

Atysian folklore

by theaí morningstar



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Preface

Hail homins!

I have travelled the lands of this energetic world and have spoken to many homins and tribal sages; visiting many stunning places to bring you this omnibus of stories.

From the mists of Zoraī, the lakes of Tryker, the forests of Matis and the sand dunes of Fyros are born tales of animals, princesses, the goddess Jena and the illustrious Ma-Duk.

Enjoy these tales of the past!

Theai Morningstar,
Senior guide

Disclaimer

This is a collection of folklore from locations around Atys and in no way reflects on the genuine game lore set by Nevrax.



-Matis-

A dapper for my love

Many moons ago, when the old monarchy was new and the kings and queens of bark sat on their thrones and ruled with great power and respect...

...there lived a very poor blacksmith whose worldly possessions were a tumbledown cottage, a wife, a troupe of hungry children, and nothing but seven dappers to his name.

So with these seven dappers he bought himself a stout rope and went into the forest to hang himself. He found a small tree with a strong branch, threw the rope up over it and began to tie a knot.

Suddenly, a lady all in black stood before him, as if she had risen up out of the ground.

„Blacksmith! Stop at once!!” she commanded.



The blacksmith was so frightened that he untied the rope, and the woman immediately vanished. As soon as she was gone, he began to tie the rope around the branch again, but the lady in black reappeared instantly, waved a threatening finger at him and snapped „I told you to stop that, Blacksmith!”

Again the blacksmith untied the rope, and started to make his way home. But on the way he thought to himself, „There's nothing left for me at home but to die of hunger anyway. I think I'd rather hang myself”.

So again he found a good tree for hanging himself, and tied the rope around a branch. But the lady in black was there at once, shaking with anger „Why wont you listen to me, Blacksmith?” she demanded. „What else should I do?” sighed the blacksmith. „Me and my family are going to starve, anyway”.

„You will not starve” answered the lady in black „because I shall give you all the money you could possibly wish for. But in return you must give me that thing which you have at home, and yet know not what you have”. The blacksmith could hardly believe his ears or his eyes when he saw the sack full of dappers that the lady handed to him.

He thanked her heartily and set off as fast as he could with the heavy sack.

„But don't forget your promise” called the lady in black after him „That which you have at home, yet know not what you have, belongs to me. In seven years I shall come to claim it”

„I know everything there is in my house” laughed the blacksmith „If there's anything you want you are welcome to it!” he added.

When he returned to his tumbledown cottage, his wife greeted him and showed him a beautiful baby girl with golden hair and a golden star on her forehead. This was the blacksmith's baby daughter who had been born that very day. „Our little Golden-Curls has brought us luck!” laughed the blacksmith to his wife as he showed her the sack of dappers.

The years passed and Golden-Curls grew into a beautiful little girl, the joy and the sorrow of her parents. On her seventh birthday, a black coach stopped outside their home and the lady in black stepped from it. 'I have come for the child' she said, and she took her hand and led her to the coach.



The other children begged her to relent, but the women would not be moved. The sinister coachman cracked his whip and in a flash the carriage was gone. The coach drew up to a huge black castle. 'This castle is yours' said the lady in black 'it has one hundred rooms, all of which you may enter freely, except the hundredth one'.

„Do not enter that, or great evil will befall you. Remember! In seven years time I shall visit you again.” And the lady in black was gone.

Exactly seven years later to the day, the lady in black returned in her carriage. „Have you been into the hundredth room?” was the first thing she asked. „No I haven't”, replied Golden-Curls honestly.

„You are a good obedient girl. I will return in seven years time and if you still have not entered the room I will make you the happiest Homin on Atys!” said the lady in black.

The seven years passed quickly and the lady in black returned „Have you been into the hundredth room?” was the first thing she asked, and „no I haven't” replied Golden-Curls honestly.

„Very well, you may return to your mother and father.”

The black coach drew up and returned Golden-Curls to her family and friends, and she was truly the happiest Homin in Atys!

Her father however, having missed his daughter for fourteen years, had learned the valuable lesson that love is more important than dappers.

The Arena

Back in the days of the old monarchy and the lost kingdom, the time of honourable Kings, beautiful Queens, lost Princesses and adventuring Princes....

