Maybe we should return to the others, there is something wrong here..."-said the warrior.  "Reeeally? Well that is a very perceptive from you!"- said the sorccerer sarcasticly  "Just shut up and come"- warrior mutters    The other boy, the elf that came after the guildsmen party helped Gigel stand up.  "Name's Hiekatthanasul." he said to the peasant "you can call me Heik. Still... how did you know where the kitchen is? Have you come here before?"    "Nice to meet you Hiek" - Gigel stood up and shook off some sand from his clothes. "In here?!" - he said with his eyes wide open - "No, young sir. Never been here, but a friend of mine worked here a few years back and he told me about some places he's been to in the mansion." - he picked up his walking stick from the ground and continued his conversation with the young Heik - "I think we should follow that brave warrior, before more sand engulfs us..."    Dusting the sand/innards of Librarian Albert, Hastings opened - and shut - his mouth several times, as if at a loss of words to say.    "That... that was most irregular of Master Albert..." he stammered slightly, though his self-control remained astounding to the otherlanders considering he had just watched his teacher blowing up into a pile of sand. It was almost as if he'd expected such infinitely irregular things to happen about his person - it's as if he knows this was going to happen before it did (thought most of the searchers suspiciously)    "I must... must report this unbidden happenstance to my Lord and Liege, Dante... I am sure he does not approve of people... exploding... about his premises," added Hastings as he turned around absent-mindedly, and headed towards the exit - while the others were furtively scraping about the sand looking for a pointer to a possible explanation, like cockerels scratching desperately for a worm that is clearly not present.    Wordlessly, Hastings left the investigating party and exited from where he had entered. One of the searchers observed Hasting's abrupt departure and hasten to tail the scholar, who had aroused a great deal of curiousity in him     ~ Search for Dante ~     The warrior calls upon the attention of the others. Hastings has left the room with no explanation as to where he is going. A flood of men thundered from the library, down the stairs and into the main hall. Only to discover that the body of the old servant was gone. But where did it go and a better question who or even what took him. He just couldn’t have walked away, he was dead. Or the mansion has some way to wake even the dead, it the end it is still Dante Masion.  The group from the kitchen meet up with the one from the library in one of the rooms next to the main hall just in time to see Hastings proceeding thru a simple undecorated door.    "I wonder where he is going!!!" - Gigel watched John pass by him - "Now we have something to worry about young sir Hiek" - said the farmer, placing his walking stick on a nearby wall and pulled out two apples, one he gave to young Hiek - "If the noble ones are in a hurry then it means that there are problems ... " - Gigel watched who else is in the room and if there is some new information -"...and if there are problems then we, the simple ones, are always in trouble..."    "I have my methods of knowing people's minds" said Hiek puting his bag on the floor. He wispered something in a language Gigel could not understand and a small shadow rushed out of the boy's bag after John. Hiek stood up and took a bite of the apple.  "I like these fruits, Gigel.... I really do."    Hastings, though walking very fast, had managed to keep his deportment completely under control and was apparently doing his best not to break into a panicked run - unlike those ill-bred peasants that knew naught about self-control in every imaginable situation (he thought contemptuously to himself). He was a nobleman, both in blood and mannerism! Heaven forbids the thought of him scuttling about like a frightened doe!    He came to a wide corridor, partially lit by torches. On its walls, many paintings were hung of men both victorious and vanquished in the annals of history; One depicted King Demosthene, astride a black stallion and charging at the battle of Gillead Pass. Another painting showed King Emry, majestic, upright and proud - hung beside his consort's portrait, Ambrielle of Many-Secrets. Further down the hallway, however, the paintings illustrated the darker faces of events past. An oil-painting sitting in a gilded frame depicted the Lost Child, Uther the Deceiver riding upon a many-tentacled Beast. Yet another was the likeness of Hubert DeLayle, Man-Demon of the Empire having a jovial time at a drunken feast - participating in the macabrous activities the scum was infamous for. Lord Dante's taste in art was often deemed unconventional - dark, even.    Hastings had past this hallway hundreds of times, and yet the infernal images of Uther and DeLayle have never failed in illiciting a chill down his spine. Their eyes follow - watching every step he takes, as if sadistically wishing that he should trip, crack his skull open and bleed a slow and agonizing death. Such was the malevolent atmosphere that hung about the place.    "Lord Dante?" Hastings spoke in as calm a voice as he can muster - rapping the door to Dante's study twice, sharply. "I wish to seek an audience with Your Eminence regarding the... resignation... of Librarian Albert from his position. I am here to report and expound upon the details of his... circumstances."    There was no answer.    John Hastings knocked upon the door again, "Lord Dante?" The door, the study and its contents remained obstinately quiet.    "Everything has gone barking!" thought Hastings huffily as he proceeded to visit every possible room and chamber in pursuance of his goal of locating Dante, failing miserably in the process.    "There's just the cellar I have not looked in," mused Hastings, as he proceeded towards the Kitchen, where the cellar-door - and its key - was located. He was oblivious to the persons who had followed him faithfully throughout his hunt, being deep in thoughts himself. "But why would the master be in there in the first place?"... But seeing that the most unbelievable, amazing events have occured in his vicinity the entire time, he was well-prepared to believe even that the the serf - Gigel - was really Lord Dante in disguise and that pigs can most certainly take to the air.    "There's just the cellar left," he muttered as he lifted a set of old, iron keys of its hook...    He then came to the wooden trap-door that leads to the underground chambers that sits in the very foundations of the mansion. But a sudden doubt stayed his hand from throwing the entrance open. He was suddenly fearful as certain memories assaulted his mind... unpleasant memories of the dark beneath.    Several members of the searchers walked into the Kitchen, finding Hastings deliberating over a cellar-door. Hastings turned to them and said; "I believe Lord Dante may currently be in the cellar, as it pleases him - as I cannot find him in all the other possible places. It would most certainly be his wish to meet his guests and greet them formally himself"    He unlocked the door with a click, and uncovered a gaping, hungry-looking passageway to the subterannean chamber.    "After you, my good sirs," he bowed and gestured courteously towards the entrance, flashing a polite smile and revealing those ever-so-slightly-pointed canines again..."    The basement is dark and gloomy. On some walls there is even green mold, quite rare in the desert. The more usual brown mold was missing. Stacked near the walls were barrels with wine, some where broken, slowly dripping some of their precious liquid on the lightless floor. Water was rare in these lands and wine is a priceless comodity. The aristocracy spends a lot of money to fill their cellars with wine expecially the famous Nestorian sort. This odd need to buy wine is because of the sandburgian nobles straward desire to not quench their thirst with alchool with local bewerages. It is not a problem of quality but more a problem of social etiquete.  As you progressed further you take more air into your lungs. The air smells and taste sweet. Lord Dante is not here, no sign of him, but then you spot a hole on the basement floor. When you go near you see a passage and stairs going down, they look new, but the entrance seems to be old. The passage leads 100 m down, every 10 m there is a burning torch. When you reach the end of the tunnel a small, but high room appears before you. You spot also huge, heavy doors with some inscribtion. The language is somehow familiar, but also unknown. You can only translate a part of it...     ~ The Door ~     Gigel moved next to the door. Drawn there by a mysterious curiosity. Symbols on the doors moved and replace each other in a magical dance until the old text was rearranged. Gigel looked suprised:  "I can understand it... "O..Our...Greed is ... our sin. Our God is ... our destruction. The road lies before you as you speak the words, but be ready to do this". Gigel happy looks at the others but no one seams to see the text change. Then out of nowere, a whisper: "Simple riddle for a simple man" – the voice was arrogant – "oh don't bother about me, soon I shall present myself before you young one" - the voice whent silent.  Gigel silently repeated the riddle. But what does it mean?    Hastings dawdled at the back of the exploring party, ever wary - ever cautious. Odd things have been said about the ruined tunnels beneath Dante's Mansion - and indeed, he've seen surprising mishaps associated with them many a times.    The discovery of these subterranean tunnels beneath the wine-cellar appeared no more than a chance incident. Years ago, a butler - by the name of Burgum - was fetching a bottle of Nestorian Wine for his Lord, Dante in the very same chamber. He claimed he felt tremors beneath his sole before the floor gave way and he fell mid-way down into the underground passageways. It was luck that held his hand at the edge of the breach, narrowly costing his life. The rest of the servants who heard his cries of distress promptly rescued him from an unexpected trip to the afterlife.    