

The story of how we came to be

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"The story of how we came to be" is a short story that presents a story of origin for the human race upon the land of Azum'rah. It is used as an intro for the book "Azum'rah - Kings of a Dying World."

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We came from the north. That much is certain. Descendants of the exiled dwarves condemned to live on the surface. In the sun of Azumârah, we grew taller over the ages and by the shade of the Forbidden Mountain we bred until the endless winter came. The sun has spoiled us with its rays and after 3000 years of sitting in front of the underground city we once called home we became thin and hairless. The women were affected by the loss of hair more than the men but even so both man and woman looked more elvish now than dwarfish. Not that we knew of elves. We never really left base of the forbidden mountain. At first it was the hope of forgiveness of the high dwarves that made us stay. Later on it was the force of habit and good hunting grounds. When their time came, the old exiled dwarves died going back into the ground they once came from. The new born never lived underground and their eyes got used to the sun from the first minutes of life. After a while we stopped living in shallow caves. It was the moment we forgot our dwarfish name, the moment we left our old digging tools for woodcutting axes to build wooden structures covered with half crude leather â the first human dwellings. As time passed these would become more and more practical and beautiful. By the time the endless winter came we had roughly cut stone walls to protect us from the wild beasts that roamed in the uncharted forests to the west and south. The stone however was never taken from the forbidden mountain for we carried out our shame long after our punishment. The newborns were taught by their parents of the evil they caused back in the Underworld and how the outside world meant the fall of the dwarves. However some humans grew tired of the so called shame and considered that to carry out the curse of the dwarves was the burden of the old exiled ones not of the humans. More than 2000 years passed since the great exile and the new human race, although not recognized as a new race of Azumârah, grew tired of being told how they were nothing more than disfigured dwarves. The first human settlement was at a crossroad. The older humans still worshipping the Goddess of the Mountain and her apprentices considered that they must carry out their punishment in hope of a possible return for their childrenâs children. But the younger humans could not just follow a blind religion and promises of a never seen underground city were as empty as a drunkâs coin sack at a tavern. In fact, the doors to Underworld have not been opened for ages. Could a town as such survive on its own isolated from the rest of the world? It was one thing for the human settlement which was relatively small but their place of origin was â according to its legend, as big as the mountain itself. Tales of long underground tunnels used for trading with other dwarfish cities seemed lies made up by the priests. It wasnât long before the words conspiracies were brought up and the streets were flooded with doubt and hiss. Fearing for their lives, the priests formed an order paying guards to protect them, thus forming The Order of the Forgotten Rock. When the coins were few, they started taxing the frightened people, selling false promises of forgiveness from the God of the Mountain in exchange for coin. This meant the rebels had to organize themselves as well. And it wasnât long before the fragile world of men was at risk. As fast as the new race has risen it seemed doomed to destroy itself. As assassins rose everywhere a new word was invented â warâ. But it did not mean the bloody face to face battle it means today. It was a war fought in darkness. Things seemed grey and the shadow of the mountain, once cool and pleasant, now hung over the humans planting fear in the heart of every mother. The shadow of the mountain was a friend of the assassins always lurking from the gutters, behind every corner and up the trees...

Then one day, at the local towns meet someone yelled out:

The story of how we came to be

The story of how we came to be

“Open the gates to the city and show us proof.”

“You can’t just open the gates to the Forbidden Mountain. They are sealed from the inside,” yelled the priests.

A new argument arose.

“The city gates must be taken down. Maybe the dwarves forgive us but are unaware we are waiting at the gates.”

“True words you speak but if the dwarves have not forgiven us and we are to take down the gates, our chance for redemption will be compromised. Are you willing to sacrifice that?”

“We paid our fees and you told us yourselves that the God of the Mountains has forgiven us. The dwarves cannot go against the word of our god.”