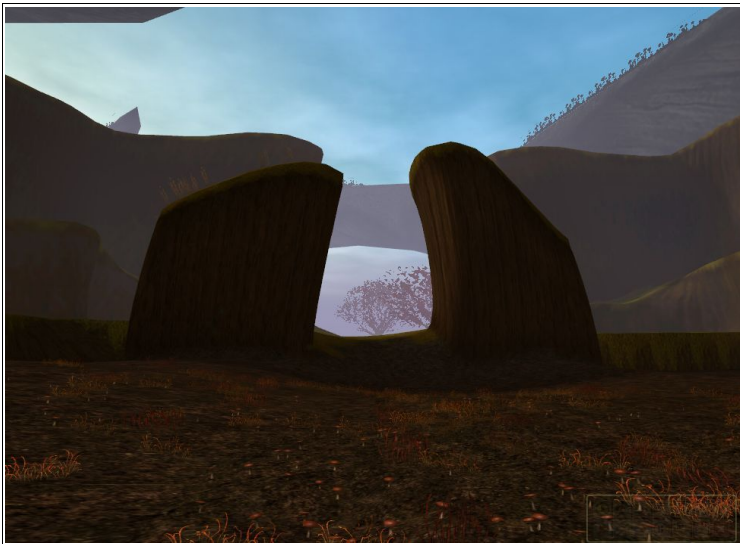
King Me'eron ruled with the temperament of the sea on a winter's night. Back in the days of the great wars and the Tryker slavery, King Me'eron was very tactical and believed he had the best warriors in all Atys. His men would train and train well. He worked them hard every single day.

„A king is only as strong as his army” Me'eron would say to the knights in his court, and they would discuss late into the night the training sessions and accounts of money to be paid on armour.



Many hours were spent here by candlelight drawing out plans and plotting. One fateful night the King called upon his court to hear news of an important scheme.

He scrolled the maps and blueprints out on a large dark wood table. „This is it!” he proclaimed „This is what is going to make our army the best in all Atys”. The courtiers looked puzzled at the maps.



„I do not understand, Sire” said a trembling Knight, for no-one challenged the king.

„It is an Arena, Sir Eveileb, can you not see?” replied his King „It will be a fantastic training ground for my troops! And they shall truly be the greatest warriors in Atys”.

„Surely, Sire, it would take many, many years to build such an amazing place and many, many man. The warriors would die if they tried to build it, Sire” protested a mage.

„This is why my army will not be building my Arena.” said the King. „I would not

waste my men on such a vain misadventure! We have Tryker slaves for such things! There is no way we can lose” announced the King in tones of smugness.

So it was after many years, and the deaths of many Tryker slaves, the Arena was nearing completion.

One night, the Kingdom was invaded by a vile Kitin swarm. Many Homins died and buildings were burned to the ground by the people to rid the kingdom of the Kitin.

One of the buildings was the King's Palace where he lay sleeping. His courtiers were sad to lose their King who, despite being cruel to slaves and to his army, treated his court like family. The remaining Slaves were shared out between the knights to help rebuild the town and to restore normality unto the kingdom.

Sir Eveileb buried King Me'eron between the two pillars at the entrance to the Arena, and there he remains to this day. His grand training grounds for his army were never finished.

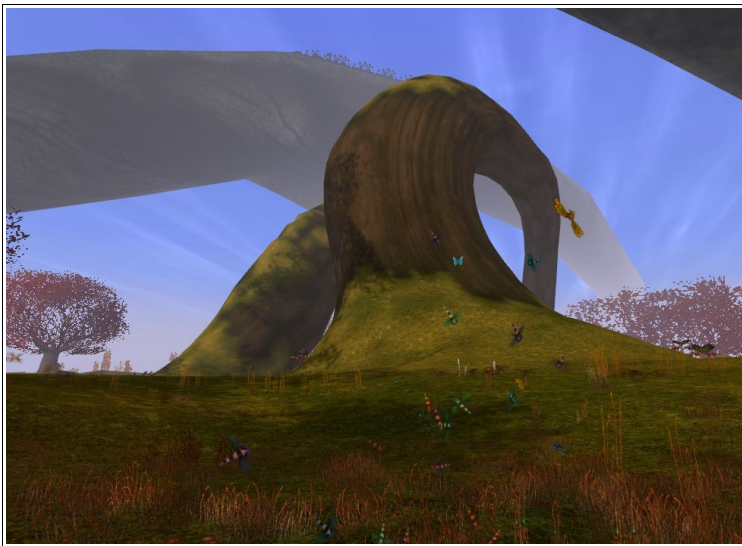
And it is said that if you listen carefully you can hear his voice on the wind talking of the greatest warriors in Atys.

The Bodoc Horns

There lived once, in the city of Yrkanis, a wicked Queen. She was rich enough to afford anything she could ever want, or long for, and yet her heart was filled with envy of anyone who was rich, contented, good-looking or young.

If she saw someone in a happy mood, or heard of a true friendship, this was enough to arouse her bitterness and anger. Indeed she was annoyed each time a poor person dared to smile „How irresponsible they are” she would fume. „They are too lazy even to worry! Yet here am I, higher born by far, with more problems than I can handle. Is there any justice?”