It was dismissed as no more than a flaw in the architectural design of the mansion's foundation. But Butler Burgum claimed otherwise; saying that he heard fell-voices when he was dangling above the chasm repeating the phrase, "Nea Sa Vaszul" many times over. He then went mad and was dismissed from his position by Lord Dante. Librarian Albert and his protege, John Hastings, however, knew the meaning of those words - they said "We hath cometh" in a tongue forbidden, and spoken only in places where light will not shine. This information knew the inquisitor Dane, whos order has investigated butler Burgums madness.      Lord Dante then went on to clear the rubble and had steps cut into the tunnels - led by a personal prophecy of possible riches and forgotten relics. He (Dante) was, after all, a respected antiquarian and collector - and the discovery had been a blessing. But that little project of his was little known to Hastings.    Lit torches stood in their brackets at ten step intervals all the way down the crude steps which was no more than footholds cut from the bedrock. Someone was in these tunnels recently, that much was known to the explorers. The air, far from being the stagnant, musty atmosphere of a cave, smelt surprisingly sweet as if the rocks here have bathed in honeyed-butterwine.    Very soon, the entourage came to the bottom of the stonestairs, coming to face with an imposing stone door that would allow a titan with comfort (and looked as if it'll require a titan to break it down as well). No handle rings or dwarven-lever-and-pulley set-ups was attached to it; creating a baffling question as to how the door can be opened. A huge, scaly, many-mouthed creature was carved upon its surface - a scroll fashioned entirely out of stone was held in one of its tentacles.    "Avaris ahn Tabus, Tabus ahn... \*mumble\*... Loqui Nominus en Portis" recited John Hasting, as he studied the tablet. "It said - 'Greed is our Sin, Our Sin is...' and I can read no further of that line."    "Right here, however..." said Hastings pointing at another line, "reads, 'Speak the Answer, and you may Enter...' It's a riddle written in the secret script of an ancient cult" added Hastings dreamily, his gray eyes distant - his mind lost in the surreal lands of wandering thoughts. "What can they really mean?"    When Hastings read “Our greed is our sin” gates began to tremble, but suddenly stopped. “This is only half of the answer, you need to say the second half if you wish to pass through me…” – the voice, comes from a mouth sculpted in the gates themselfs.”Think quick and lets finish it” – said the gates. The guild sorcerer tries to question the gates but they obliviously remain silent.    Gigel moved then near the doors, Hastings disgust grew to unimaginable levels – “What does this serf desire, this concers him not”. But Gigels hands touched the gates and said quinching his eyes: “Our Sin is God… Our God is our destruction…”. The mouth sculpted in the gates laughed:”Yes, that’s it, Greed is our Sin, our Sin is our God, our God is our destruction…” – the gate spirit gave out a sigh – “…nicely done young one, but you still need a key” – the mouth began to disappear.    “I think can help you with that” – sarcastically said someone behind you. Everyone startled, looked quickly behind in the direction of the voice hoping to see something. And you do. Piercing from the dark emerged the old man, the porter, his face broken in half - “Oh excuse me for my manners…” - he says throwing his face away like a mask. Beneath it, another face, a younger more noble Lord Dante – “Milord?… What is this? ” said Hastings moving closer to the aparition – “Well not quite…” – and "Dante" threw away his face once again, this time even his clothes changed, revealing an ancient tunic decorated with many ornaments made from jewels. “My name is Hash'nar…” – the enities voice echoed with an unnatural tonality – “… and you gave me a great gift, young ones. Finally, after so many years of corupting the souls of this mansion I can at last open these damn doors.”  “What are you ?” – asked Hastings placeing himself a few steps away from Hash’nar.  “That’s not your concern yet, young ones. What is important is that I found you, Gigel is your name, huh? Well I think we should change it soon, someone with our blood in his veins shouldn't posses such a funny name. I sincerely regret to tell you this, but I need to kill the others, I'm quite hungry after so many years, but don't be afraid... Gigel you won't die. I will need your asistance Hastings, also. But the rest shall have the honour of being my food…” – he smiles gently as perhaps a friend would do. But behind that smile, oh what devious toughts cris-crossed his ancient mind.    