

**THE CITY OF
ENSHOPHUR IN
THE COUNTRY
OF KOTH.**

IT IS A TIME OF HIGH ADVENTURE,
O PRINCE, AN ERA IN WHICH THE
MIGHTY--THROUGH CUNNING AND
STRENGTH--CAN SHAPE THEIR
OWN DESTINIES AND LEAVE THEIR
MARK UPON THE WORLD.

THIS IS THE TALE OF NOT ONE BUT
TWO SUCH LEGENDS WHOSE DEEDS
WOULD ONE DAY SHAKE THE VERY
PILLARS OF THE COSMOS.


BUT, AS IS OFTEN THE
WAY IN SUCH STORIES...

DO AS I
SAY, WIZARD.
I'M LOSING
PATIENCE.

OF COURSE, MY LORD.
I WAS SIMPLY REMINDING YOU
THAT THE ITEM IN QUESTION
IS MEANT TO BE A GIFT FROM
YOUR FATHER. IT WOULD BE
A SHAME TO SPOIL THE
SURPRISE.

WELL, IF THE
SURPRISE IS SPOILED
THEN IT'S YOUR FAULT.
YOUR SLIP OF THE
TONGUE HAS MADE ME
CURIOUS, AND I WILL
HAVE MY CURIOSITY
SATISFIED.


...GREAT EVENTS THAT SHAKE
THE WORLD OFTEN RESULT
FROM THE MACHINATIONS OF
LESSER MEN WITH BASEST OF
MOTIVATIONS.



JUST AS YOU SAY,
MY PRINCE. MY
FAULT ENTIRELY.


BEHOLD KAL'ANG, COURT
MAGICIAN OF ENSHOPHUR,
A MAGE OF MIDDLING
POWERS, COMMANDING
LITTLE RESPECT.

AND ALL THE MORE
AMBITIOUS AS A RESULT.



ALLOW ME TO
UNLOCK THE DOOR
AND REMOVE THE
PROTECTIVE WARDS,
AND WE SHALL
SATISFY YOUR ROYAL
CURIOSITY.


AND BE *QUICK*
ABOUT IT, YOU OLD CHARLATAN.
THE FESTIVAL BEGINS IN A FEW
DAYS, AND I WANT TO BUY
SOME NEW CLOTHES FOR THE
COLISEUM GAMES. FATHER HAS
PROMISED A SPECTACLE.




IF IT'S TRULY A GIFT
FROM MY FATHER, THEN IT
MUST BE SOMETHING GRAND
INDEED. I'LL TRY TO LOOK
SURPRISED WHEN HE GIVES
IT TO ME. HA HA!



WHAT
THE--?



THERE'S
NOTHING IN
HERE BUT...
SEEDS?!




YOU TOLD
ME IT WAS
THE RAREST
OF JEWELS.

SIMPLY HOW
THE SEEDS ARE
KNOWN, PRINCE.

IF MY FATHER
THINKS I'LL
BE IMPRESSED
BY SUCH A GIFT
HE IS SADLY
MISTAKEN.

HIS MISTAKE
WAS EVER
SIRING SUCH A
USELESS BRAT
AS YOURSELF.



WHAT?!

HOW *DARE* YOU
TALK TO YOUR
BETTERS IN SUCH
AN INSOLENT--



ENOUGH, YOU MISERABLE FOOL.

YOU'VE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE, ALLOWING ME TO ENTER THIS SECURE ROOM. PAST THE GUARDS.



SO THE BLIND MAN WAS RIGHT. BLOOD ROOT SEEDS. YOU NEVER KNEW THIS, MY PRINCE-- IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU, AFTER ALL--BUT MY PASSION HAS LONG BEEN HERB LORE.

I MIGHT NOT BE NUMBERED AMONG THE LAND'S GREAT WIZARDS, BUT MY KNOWLEDGE OF PLANTS AND HERBAL POTIONS IS UNSURPASSED.



IT'S TEMPTING TO TAKE THEM ALL. DEPRIVING YOU OF YOUR GIFT WOULD GIVE ME NO END OF PLEASURE.

ALAS, I AM NOT PREPARED TO FACE THE KING'S WRATH. ONE MISSING WON'T BE NOTICED AND WILL SERVE MY NEEDS WELL ENOUGH.



FORGIVE MY PETTY GLOATING, BUT I AM FINALLY RID OF YOU AND ON TO GRANDER THINGS.

WHEN YOU COME TO, YOU WILL REMEMBER NOTHING, AND THIS CITY WILL BE WELL BEHIND ME.



I TRUST ALL HAS TRANSPIRED AS I HAVE FORESEEN, KAL'ANG.

SEER! SO, WE MEET AGAIN.

IT SEEMS YOU COME AND GO FREELY IN THE CASTLE NOW.



A GUARD TURNS HIS HEAD AT THE RIGHT MOMENT. ANOTHER GOES TO RELIEVE HIMSELF. THESE FLASHES OF THE FUTURE COME AS THEY'RE NEEDED. THUS DO I SLIP IN AMONG THE SHADOWS.

BUT NEVER MIND MY MYSTERIOUS WAYS. WHAT OF THE SEEDS?



I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS IN THE BOX WHEN I CAST THOSE PROTECTIVE WARDS FOR THE KING. JUST THAT I WAS PROTECTING SOMETHING VALUABLE.

SUCH LUCK. THAT A BLOOD ROOT SEED SHOULD ACTUALLY COME INTO MY POSSESSION IS BEYOND BELIEF.



LUCK? BAH! THE FATES HAVE GUIDED ME, AND I HAVE GUIDED YOU. WE MAKE OUR OWN LUCK, MAGE. THAT THE WORLD'S GREATEST HERBALIST SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO BLOOD ROOT IS NOT LUCK.

BUT YOU *STILL* NEED ME. TWO WILL RISE TO OPPOSE YOU...ALTHOUGH THE TIME AND MANNER OF THEIR COMING REMAINS UNSEEN.




THEN COME WITH ME, SEER.

AND TOGETHER WE WILL MAKE HISTORY.


**MANY YEARS LATER, IN
THE KINGDOM OF KUSH.**

A KINGDOM ON THE EDGE OF
WAR. THE KING'S ARMY WAS TOO
FEEBLE TO MEET THE THREAT.



WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE? I WAS
TOLD THERE WOULD
BE SOME SORT
OF DISPLAY.

*BUT WHEN GOLD IS PLENTIFUL,
SWORDS CAN BE HIRED.*



EIGHT MERCENARY
COMPANIES HAVE
ANSWERED YOUR
CALL TO ARMS,
SIRE.

THE CAPTAINS HAVE
DECIDED THAT THE TROOPS
WILL FIGHT MORE EFFICIENTLY
IF UNITED UNDER A SINGLE
COMMANDER, BUT THERE HAS
BEEN A HEATED ARGUMENT
ABOUT WHICH CAPTAIN
WILL TAKE CHARGE.

SO THEY ARE
FIGHTING DUELS
TO THE *DEATH*
TO SETTLE THE
MATTER.



SETTLE
DOWN AND PAY
ATTENTION,
YOU DOGS!

THE CAPTAINS ARE
GOING TO PAIR OFF AND
FIGHT FOR COMMAND OF
THIS ARMY. YOU KNOW
THE RULES--*NO RULES!*
YOU DIE, YOU LOSE. YOU
LIVE, YOU WIN.

FIRST CAPTAIN,
STATE YOUR NAME
FOR POSTERITY.