She would go on grumbling until she found a way of spoiling a cheerful person's day. Among the people who lived in the Wicked Queen's palace, other than the many hundreds of servants, was her daughter Neven.



Neven spent a lot of her days away in a Fyrosian Ladies Educational society as it was her mother's desire for her to have the best Mentors and education in Atys. Although she was not happy with the Mentors being of the Fyros Race it was Neven's father's last dying wish for his daughter to grow wise and know the way of the world, and although it was a thorn in her pride to have her only daughter educated by Fyros she could still boast that Neven had the best education in Atys! Such was her bitterness.

Neven, though she had hardly known anything but beatings and scolding from her mother, managed to keep a pure kind heart and a sweet temper. She was not bound by the bonds of racial hatred like her mother and other higher born people. She liked to think of herself as a Homin not a princess. A Homin no more and no less worthy than any other being that walked the lands of Atys that Jena had so lovingly bequeathed to her people.

Neven would often sneak out of the dormitories dressed as a commoner, and led a secret life away from high society. One night she was out walking in Fyros Desert as the air was too hot for her to sleep, when she came upon a handsome man

„Greetings Fair Maiden”, he said, never moving his eyes away from the fire.

„Why hello sir, I am Neven”, she replied sweetly. „I am Evird” replied the handsome Fyros „and it is a pleasure to meet such a beautiful young lady as you Neven.”

She sat by the fire with him and they talked until sun hung over the sand dunes.

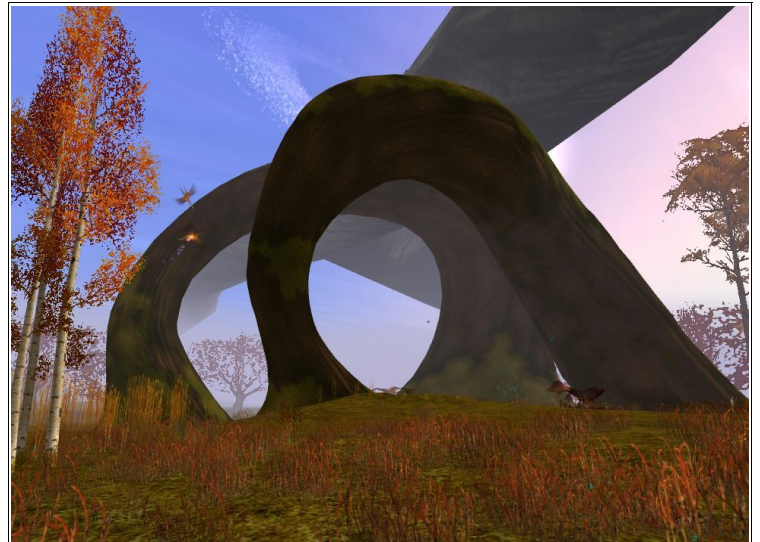
The next night she snuck out again to see if the handsome man was there. Indeed he was and they continued to meet at night for many, many months. When the time came for Neven to return home to Matis and her mother she went to meet Evird one last time to say good bye.

Evird and Neven loved each other dearly and Neven had told Evird of her Evil mother. He knew she must leave the next day to claim her birthright and take her place in the famous lost kingdom. „I beg you Neven please meet me at this place tomorrow night in your fair and proud lands.”

Evird kissed Neven with passion and slipped a map into her hand. Then, with his heart breaking, he left.

In tears and broken hearted herself Neven returned to her Kingdom. The following night, she crept out of the palace, and closely followed the directions on the parchments Evird had passed to her the night before until she came upon some odd roots.

„They looks like the horns of a bodoc no? To symbolise the strength of our love,” said Evird and he stepped out of a shadow. The way he was dressed struck Neven as soon as she saw him. He was dressed head to toe in the fine white armour of a prince.



„Your dress is behind that tree” said Evird „put it on please and then return to me.” He smiled so sweetly and Neven could have sworn she saw a tear in his eye.

After Neven had changed she returned to Evird. „What is happening Evird?”, Neven asked her voice full of fear. Evird knelt down and asked Neven to be his wife. Although Evird was not a Prince, he loved her more than anything in Atys and would gladly do anything she wished of him.

„Yes, Yes!”, Neven cried, „but how are we to marry, we do not have a priest?” As she said this, a tall attractive women stepped quietly out from the shadows. „I am Elanory, and I am a Priestess. It would be an honour to marry such a happy and blessed couple”, the women said. So it was that the Priestess Elanory married Princess Neven and her love, Evird

They returned to Fyros and lived happily ever after.
The Roots still stand today as a testament to their love.