The people had their mind set. The stubbornness of the dwarves could still be seen in them. It would have taken a lot of manpower and all the hammers and pickaxes they could craft but it could have been done. One hundred years since those words were spoken and the war was still carried out. The priests along with the Order of the Forgotten Rock have lost most of their followers. All that remained were eight high priests still serving an unwanted god holding on with their teeth out of force of habit more than faith. They held such little power that the assassins did not even bother taking them down. Without a purpose, the assassins soon found themselves to be the pariah of the human race. No living soul trusted a man whose friend was neither the night, nor the dagger. Considering themselves betrayed heroes; they left the town. The assassins left one morning as if they were off to the hunting grounds. They had no belongings to take with them. Becoming a child of the night as they called themselves meant giving up the comfort of their own home at a young age, sometimes as young as nine years of age. Fair maidens feared the night while the Children of the Night feared the day and usually spent it hiding in some deep gutter covered by grass and leaves on small narrow streets. There was no place for a woman’s touch nor was there a way back once joined. Forcing some homeless woman and threatening some whore as scared of the day as they were the closest they could get to a woman’s love. Still their leaving meant the city was defenseless and everyone knew that. As they were walking out the human gate, people watched them with a mixt feeling of relieve and also fear for what was to come.

The first winter after they left started off as a mild one with snow barely settling on the still green ground. The last green they were to see in a long while. Little did they know the Endless Winter was going to swallow the Forbidden Mountain. The Endless Winter was in reality the flight of the ice dragon of the north, a creature older than time. No history was able to trace it down to its origins. Legends say he is from another realm or a curse from the ancient gods for abandoning them. The closest anyone ever got to it was a small army of elves tired of migrating south deciding to face the creature once and for all. Their typical elven arrogance brought their end. The very few elves that survived the encounter with the icy beast describe a creature of great size but no one was able to tell just how big the dragon was. Its body was covered in a haze of blizzards giving the impression of a shapeless cloud of snow and thunder. An incredibly cold rhythmic wind indicated his breath and head but no real sight of it. It was said that one of the elves felt its cold breath all the way to his bones leaving him numb and blue and stiff as a stone statue. Every few hundred years the dragon moved from one peak to another trying to escape what seemed to him a crushing hot air. The harm it was causing was unintended for it, as a beast, had the same conscience as a pigeon. The difference between him and a pigeon was that every flap of the dragon’s wings meant cold winds spreading throughout the world of Azumrah killing fields of crops. When the spring was supposed to come, the first humans were still facing

The story of how we came to be

a winter worse than they ever saw. When the roar of the dragon was heard one morning from afar, we knew they were to leave the city. Our destination was clear. The mountain could provide us with the warmth we needed until the dragon moved away and the smiths and masons were almost done tearing down the gates of the dwarves. A season's time later and the gates were down. The humans were to follow a path no longer than a four day march to reach the dwarven city. It was decided that the remaining members of the Order of the Old Rock were to follow path to the city to ensure they were welcomed. Only two came back. They were white as snow. What they saw was uncertain and they would need new words for the creatures they met but one thing was clear: the dwarves were gone.

A day's walk and they could already smell the foul stench of death. It took them two more days to reach the first corpse of a dwarf. By the time they reached the city they saw for the first time in history, human and elf, the dark ones. They were no race of their own but a mix of dwarves and orcs infected by a disease born in the deepest tunnels of the ancient mines. Born in darkness they had no eyes only a cold to the touch green skin covered in a slug that made them shine a horrible light due to the fires. The fire heated up their bodies for them to survive and you could see them feasting on the remaining dwarven bones. The rising smoke was pilling up making the air unfit for breathing. You could clearly see the dwarves blasted out their own tunnels in order to prevent the coming of the dark ones but they were too late. The creatures were faster than they would have guessed. The fireworks and gunpowder went off right behind the coming horde of dark ones imprisoning the dwarves along with those foul creatures. Now trapped in the underground city, they searched for a way out. The flesh was gone and the fires were running slow. Going hungry, the dark ones would eat each other until they would all be gone. A constant hunger and severe pain was holding them from any justified action or act of reason. The Order stood and watched them for a while unable to believe their own eyes. Nobody was going to believe their story after the oppression over the ages so they needed to find hard evidence. A dead infected creature or at least its gruesome head would suffice. But their mission failed and soon the dark ones became aware of their presence. The smell of flesh was driving them crazy making them rise from their own filth and run desperately from one part of the cave to the other, smashing themselves into the ruined walls in hope to find the source of fresh meat. A blood bath started within the mountain making a river of black blood and green slime, all flowing from the creatures eating each other hoping that the next one will be made of flesh and bones not scales and slug. Horrified, the Order pulled back as quick as they could from what seemed like a shaken hive of flesh eating bees. The two youngest priests managed to run fast enough while others were taken down by the creatures. Their fingers seemed to merge into claws. They used their long arms for running and tearing flesh with speed that would exceed that of any child of the night. No one looked behind. They didn't realize that they were actually bringing those abominations back towards their people. Taking into consideration how the order treated their fellow humans they probably wouldn't have cared at all. Only when the roaring could not be heard anymore had they stopped to catch their breath realizing they were only two left. Exhausted, they found a few cracks within the tunnel and slept in them without the hope of waking up. No one could run that much.