Hastings fell down on his knees and screamed in agony. From his mouth poured a sea of sand spilling on the ground. In the mean time around Hash'nar sand is collecting and forming into people, you spot Albert, his son, the old man and many others who once held the position of Dante servants, buttlers, stable boys, gardeners, cooks, chamber ladies, guards. After a brief moment their hands grew into sand made claws. Hash'nars skin also changed to a golden color, his eyes became green as emerald. “Your souls will please me and Alk’nar.” – it said, gathering his minions around him, and with a sign from his hand the minions charged the adventurers. Hastings was still laying on the ground, twitching.    And thus battle was joined in that deep, dark recess of the earth beneath Dante's Mansion, fierce and deeply vile. The warriors gathered around the sand abominations and struck them with a whirlwind of blades, but were unsuccesfull in breaching their defences. Indeed some of the sand minions fell to the ground in a bland pile of sand, but they had the nasty habit of reasembling into their former sand-golem state, just moments after their vanquishment.    John Hastings was fighting a battle all on his lone self - within the deep, dark recesses of his mind.    "How long has this abomination infested the very bodies of the people around him without his knowledge of it - sapping, draining the life-force of Lord Dante, Librarian Albert, Little Olrich, the porter and other servants, before his eyes, day after day?" such questions assailed his mind, as sand invaded the sanctity of his mouth, spewing forth, like foam would from a rabid hound. Painful grains of sand squirmed forth from the corners of his eyes - causing Hastings undue agony. And in this state of torment, John Hastings passes into darkness - his thoughts and musings whent onward, to a place known to no soul save Hastings alone.    The Sand-Golems proved to be formidable foes indeed. Blades passes through them like white-hot wires through butter but finding nothing vital to pierce and mangle. It seemed that the odds were stacked to collapsed upon the exploring party.    Then, an unknown figure leapt into the fray.    With alarming alacrity, he grabbed the sand heads of the abominations one after another, causing them to scatter in bursts of brilliant red flashes. The cruel talons of the Sand-Golems swipped and grabbed, trying to rip the new-comer into shreds - but missing him entirely all the time. The figure seemed untouchable - intangible, almost... for his speed was blinding. He was a perfect blend between a duelist and a mage.    Within seconds, all was left was a path of carnage of loose sand - and Hash’nar.    "Cease to exist, and begone from the face of Nevendaar!" said the mysterious figure - and with a movement too fast to be caught by mortal eyes, he sunk both his hands into Hash’nar's chest and obliterate him in a red-sphere of bulbous energy - and of course, sand...    As the red-luminance that briefly illuminated the chamber dissipates, the tunnels sunk into shadows again. The exploring party warily approached and took a closer look at their strange saviour, finding - to their immense bafflement - that he, and John Hastings was in fact, one of the same person. His gray eyes now burned with an orange glow - like an ash briquette rekindled by the wind. Slowly, the fell-light disappears from his pupils, which are now black - black like the coldest, starless night. Its inky depth screams out loud of alien otherness. He quickly found the wall to lean onto because tho’ it was a great ability, it also drained the vital energy of the user.    "Hashnar spoke of a blood-bond between you and him," said Hastings in his familiar coldly-efficient voice, addressing the question to the serf Gigel. "What manner of bond did he speak of?"    Gigel recovering himself from the battle, looked at John with suprised eyes:  "A bond? If there was one I certanly didn't know anything about it ?!" - the farmer said looking onto the floor to find his walking stick. He found it under a pile of said and as he pulled on the stick it revealed a statue.    In the place where Hash’nar made his last stand something else glow in it, beside the unnecesary amount of sand. Somekind of statue. Further inspection revealed that the staue was the key the gate spirit spoke of. The way lies now open, but something just isn't right, when Hash'nar was destroyed... he smiled for a second. Defiant you might say, but what if there was more behind all of this.  As you use the key gates open. You feel cold air coming from the entrance.    Hiek watched silently from the back as the battle proceeded and afterwards as the body turned to sand and a key he emerged from his hiding place. There was something strange in everyone here, including himself. As the others proceeded Hiek watched the adventurers with curiosity it was all new to him. Then the small shadow he had released before returned to his bag. He picked it up and followed the rest.    