The White Blossom of Matis

In the days before the war drums sounded in the region of Matis, a beautiful village stood at the edge of the lands over-looking the water.

The men went out to hunt every morning and returned every evening with rich bounty. The women prepared their food and repaired armour, and the children played from sunrise to sunset. Altogether they were very happy and content, happier than any other people on Atys.

The sun shone long into the afternoon, smiling down on the men, and the rain fell only when it was needed to replenish the wells and rivers and lakes with fresh water and to refresh the trees and flowers.



But....let me tell you what happened to these people of the earth. The stars which flickered above the camp every night would soon learn about the Matisians.

Because the stars' glow was so tiny their light never reached the dirt, so they begged of the moon, who was their leader, to go to the village of Davae. But as the chieftain of the night sky he did not like to have his people wandering about and

going to bed late, like the morning star does.

Whenever they did so the sun would quarrel with him but that night he was in an exceptionally good mood, so he granted the stars' request. They swiftly prepared for their journey, laughing and chattering, so they hardly heard the wise counsel the moon was giving them.

„You may go wherever you please, only take care not to touch the ground. If you do that, you'd have to stay there, and the sun would burn you to death the next day, for his arrows are fatal to us.”

The stars journeyed long and far. It was lucky for them that the moon was full that night as otherwise they would surely have lost their way. At long last they reached the Matisian village and, hovering above it, examined it from all sides, the Matis were asleep, only one little boy who lived on the very fringe of the camp was still awake.

Hearing a strange whispering noise above his head, he listened carefully, then he looked through the opening in his tent and his heart almost stopped beating at the sight that met his eyes! So many stars so very, very near! He crept excitedly through the flap in his tent and climbed right to the top of a tree near the lake and moved the branches for a better view.

The smallest and most inquisitive of the stars had just passed low over the treetops.

The boy, overcome with awe at the beauty before him, reached out and brushed it with his finger. The star was knocked off balance and fell hurtling to the ground where it changed at once into a beautiful, weeping girl. „Now look what you have done!”, she reproached the boy. „I can not return with my sister stars, and as soon as dawn comes, the sun's arrows will find me, and scorch me, and I shall die!”

The rest of the stars, seeing what had happened fled back home, knowing they could not help their unfortunate sister. „I will help you”, said the boy, his voice full of pity. „When the sun is out during the day, I'll close my tent and he'll not be able to see you. But what shall we do after that?”

„If only I survive the day, I shall change into a flower in the evening and go and live on top of a high cliff from which I will watch your people, for I like your Matis ways.”

They did exactly as they had agreed to do. As soon as the day was gone the girl slipped away and hurried to a high cliff, where a beautiful white cratcha grew the very next morning.

The Matis people admired the flower from a distance, but only the boy knew that it was the little star he had sheltered. One day a small yber came to talk to the star cratcha. 'I am so lonely up here, I wish I could go down to the camp' said the flower to the yber, sadly

„I can help you”, said the small yber „just bend your head a little and I can take you in my beak, and fly you to the camp.”

So the yber and the white cratcha soared into the sky and down into the village.

The yber dropped the white cratcha into the lake by the camp. The next day when the Matis villagers went down to the lake they were stunned to see perfect and beautiful white flowers spread across its surface

Since that day, the star has lived on the lake in the shape of a white water-lily. Many call her White Blossom.



-Fyros-

Tears for Lirht



This story begins many, many moons ago when the paths of Pyr had barely been walked. There lived a small family. They were not rich in dappers, but what they did have they shared with their fellow Homins. They managed to make do with what their had, and still donated their spare food and armour to less fortunate souls.

They were known by their neighbours for their kindness and their devotion to people in need, taking into their home orphaned and abandoned children and treating them no differently from their own. They followed the light of Jena as they believed

that no matter of your race, Jena would love you indifferently.

Their generosity knew no bounds and for that the people loved them and they become as famous as the Emperor of Fyros himself. They only had one child of their own, a small girl by the name of Lirht.

Lirht was very much like her mother and father and loved to help in any way she could. It was said the family was so loved that Jena herself watched over them and protected them.

One night Lirht was going to feed the wild yubos that lived not far from their home. Every night she would save her scraps from the family meal and go to feed the yubos.

Being far too poor to have a pet or domesticated animal, she had named each one, and they would come take the food gently from her hands.

On this night Lirht noticed one of the very young yubos had gone missing and its mother was crying out for it plaintively. This sight broke poor little Lirht's heart

„What would my Mummy do?“, she asked herself. She smiled and put her crumbs in her pocket, and set off into the desert, red with the glow of the setting sun.