"I'd rather be sleeping when they come. Maybe they kill you quick enough and we won't even feel it," said one of them.

"I'd prefer to die on my own two feet," said the other priest who had the basic combat training.

"But you are right," he continued, "we cannot go on like this."

So they went to sleep. And what a restless sleep it was, twitching with every movement and every sound. When they finally grew themselves to exhaustion and fell asleep, they had terrible nightmares about the coming wave of dark ones. They kept running in their sleep constantly kicking their feet, bruising their knees on the hard, cold rock. One of them even dreamed that he turned into a dark one.

The story of how we came to be

The legend has it that the disease also was a curse of the old gods. When the orcs, dwarves and elves turned away from them, they decided to leave this world but not before taking their revenge on the treacherous souls of the Great Plains. Nuvgross, the surface god responsible for the wind and thunder, stole from across the northern mountains a dragon's egg. His intentions at that time were unclear even to him but after caring for the egg himself, the dragon came out and instead of fire, smoke and ash his breath was icy cold and his scales were blue. It was then he decided to let his dragon take his place for what punishment could be more fitting than to give a beast his power over the beasts that turned away from him. An unpredictable force over unpredictable creatures. His sister was the goddess of the forests, Netra. When she stopped being loved she went mad and a mad god is a threat to the balance of nature, a twitch in the flow of time. She unleashed another dragon that was to burn the land and every elven inhabited forest on its surface. The dragon carried the name of Chaos and as soon as he saw himself free Netra was the first for him to burn to ashes. Heavyhearted, Nuvgross carried the ashes himself and placed them in the sea thus poisoning it. What was once water fit for drinking turned into salted water. The sailing elves that drank it went as mad as the goddess herself. Seeing what this dragon had done, Treja, the youngest of the gods, drew her sword and slay the fire breathing beast. She took its heart and seeing how she was the only god left in the lowlands decided to take her own life with it. She went into the deepest of the dwarven mines and she drank the foul blood from the dragon's heart. She fell to the ground and, over the ages, her once fair body became the very source of the disease. Its rotting flesh had a taint beyond anything seen before by any creature. A dark veil of death came from beneath affecting the orcs who were the closest to the deep mines. Without a cure for the taint, the orcs fled their underworld and invaded the surface without having time to scout it first. The elves of the south saw themselves under attack thus beginning a war that lasted for ages. They fought for so long the cause was forgotten by both sides and it became a clear act of hatred. With the dark ones rising from beneath and with the elves pushing them back down, the orcs had no chance of victory. The remaining ones today were scattered in long forgotten tunnels constantly hiding from the dark ones.

Orcs, however, seemed the least of troubles for the priests. They awakened as tired as they went to sleep but they had to leave as soon as they could. They could smell the foul stench growing nearer and nearer. In the dim light of their torches they saw no slime traces on the hard ground so the dark ones couldn't have passed by them. The thought gave them a burst of life and strength in their still shaking legs. Only now did they realize the danger they were putting their people in. But the dark ones would have found their way out sooner or later for the gates were taken town stone by stone and humans lost the dwarven crafts of rebuilding them. They had to be warned. A day's march from the surface and the priests felt an unfamiliar cold within the ground. Their torches were barely burning. Neither spoke a word of this. When they could see the entrance to the tunnel they saw a ghost town wrapped in snow. No trace of human soul. The dragon settled on the forbidden mountain.