You go deeper into the tunnel, the air chills your body and soul, yet the air is very dry. In the tunnel as before every regular interval there is a torch. On the walls hanging were silent testemonies of this lands past. Large paintings spoke of a tropical land described in detail in a language that you sadly can’t begin to comprehend. As the young elf, Hiek, marched deeper into the tunnel he seemed more and more upset. He looked at the pictures and his face grew more and more pale. His hands clutched into fists and his eyes closed. Yet he followed the others. At the end of the tunnel another larger statue greets you. It’s shape made you remember a figure from the paintings, but no one wanted to go back and check. To your surprise the statue move her head and began to speak “Give me the offering.” – she spoke in a desperate voice – “ Give me the liquid of life.” Quickly you spot the statue holds a pot.      But the words echoed in Hieks head, echoing back from his head as a storm of anger that seamed to burst from his eyes, he tried to keep them closed. At first there was no reaction, none that could be seen by the others, but then suddenly his eyes opened. Viewing the image of the woman, broke his determination to keep his silence. He rushed towards the statue hitting it hard with his fist.  "Mockery!" he cried, tears began to fall from his eyes and blod from his fists. The others looked at him with a gaze of a person that doesn’t know what to do. Luckly Hiek gained control over himself again, after a few strong hits on the statue.  "She brings life no more" - he said sadly, tears coming down from his eyes -  "death herself is her messenger now. She was our mother, yet mermaids were her favorite children. Offered her their home."    As the elf spoke, a droplet of blood was forming on the statue were the elf unleashed his fury.  His blood has stained the statue, but now it strangely collected into one drop that fell into the bowl scupted into the statue. Immediately the statue awoke:  “More, more…” – it said now with a hint of desire in it’s screaming voice –“I need more !”    After seeing that every one for different reasons had frozen into a statue like paralysis Hiek goes to one of the adventurers with a grim look.  "Come on, man, you have water, I really don't have any, so please pour some in the bowl."  The guildsman looks confused but after that goes and pours the needed water into the bowl, mixing with the elven blood.    The statue looked at you tired: ”Hmm… sacrifice is not you pashion I see. I’m tired, I have what I want now.” – the statue whent silent. Everyone stood still trying to make head or taills of the events that happened and their meaning. John moved next to the statue with a voracious curiosity, placing his hands and sites into the sculpted bowl. It was empty. A short lightning of disapointment whent up his face. The others crowded around him. Slowly coming out of the statue was a spirited entity. Glowing in a blue light, it scared the adventurers into making a few steps beck, some whent as far as runing a few steps.      **~ The Mystery of the Golden Desert ~**      *“At the beginning…” – it said looking at everyone in turns – “there was Highfather that created Bethezen, his most beloved son, he even gave him the power of creation. With this great gift Bethezen, the Great Angel, most beautifull of creations wanted to thank the Highfather for his gift with a new world – Nevendaar. The sacred land was pure and good, a creation to match his own beauty.*  But Bethezen felt that something is missing, so he asked the others to help him in his task to create the new world. And they came, no one really knows from where and who they really are. Where they angels also beloved by Highfather or beings equal to the Eternal Highfather himself? Some even dared to say they came from other universes, other than the one created by the Highfather. Among the new comers to Nevendaar was Alk'nar – The Golden Lord as he described himself, who was a calm and friendly soul. He singeld out a part of Nevandaar were he spiled his blood, that dried to become the Great Golden Desert. The desert was as a shiny ocean of sand and soon many others visited it for its beauty. Solonielle gave the desert many oasis and Gallean planted palms and other plants giving sweet fruits, Wotan gave the land glass from the skies, mined later as rubies, sapphires and other precious metals. But Bethezen gave him the greatest gift. He used the blood of the Golden Lord and his tears to craft the Alkmaars, the desert people, Alk’nars sons and daughters.  *For millenia Alkmaars lived peacefully in the land. Worshiping the Golden Lord for the life they enjoyed. And so they began to build in his honour. Great stone temples floated onto the golden seas as the proof of the Alkmaars love for their god. Soon a desire grew from within the sand peoples hearts to give their god the finest things they could make. In his tempels sacrifices were brought in lavish ceremonies. First it was only fruits, water and cloth in small community holidays. But then – the want, the desire to make things bigger, better and more elaborate pushed the sand people to organized large spectacles that ended with the sacrifice of many animals. His statues were decorated with precious metals but the Golden Lord didn’t care much about the offering, not at first. In the begining he took the offerings because he felt that his children are happy making them and the happines of his people was paramount to Alk’nars desire. But then the want that pushed his people in lavish ceremonies, somehow jumped from the Alkmaars to Alk’nar. The Golden Lord demanded more and even more. But when he asked his people for the supreme sacrifice, the other gods of Nevadaar struck the Golden Lord with all their fury. Gallean and Solonielle then entombed his still living body into a prison beneath the sands. Seven tears from Solonielle were used to lock him util, they hoped his madness would go away. Four were take to the four corners of the desert, one was give to the High Priest of the Alkmaars one was embedded onto the door of the Prison and the last was placed inside the body of the Golden Lord. His soul was taken by the tear in his body to a dream state, where his mind could be purified.