„I wonder where young Lirht is. Its getting dark and I heard at the merchants that there is a sandstorm coming our way from Thesos“, her mother commented anxiously.

„Indeed my beloved, I believe she's feeding those yubos again. She gets that from your side of the family“, he jested, „but if you are worried, I shall go and get her“, he added quickly.

He saw the expression on his wife's face and pulled on his boots and headed out of the door hastily. When he reached the yubos Lirht was no where to be seen. He called and called and yet there was no reply. He ran to the house as fast as he could, and informed his family of Lirht's disappearance.

They asked all the people they knew to help find her and many, many people joined them in their endeavour, for they had helped almost all of the Homins in Fyros at one time or another. So it came to pass that the Homins of Pyr went out hunting for Lirht as the sandstorm bell rang out from outpost to outpost, closer and closer to the city gates.

Their efforts, although driven by love and compassion, were nevertheless fruitless. Lirht had gone out trying to find a lost baby to ease the suffering of the mother and instead had never returned home. Her body was found under a tree and was buried there for all to come and bid her farewell.

And the very next day, after many, many years of drought, the heavens opened and Jena's tears fell upon these lands, and have always remained in this, Lirht's final resting place.



The Izam Kite

Long, long ago, in the time of the great sandstorms, a certain youth was getting ready to join his companions and go to war. His was the longest spear of all, the sharpest dagger, and the boldest tongue.

Nor did he forget to visit the girl to whom his thoughts were turned, in order to impress her before he left. The dark-haired maiden was weaving a fire shirt in an alcove. „Tell me what you like best in the whole of Atys”, the young warrior asked her, hoping she would say his name.

The vain weaver thought most of all about how she would dearly like to adorn her hair with a Hae-zan flower so she replied: „The dearest thing in all of Atys is a Hae-zan”, and began to croon a song in praise of her own beauty. „An Izam?” said the young man, who had misheard in his disappointment. „Very well, I shall bring you one.”



Right away he and his companions made their way to the enemy tribe's village. He fought like a ragus to fulfil his maiden's wish, and as soon as the battle was over he made straight for the alcove where the girl normally sat to do her weaving.

„I have brought you a fine Izam, that which you love more dearly than anything in Atys. It is yours and yours alone.” He had scarcely finished speaking when the girl almost fainted away with horror. The bloodied animal suddenly came to life before her eyes and crawled up onto her lap. „Do not weep, my beauty,” the Izam comforted her. „Do you not love me more than anything in Atys? I shall make you my wife at once!” Horrified, the beautiful weaver began to make excuses. „Very well, but first you must watch over my skirt, so that the mice may not tear it apart, dearest Izam. I shall only go to my parents' home to get some things to assist me in my weaving.”

The Izam strolled back and forth in the alcove, and trod on mice's tails to pass the time. At last it grew impatient and made its way to the girl's house and knocked on the door with its beak. „Hurry up!”, it called. „It is I, your beloved Izam!”

But the girl did not reply, and in the end the Izam lost its temper. Smashing its way through the wall, it jumped straight into her lap. „Why did you not reply, my beauty?”

„I was just moistening the yarn in my mouth,” lied the girl. „Then why did you not open the door, my chosen one?” asked the Izam angrily.

„I was rocking my baby brother in my arms,” declared the unfortunate maiden. „Wait for me just



a little longer, my dearest Izam, for I must go to the fields to check the bodocs and capryni have not been digging up the crops.” But the Izam would not listen and refused to be parted from her. „You said you loved me more dearly than anything in Atys, therefore I shall never leave you.”

At this the girl began crying again, ever so bitterly. „Why do you lament so, my betrothed?”, asked the Izam quite taken back. „Do you not love me?”

„Of course I love you, my pretty little Izam. Are you not the dearest thing in all of Atys to me?”, the maiden was quick to reassure

it. „I am crying because I have no food and I am so very hungry.”

„I would be oh so happy for some fresh fish. I could always go into Pyr and get some from the market place.” But the Izam was angry. „Nothing of the sort, you just wish to trick me again! I shall go and get the fish!” screeched the Izam. „As you wish my beloved” replied the Weaver girl, and a plan began to take form in her mind.

The Izam went forth to Pyr to get the fish. The weaver girl called upon the young warrior and proclaimed her love for him and said sorry for her selfish vanity and begged for his forgiveness.

They took some materials from the table and got to work right away for the Izam would be back soon. They used glass and metal shavings and her brother's kite, and once finished they ran outside the camp. When the Izam came back, he saw the girl talking to the most beautiful Izam he had ever laid eyes on! She ran up to her betrothed and told him of her undying love for the beautiful newcomer.