Losing all hope they found shelter in an abandoned house that seemed like it would have been missed by invading horde. But the dark ones never rose. Without the heat of the sun or the burning flames of the underworld the dark ones would die. Their decaying bodies could not produce the heat they needed to stay alive so a march in the snow would be a death sentence to them. As soon as the endless winter reached the entrance tunnel they went back to their burning deep fleeing in a painful shriek that could be heard even by the hiding priests. The only one who was not disturbed by the horrifying sound was the dragon who was asleep on the peak. Heavy clouds were flowing away from the top as if the mountain was hurling out coldness. The snow on the ground was up to their knees, for a dwarf it would have reached his belt. They were set to move to the south. From the highest tower of the city they could see a still green forest in the distance.

The story of how we came to be

But they would need supplies. The snow probably was hiding full clothed bodies of their fellow man. The inn probably still had meat and loafs to spare. So they started scavenging for anything that would have been of use. A dayâs search and the snow revealed nothing. They even spread out to make the search faster. If either of them was to find something he was to blow its horn and wait for the other one. But nothing was found apart from a few dead dogs. No sign of their fellow humans. They probably took whatever it was to take and left for the southern forests as they have also planned. If so their footsteps were covered by snow. Keeping his head down at the ground, Fildur, one of the two remaining priests, suddenly felt the shadow of a man over him and felt a cold stone spearhead on his neck.

âWho are you and where are your fellow men?â said a deep voice.

Looking up he saw a pack of hunters, all wearing bear furs on their shoulders. They looked like savage warriors but they were humans. Before he could answer he noticed how one of them was snapping his fingers making small, dark purple sparks with every snap.

âWe â we were sent in-into the depthsâ he stuttered. âOur fellow men left us behind. Please! Please help usâ he said throwing himself at the feet of the strange men. âThe ice dragon was approaching the city so we decided to take shelter in the mountain. I and my fellow priests were to go down and ask for the dwarvesâ permission. But the dragon came sooner than we would have guessed. We arrived back here just yesterday.â

âSo you were with the Order, ha? We were told tales of your Orderâ said the man with the sparking fingers. He had disgust in his face as he said those words. Only then, Fildur made a connection. They were the Children of the Night. They survived out in the wilderness, and quite well too. Their number seemed big and they were all equipped with everything a rogue or hunter would need. Bows and daggers hung on their backs and on their belts and six ox carts of supplies were sitting behind a few members. That, however, didnât explain the sparks from his fingers â Realizing his position, he became desperate and added:

âNo. We gave up on the Order and we were to go in the tunnels as a punishmentâ he said while his eyes were moving nervously from left to right in search of the right words.

âThat does not seem like a punishment fit for the Order. It seems to me a trip to your promised city is a blessing rather than a curseâ said the man with the spear.

Fildurâs face lost all traces of fear and his eyes suddenly focused on the face of the hunter. He knew that look. It was the look of a man who lost everything, hopeless and aimless. He understood the gravity of answer to come and with drew away his spear from the manâs neck. The man with the sparking fingers stopped his snapping and took a quick look, without turning his head, at the man with the spear, searching for an explanation written on his face. He was clearly their leader.

âThe dwarves are goneâ said the man between his teeth. âThere were devoured. The mountain is cursed and demons climb their way up from the deepest hole. They will find their way up. Weâll all die a horrible death.â

The leader knew he was not lying. Suddenly, a horn was blown. It was the other priest. The hunters drew their daggers, swords and bows thinking they were under attack. One of them thought it was all a trap and speared Fildur through the heart. The leader pointed with his spear the way from which the horn came and they started what seemed a stampede lacking any stealth. Rogue or no rogue they had strength. The man with the sparking finger had his hands burning with a dark purple flame. No sign of burned skin.