*  *“But now” – the statue said – “… the tears are in danger and Alk’nar is still mad, more years, even centuries if not millenia have to pass until we can have our god back. Please I beg of you to go and seek the answers behind this story and bring back the tears to their rightfull place. There is another way but you are our first and best hope. Now go forth and reclaim the tears.”*    The adventurers wanted to ask more questions, but the statue went silent. Maybe it will give more answers after some actions have been done to recover one tear.    John Hasting was listening to the words of the statue with immense interest - so immense that he almost burst from the excitement    "The Legend of the God of Golden Dunes, Bloodfather of the Alkmaars - Alk'nar the Forsaken! It's true," exclaimed the scholar excitedly, his steely, warrior composure now entirely discarded, and he had regained his previous mannerism. "Master Albert and I have the privelege and opportunity to look at some of the most antique documents in Lord Dante's (may the Highfather bless his soul) extensive archive - numerous writings of the Alkmaar magi mentioned the God's name"    Then, Hastings cast his glance upon Gigel the Farmer, considering him from head to toe. "And I suppose you must be one of the last descendents of the extinct Alkmaar people - as Hashnar made references about your... blood," commented Hasting, wrinkling his nose at Gigel's dirt-filled finger-nails and less-than-fragrant garbs - possibly wondering how an unkempt peasant such as him can possibly be related to the noble and wise Alkmaars.    "Also, I purpose that the jewels and incantation in question should be located elsewhere as these tunnels go no further," continued Hastings, considering the dead end which lay ahead. "Let us tarry no longer! We shall not suffer Alk'nar to wait for an extension contract to his incarceration!"    "What's in-kar-se-rashion?" queried a perplexed Gigel, trying to wrap his tongue around this new and unfamiliar word.    Hastings rolled his eyes and proceeded with the rest wordlessly - leaving the deep, dark shadows of the ruin beneath Dante's Mansion.    The tunnel goes no further, this is the end, but on the desert there are many other Alkmer ruins. Great city Sandburg is said to be build on one of such ruins.    Gigel, Hiekatthanasul, and the rest of the Guildsmen watched silently as John Hastings forayed through Dante's Library with abandon - opening dusty tomes and unrolling yellowing scrolls, then tossing them aside when their content held not the text he was pursuant of.    'He's the picture of a bumbling, absent-minded scholar,' thought those who was observing Hastings. 'From where did his inhuman powers come from?'    Dane, the inquisitor wanted to know that more then the others, but still he kept his silence, until he finds more information on Hastings.    The book searh went on for some times until Hastings picked up, apparently, the right book with the seal of the Hourglass stitched with golden thread on its front - which served as Alk'nar's sacred seal - for the Lord of the Dunes governs the elemental all-consuming, all-destroying Time. He leafed through the ancient pages before pausing at one, exclaiming, "There!" as he did so. "This book describes the History of Sandburg, its Establishment and … other related entries…” – last part was a comment on Hastings part and not the books text –“… Marzinadh was one of the greater centers of learning of the Alkmaar Civilization, a small community by numbers but the best scholars and mages inhabited its alkmaarian houses."    Hasting produced a pair of reading glasses from his pocket and place it on the bridge of his nose.    "... when we arrived at the Oasis of Quenchwater (known as Kwen'wadi, by the indigenous nomad - last dying descendents of the ancient Alkmaar), we found this a most auspicious site to settle upon; there is ample ground-water and the soil was tolerable for agricultural progresses. However, we did not wager upon the discovery of the ruined Sand Temple of Marzinadh - which I must credit Sir Dante … illustrious ancestor of the recently deceased Lord Dante… “ – Hastings added a comment – “… for doing so - may the Highfather bless his eyes and his sight never wavers! However, many large rocks obstruct the entrance to the ruins and we have not the manpower to relocate them. It was with heavy hearts that we relinquish our quest..."    