Heartbroken and alone, and knowing he could never compete with the splendour of his rival, the Izam told her he would return when the beautiful Izam had left and then they were to be married. She hastily agreed to the proposal and to this day the kite has remained here to remind Homins to be careful what they wish for. In his wounded pride, the Izam has never yet returned.

The Crossroads Well

There once was a man who had three daughters. One day he fell ill. He asked for a glass of water from the nearby well, but the folk from Pyr always said that the well was haunted. „If only I could have some water”, he sighed „I know I would get better.”

„I shall bring some for you”, said the eldest daughter, and she took a pitcher and went down to the well. But when she leaned over the edge she heard a voice from inside it saying „You shall have no water from me unless you promise to be my wife.”

„That’s absurd!”, said the eldest daughter „I don't even know you.” She went back to her father and said „I am sorry father but the well wouldn't give me any water.”

Then the second daughter said „Let me try”, and taking the pitcher she went down to the well. But she came back without any water either.

The father grew worse and worse, and so finally the youngest daughter went down to the well. The voice called up to her „You shall have no water unless you promise to be my wife.” „I promise”, answered the girl without hesitation.

That evening, a strange creature wrapped in a Capryni skin came to the house and knocked at the door. The youngest daughter opened it, but at the sight of this strangely-dressed visitor she backed away in fright. Then the stranger began to sing:

„My Well is deep, my Well is wide, remember you promised to be my bride” so saying, the creature threw off the Capryni's skin and there in front of her stood the most handsome young man she had ever seen. He stayed until midnight, and when the Pyr Towers Clock struck twelve he put on his Capryni's skin and returned to the well.



The following night he came again and knocked at the door. The youngest daughter ran to let him in, for she was already deeply in love with him. But the others hurried out of the room without waiting to see him.

When they were gone he threw off the Capryni's skin and again became a handsome young man. But he begged her not to tell a soul about this transformation. However, the girl couldn't keep the secret, and she told her mother how her visitor took off the Capryni's skin every night

and became a handsome young man.

That evening her mother lit a great fire in the hearth, and, slipping into the room where the couple were, took the Capryni's skin and threw it into the flames. „That'll stop him coming and going all the time”, she thought. When the young man rose at midnight he could not find the Capryni's skin. At that moment, the mother came into the room and explained what she had done.

They pulled the Capryni's skin from the ashes, and although it had not burnt, it had shrunk so much the he could not put it on, no matter how hard they tried to stretch it. Then the young man said „My love, I fear we must part. As a punishment I must go and live far away from you, beyond the Tryker Sea. You will not see me again for a long time...”



„On the far side of Atys is a great mountain a mile high, and every year a small bird flies all the way to the top and rubs its beak against the peak. When the bird has worn the mountain down to the size of a grain of sand, then I shall return to you.”

He left and was never seen again.

It is said that the youngest daughter still wanders the dunes around this old well waiting for a bird to wear down a mountain.

The Gingo and the Yubo

The sand whipped across the parched dunes, stinging the eyes of the gingo like a thousand shards of ice. She headed back up the hill to get a better view from the mouth of the cave sheltering her from the harsh wind.

Her stomach ached; she let herself drop onto her side and yawned deeply as she watched the Pyr guards throw scraps of food to the yubos. Oh, it had been so long since she had eaten! The knots in her stomach were getting so bad they hurt when she moved.

She was thankful for not having pups this spring as the picking and scraps had been so thin on the ground she feared they would have not survived anyway. If it was not for some of the Homins not quartering their kills she would have surely died herself.



She had lost her mate but a few days before to the guards. He'd tried to slip past them to make it to the waste that the homins throw away. Now, he was on the feet of one of the local children who ran around the flaming gates. Though they had washed the skin in the oasis she could still smell his scent as the child ran upwind, reminding her with every step that she was alone.

She yawned again, so tired but unable to sleep because of the hunger which pained her too much. But even if she wasn't so tired, the sun was far too hot for her to take one of the yubos. These the guards loved despite the yubos' habits and they fed them until they were fat and useless, unable to even look after themselves, becoming completely dependant on the guards. It was a sickly sweet partnership; even more sickening to watch than to be part of.

She watched the Pyr yubos closely as the children played around them, feeding them with treats and stroking their fur. She looked at her own fur, grey, unmanageable and knotted as she had no one to clean it. So starved was she that her rib bones were in clear view for everyone to see. "I shall never bare pups", she thought to herself.

„Here I am, too weak to hunt, too famished to run and all on my own, I can not go to the guards, for, like my love, they shall skin me and make boots of me.”

Depressed and alone, she waited for the sun to lay itself down and the moon to rise.