The story of how we came to be

This left the other priest shocked and he dropped his horn on the snow in front of them. Realizing there was nothing to fear; the hunters left their guard down and started questioning him. After bread and mead his mouth was loose. Learning all they could learn the hunters looked at each other and decided it was their time to explain their presence back home as well.

Despite their darkened ways of making justice the Children of the Night were just people. The reason why they returned in the First City of the Fallen Dwarves â as it was named after the migration of humans â was to aid their fellow men in the winter to come. That explained the ox carts but the Wilderness of the North was a challenge even for the most skilled hunter. And yet they returned just as many as they left if not more. Out in the Wilderness a hunter does not stay well-fed and his cloak grows heavy with hard mud and blood. And yet their clothing was clean, their hair and beards were trimmed. Soon after their departure of the assassins from the city, they made camp in the west. The game was not much but neither were the wolves so it was a good place for the time being. Fortune shined on them however for one day, while chasing a deer, one of the hunters came across a vision of a woman. It was an elvish woman to be precise â a notion new to the eyes of humans. Struck by beauty the hunter forgot the deer and his bow. She wore rags that did not keep warm but the northerners had winter in their blood. A sack made of fine leather was tied around her waist for picking berries. Her skin was white and though her breasts were small and her ears were big, she was a vision. Their eyes met. Hers had fear in them while his had lust. She ran, constantly turning to make sure he is not gaining up on her. He was trying, yelling false promises as he made his way awkwardly through the branches and thorns. But even with her wild berries dragging her down, she was too fast for him. She returned to her clanâ !

The elves were creatures of the surface. Proud and beautiful as they were they looked down upon creatures of the underworld, especially orcs. Ancient as the forests they came from, elves had powerful magic in them at first. But after finding the Great Planes and deciding to leave the forest and build themselves fortresses and cities for protection against the orcs, their mystical magic was a lost art. They still had small amounts of it in them and used it to perform tricks as jousts for the nobleâ s court but it wasnâ t sufficient to use it in battle, not by far. They, just like the exiled dwarves, have lost their way. The difference was they always kept their cities close to the forests they came from and never suffered such a transformation as fallen dwarves did or humans as they now called themselves. They had five cities built from the Sea of Unknowing to the eastern mountains where they eventually stopped their expansion forced by the war with the orcs and the dwarves residing in the east. Each city was part of the Green Alliance and the few elves that remained outside the walls of these five cities became a member of a clan that hunted and provided for itself.

The Northern Elves were one of the few remaining clans. They barely strayed from the ancient ways so they still had strong magic within them. But they were slowly dying for being of the north meant being at the will of the ice dragon. Tired of its breath of winter, the elvish man of the Northern Clan decided to gather their forces and make one last stand against the beast. Unknowing of its power they marched to certain death. The few elves that survived were crippled or useless to the clan feeling a constant cold even in the summer days. They started to lose members quick and no woman of the clan was with child nor did they have the chance to be impregnated. So when the fair berry-picking elvish woman returned to her clan and told of her encounter with the strange looking elf, the queen knew what was to be done. They were to take the new elves amongst their own and bring the clan back to its once former glory. It should benefit both parties. The maiden elves were frightened by the idea but the queen always had the final word. The next day the hunters were drawn by them into a forest clearing and soon the elven women of the clan appeared from behind the trees with a bow in their hand ready to shoot if the hunter made the mistake of drawing their swords. Then the queen appeared, holding a spear, and she chose the most powerful one with broad shoulders that indicated he was clearly a good hunter and a strong man. He would be hers if they accepted their offer. She took him aside and explained their history. What actually seemed like begging for help was a hidden threat. No man would have lived if they refused. But all accepted without pondering what was to come, and that very night the humans invaded their clan. They killed the old and useless elves that survived the dragon. The clan was theirs and so were the

The story of how we came to be

elvish women. In their coupling the elven women gave the men their magic while the men gave them their future sons. These were to be the first mages of Azumârah. They were human in appearance but possessed the elvish ancient magic in them. Even some of the assassins had magic in them after they lay with the northern women. When they came to the First City of the Fallen Dwarves most of them were fathers and had a family to provide for. The northern elves did not like the idea of their men returning to the city to aid it in their time of need. After all they had mouths to feed for winter was upon them all. They feared that once aided the townsfolk would accept the Children of the Night once more and they would abandon their new found home. Scared of the thought, the elven women sent spies upon their own men. The queen and her best of rogues were to follow the men back to the settlement at a safe distance, to make sure that they would return.