Hastings snapped the book shut abruptly and said, "There you have it, gentlemen. Records of another ruin - a possibly bigger one. Now Gigel, have you and any other of your... farmer acquaintances... came across any such possible entrance when you were digging about in the dirt? The location descriptive of the Temple's whereabouts clearly states that it is not the one we've just visited... It must lie elsewhere"    “If you let me think a little, I shall give you an answer.” – said Gigel placing his hand on the left side of his face.    “Then when you remember take some of the men and go to the area that you think the ruins are located.” – said one of the guild leaders    As Hastings finished his reading the young elf looked through the guildsmen. Not that he really cared about this Alkmaar story, but he needed a strong party to watch over him and these people seemed to fit for the job. And as he helped them, the possibility for them to help him grew. They talked between themselves and probably suggested where this ancient place would be, but he did not hear them. He sighed.  "Is any of you gentlemen a hawkmaster?" he asked slightly immitating John in manner of speaking and timbre.    "Hawkmasters?" commented Hastings with one eye-brow raised with incredulity. "Who would want to have anything to do with those positively perilous, smelly excuses for birds?"    "Now gents, to our business and quest," said Hastings almost immediately, with as much grimness as he can muster. "I suppose that we should try different sources to locate these lost ruins -some of you should try the City's archive and scry from the records there. And another few of you should visit Old Tomworth the tavern-keeper of the Seven Deserts Inn; he'd heard much (even those he wasn't meant to) and I believe he'll require some degree of... persuasion, before he'll open up."    "As for me, I'll search through these mountainous documents for whatever clue I can locate," added Hastings, making a broad sweep with his eyes of the Library. "And there is some business that I'll have to take care of - in this mansion... I am not quite sure... but..." his voiced trailed off with uncertainty.    "I'll meet the lot of you again at precisely nine o' clock tonight in the City Square. There, we'll pool whatever resources we have and decide the next most appropriate course of action. Now, go gentlemen...Go..."    The guildmen waited for a sign from their leaders and the inquisitor. They nodded and from outside the room.      **~ The first quest for the Tears ~**      "Hmpf, just ghost stories to scare the little ones." - tought Gigel as the group moved away from Hastings, now entierly focused on his reading. "If they have the time to combe the desert for secrets people forgot for a reason, then let them. I won't stop them. And that Hastings fellow making me one of the Desert Ancients is just ...em...not right. He spents to much time behind these walls, reading these old ...things...books...yes...and understands from them what he likes. Must hide..."- Gigel looks down at his chest to see his old medalion - "...this too before someone thinks I'm that Alk'nar fellow. Eh... people with to much imagination and ...heh...loads of free time. What more you want from them. Now lets go home." - Gigel started walking to the main entrance.  "Were are you going farmer?" - asked one of the adventurers.  "Home... em...I think I know a ruin..." - he said - ".. great were am I gonna "produce" a ruin now" - he was thinking, with his back turned to the adventurers - " a ruin.. oh wait I do know a ruin, the old obelisk, me and Ebun found when we were children, under his fathers barn." -now Gigel turned to face the adventurers - "... its not much of a ruin, but it should be searched for it secrets"  "Let us help you !!" - said a smaller group of adventurers that split from the main body of guildsmen. When Gigel seen them he said - "... all, allright then, let's go" - but he was thinking - "... me and my big mouth...". Gigel knew that it's something near imposible to stop an adventurer from doing something, in the end it is because of this stubbornes they are what they are ... adventurers. "Ah god ol' dad and his wise teachings..."    The guildsmen left the room following Gigel, who looked really happy that Gigel promised them to take them to the tavern in Cali’manash.    Hastings and Hiek are left behind.  "May I ask you for a favor?" says the elf uneasily.  "Of course, young sir," answers John in his common noble polite way "What can I help you with?"  "You can cut that out, sorcerrer... I don't like people who are hiding something... however, Musty is little bit scared..."  "Musty?"  "Yes... he is a marten." saying that Hiek took a little beast out of his bag.  "How... cute."  "We were attacked by a demon when we came here. He is really shocked... I don't want to torture him. May I leave him here? I'm sure he'll find himself something to eat in this huge house. If he senses danger he'll run back to you... it could be of help. What do you say?"    **End of Chapter I** |