The guards were talking amongst themselves as she crept towards the gates. Her heart pounded in her chest as she moved silently towards them. The Yubos were sleeping next to stables.

She made sure the guards did not see her and that she was down wind from the yubos. Picking one of the yubos up gently as not to hurt it, in her mouth like a cub, she made her way back to her cave.

The yubo was awoken in the cave by the gingos rough tongue.

„What are you doing?“, exclaimed the yubo in shock.

„Please don't eat me, my cubs need my milk!“, she added in a hurry.

„I shall not eat you mistress yubo, I merely wish to talk“, said the gingo calmly.

„Oh? Is this a trick?“, asked the yubo wide eyed.

„Yubo, I watched you and your herd today“, said the gingo as she cleaned her guest.

„Yet you did not try to kill me, so maybe this isn't a trick“, the yubo carried on.

„Your friends cleaned you and in return you cleaned them“, said the gingo, ignoring her company.

„Are you asking me to clean you?“, said the yubo slightly puzzled.

„Yes, in return for me cleaning you“ said the gingo.

„Are you not going to try and eat me?“, enquired the yubo.

„You have my word I will not eat you“, promised the gingo.

For whatever reason, the yubo took the gingo's word and they talked till the sun was almost up as the cleaned each other.

„You seem very interested in our lives, mistress gingo“, concluded the yubo after the cleaning was done.

„Almost as if you would like to live as we live“, she added.

„Oh no, mistress yubo. You see, watching you today, I just wanted to ask how you enjoy living like that. Yubos are perfectly suited to the life you are living, as if the Homins were your masters. But I felt deeply depressed with the loss of my lover and as I couldn't go on alone, with no company and no pups of my own, I felt at a loss. I must thank you though, for spending time with me tonight, as you have rekindled my love of life. I see now I would rather starve free than be an obese slave to others. I shall return you to your family now“, explained the gingo.

The gingo returned the yubo to her family, thankful for a new view on life and went to seek out others of her kind.



-Tryker-

The Yubo and the Sun

Deep in the Lagoons of Loria there lived a yubo, who was most displeased.

“Sun!”, he shouted, “Sun, I beg you, talk with me, please!”, shouted the yubo at the sun.

“What is wrong, dear yubo, you seem most unhappy”, asked the sun while smiling so kindly at him.

“I am nothing but a little yubo, so small - tiny, in fact - and you shine so warmly on me that I feel weak! My legs are too small for me to get close enough to water to quench my thirst. You must stop shining so brightly on Loria or I will surely die! I am too small to do this alone!” barked the yubo to the sun.

„But little Yubo, I merely do as I am told for this is my job, the Stingas need me to smile so they can live, the Children of the wind need me to smile on them for their livestock to graze and their young ones to play. Surely it would be easier for you to find other means of quenching your thirst than to deny the other of the land to bask in my glow?“, asked the sun.

„You are not listening!“, protested the yubo.

„I am too small to help myself and if you do not stop I will surely die!“ he added.

An Izam overhearing the shouting set perch on the branch of a near by tree and listened to the Yubo protesting about how helpless he was.



„So, dear Yubo, if you are so helpless and so little, why should the sun be interested in helping you?“, asked the izam.

„Because if she does not help me, she will kill me!“, shrieked the yubo.

„Is your life so hard, little yubo, that you can not help yourself and must make others live it for you?“, asked the izam with a disappointed tone.

„Yes!“, bellowed the yubo.

„So all must suffer to help you, everytime there is a stone in your path, we must move Atys around you to help you,

because you are so small?“, asked the Sun.

„Yes!“, bellowed the yubo.

„Oh dear, so the only one who can help you is the sun?“, questioned the izam.

„Yes!“, bellowed the yubo.

„I can not help you what so ever Yubo?“, enquired the Izam.

„No! Now keep your nose out, you stupid izam!“ screamed the yubo.

„Oh how rude!“, proclaimed the izam, winking at the sun.

And with that, the izam swooped down at the yubo, who dodged out of the way.

The izam had left a little path near the yubo's feet where water could flow in from the lake and it was just at the right level for the yubo to drink from.

„Oh dear“, said the yubo with pity „I could have saved everyone time and just dug a hole in the sand myself, but instead I feel I have made a fool of myself. Please dear sun and izam, will you grant me forgiveness for my actions?“

Both the izam and the sun granted the little yubo forgiveness and from that day on, the yubo would always think when he had a problem instead of blaming others.

Lilac of the Lakes

It was another beautiful day on Atys. The sun shone down on city of Fairhaven and beat down on the face of Lilac as she lent against a tall bent palm across from the stables. She shut her eyes, put her head back against the bark and let the sand run through her fingers. Lilac sighed deeply; tilting her head to one side she watched the sun's reflection dance elegantly on the lake's surface. She could spend hours watching life pass by in this city...but not today. The first wave had hit Bounty beaches very hard and the news was that a lot of Homins had been hurt in this onslaught. The night had left a strange feeling with Lilac as she remembered the happenings.