As soon as they saw the city, they hid in the forest waiting for the gates to open and hoping for their men to come. Only the best scout was sent over the wall. They feared the Children finding out for that would lead to one of the races leaving the clan. She saw the deserted city and saw the humans meet the second priest. By the time she found them in the city, they already exchanged pleasantries and she only heard the ending for their encounter.

“Tell us, priest, are you quick on the horse?” asked the leader of the hunters after a long pause of thinking things through.

“I can handle myself in the saddle.”

“We’ll supply you and the food and ale you need and a horse fast enough for you to meet up with our brethren. They must hear of this. Tell them they should find us in the north if willing to join. If the cold keeps those abominations deep in the earth the north is the safest way to go. Find us in the north-west between those two mountains” said the leader pointing out his spear. Despite our history at the bottom of this cursed mountain, we must stay together if we wish to survive the coming age.”

By the time his horse and pack was ready the scout was already on her way back. She came running to the queen as fast as she could and told her of what she heard.

“My queen! My queen!” she drew her breath for a second “the city is abandoned and their people are going south. Our men, however, sent a messenger upon them carrying an invitation to our tribe.”

“Those fools will destroy our people with their kindness! With their numbers far exceeding our own we will be driven out of the tribe. Listen to me when I tell you of what is to come if the messenger reaches his brethren. We will be invaded by both male and female members of their race. They will not take kindly to those who tainted their men with magic scared as they are of nature. Our children will grow into slaves and we will be imprisoned sold or kept as toys for lords and nobles. The messenger must die. I will go myself but I will need three more to ride with me. Quick riders and masters of the bow are more than welcomed. The rest of you are to go back to your homes and await your men. You will all take an oath here today to hold your tongue of our mission. If they arrive before us you are to tell them we are hunting in the west.”

As she finished talking so have her people finished packing up their camp. Besides her stood the best of the northern hunters and when the speech was done her people were ready to follow her instructions. Her quest was a success and she even arrived before her chosen male. The first humans heading south never heard the assassins’ offer. Considering themselves insulted once again, the Children of the Night decided never to get involved in the affairs of men, and soon considered themselves a new race. As their children grew up they needed a new home so they settled themselves on the Northern Pass, last place before the forbidden lands

The story of how we came to be

where things of the old world reside. This is where the gods came from. Fearing their power the elves, dwarves and orcs started worshipping them as soon as they laid eyes upon them. The old legends speak of a large number of gods coming from the north after the first ones spoke of the southern worshippers. Along with magic and power they also brought to the south jealousy for a constant competition between the gods arose and soon a battle burst out. Armies of elves fighting one another on the surface carried out their glory. The name of gods became war cries. The sky was a battle between gods riding dragons, the surface was flooded with elven blood and the underworlds were shaken by dwarven hammers hitting the primitive swords of the orcs. Many great swords were forged to win the war and after one final battle most of them were lost among the ashes of Azumârah. Its ending was without victory and seeing the south lying in ruins the gods decided the small creatures were not ready for their coming and all left back to the north. All but three left behind to rebuild that which they destroyed with their greed. Now with the three gone as well the world was free of the gods for the first time, yet fearing that history will repeat false religions appeared worshipping invented gods or the deceased ones. Considering themselves due to their magic more part of the old world than the new one, the Children of the Night and its mages desired to be as close to the world of gods as they could be. They did not dare go further up north. The Pass grew narrow and when the gods left the south they gave life to the rocks there. They feared the small creatures would invade them after what they have done to their world so they built rock trolls there and set them in stone. They were to be awakened by any soul that would venture the pass both god and mortal.

With the mages declaring themselves a new race and their former brethren going south, the north said its farewell to humans. It would be a long time before its snow would be crushed down by human feet once more. But as the north was abandoned the south opened its arms to the arriving humans. Their timing was perfect and it seemed fate had a lot stored it for this new race. After three months of slow movement towards the south they ended up at the gates of Telehâkan. From their towers in the forest they saw them coming from the north way before the humans spotted the city. At first they feared it was the gods but after seeing the pace of the travelers and their carts filled with furniture, pots and pans and other things of this world they awaited their arrival without any fear. In fact they were eager to have them at their gates for you see the elven world was facing a crisis. This was not an ordinary crisis but one that would bring the end to the second era of the elves. After the war with the orcs the elves came victorious. But their victory came at a huge price for their numbers were small, smaller than their history could recall. With the war won the Green Alliance was forgotten and each city became independent. They started seeing all their small differences and soon forgot the calling of the woods and their shared blood and turned against each other. The elves of Telehâkan feared the legends of the three gods that left or found their death within the south. They were certain that if the old gods were to come from the north they would blame them for their makers' death. So they formed a chantry called The Widowers of the Forest Maiden praising the long gone goddess Netra. One of the cities, The Green Keep accepted the chantry without questioning. The southern city was ruined in the war, being closer to the orcs dwelling tunnels. Its few inhabitants fled into the four remaining cities and accepted the religious views from that city scared of being thrown out otherwise. The other cities however saw their chantry as an insult towards the forests. They were praising the mad god, the one who unleashed fire upon their sacred lands and saw in this how the very core of their race was shifted, mutilated. The crossing into a new era of peace, as they first saw the end of the war, took a very bad turn. It seemed to them the ancient ways were truly forgotten. And the arrival of a new species which they saw as an abomination of the dwarves was a plague upon this world. But the city of Telehâkan saw victory written on their coming. Accepting humans in their city would increase their numbers making the other elves fear them so. And the new arrivals were easy to buy for they had no choice. Without knowledge of the southern world they would gladly settle in the first city to accept them. By the time they arrived in the south humans had four times the number of elves but without a home their numbers meant nothing military wise. The religious cities grew overnight and the chantry started taxing humans for permission to stay. The western cities of Davonhis and Kelndor predicted an invasion soon one they could not face. There was no victory. Their eyes were clouded by hatred and decided that in their fall they would bring their fellow cities down as well as a punishment to their betraying brothers. If they could not win this war they would sabotage the elven people who lost their way. If

The story of how we came to be

the cities of the western plains were to be abandoned the humans would soon move in them due to the increasing taxes on humans. With their own cities the humans would take revenge on the religious elves forcing them out of the cities and back into the Unknown Forest. After making sure the blasphemous elves were forced back to their place of origin, their western brethren followed them and just like that the elves disappeared gracefully into those dark woods just as mysterious as they came from it ages upon ages ago. As they disappeared in the in the thick forest they cast one last glimpse at what they were leaving behind. For them the human race was nothing more than a mirror of their own decadent ways. The few remaining elves were those who hated the rulers of the elven people both western and eastern. These were mostly the peasants tired of suffering the same fees as humans. The humans were kind to them and they soon forgot their former lords bowing their heads with no regret to human houses that took the ancient quarters while the commoners build their new houses outside the elven walls. Some of the remaining elves were so fond of the human race they made an effort as they do to this day to be accepted into our high society. They would cut the tip of their ears in an attempt to look more like us and a clear sign of abandonment of elven legacy. Settling in all four cities humans were now masters of their own fate. They began mounting expeditions to improve their lore of this world and soon they mastered the craft of sailing learned from the elves. Expeditions were made both in the western sea and in the eastern mountains. Here is where they found another city of dwarves. Considering how the human race was advancing faster than anything seen before the dwarves made deals with us and new trade routes were opened. They even gave access to their own mining caves to buy our friendship.

As we came south the world was given to us, humans, as a present of fate. Soon enough, we were masters of the surface. With magic gone from the world and humanity being the only known surface race we lived peaceful lives for two hundred years. But even though we considered ourselves alone upon the surface there were still enemies to be found deep within.

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