Lilac's family were very well off and her Father was a well known and respected member of the Tryker community. With respect comes a need to live life traditional, Lilac's Father did not believe that his daughter should spend more time around young male Tryker than was needed. So Lilac grew up around her nannies that cared for her dearly and watched her grow into a loving young woman. Teaching her the ways and traditions of her people, the knowledge of the lake lands ran fast through her blood.

As a child she had made a friend, a young Tryker by the name of Asgas; her nannies, thinking no hard would come of this friendship, turned a blind eye to her sneaking off to spend time with him. The years had rolled on and Lilac and Asgas became close, never telling her father from fear of his traditional view of life. Asgas was strikingly attractive to Lilac so, over the years she became more and more interested in him and he to her. They knew though that it was not possible for them to live in the community, for fear of her Father. Asgas was intelligent and knew the arts of warfare, but he was also very poor, living off the lands and his knowledge would not be good enough for Lilac's father.

But times had changed and the Kitin were now in Bounty beaches and something had to be done to save the cities of Aeden Aqueous. Lilac's Father was called to a meeting as soon as the first reports were in. He demanded a regional 'call to arms' of all warriors and mages to rid the lake lands of the horde. Asgas, seeing his chance to prove his worth, was one of the first in line to die for they kind, Lilac begged him not to but he needed to prove to her father he was worthy of her love.

That night Lilac lay in her chamber not able to sleep for fear of losing her loved ones to the Kitin, as many Homins have done before; she'd heard so many horrible stories, from travellers to these lands and the history of Aeden Aqueous was riddled with heroes whom lost their family to the Kitin. She turned on her side and watched the living creatures swim past her window living life as if nothing unusual was happening above the surface of their submerged world.

Something glinted in the water, reflected from the dim lights in her apartment.

She held her breath and rushed to the window, watching the object slowly sink into the zenith of the lake. She ran around the walkway and threw herself into the watery depths. She submerged a few moments later with a small bag tied with a length of fibre with an earring as a clasp. She knew it was Asgas's earring (she'd made it for him herself when the women were teaching her, it was the first one she had ever made and she'd given it to Asgas as soon as was possible; he was so proud of her!). In the bag were some parchment and 4 blossoms that had been pressed for some time, She fumbled at the parchment tears ready to fall from her eyes, and with the immovable lump in her throat.

Here is a blossom from each of your cities, like you they are beautiful and will be forever, unlike you that can not get more beautiful than they already are, I shall return when your father deems me worthy. She had placed the bag in her dwelling and gone to watch the sun rise hoping to hear the news from the front line as soon as was possible.

Both her Father and Lover had gone to bounty beaches but would any of them come back?

Lilac waited and watched as the guard walked past the stables, holding her breath not wanting any time to pass yet longing for any news of her Father or Asgas.

She'd watched the priests bring back the badly wounded to spend their last hours with loved ones; the sand was red where the blood had leaked from the stretchers, trails in the sand that told a thousand stories devoid of words.

Lilac had to make a decision, to stay and wait helplessly or to make a sacrifice.

She ran and she ran till her throat was dry, and her heart beat in her chest. She ran till her legs hurt making tears stream down her sun-kissed cheeks, memories flowing through her pushed her just that little bit more to run.

She fell to her knees and broke down. She knew she had to be strong but it was so much to ask and what if there was really no one listening? She couldn't have doubts not at a time like this! She was so close.

The water was dark and muddy; rainbows danced on the surface and burst to let her pass.

She scrambled up the rock not wasting a second and ran up to the cave. She stopped at the opening, removed her shoes, whispered something under her breath, and crossed the threshold.

She emerged some hours later with a calm expression on her face. She began the long journey back home, slowly as if savouring every moment with quiet contemplation.

She was welcomed back by the withered face of Asgas; he ushered her aside from the worried faces and the whispering crowds.

Lilac pressed a finger to his lips. 'I know' she whispered, 'I know'.

Asgas looked into Lilac's deep eyes. 'He spent his blood for the Lakelands' Asgas managed after some time. Lilac took his hand brown with dried blood. 'As will we, when it is our time' she replied calmly 'but for now we must be strong'. Brushing the hair from his eyes she graciously

kissed his brow.

'Trykers!' she announced to the crowd 'My Father spent his blood for the Lakelands. He was known to all of you. In his honour I will take his place on the council.' The whispering stopped.

'I will lead you if you will have me, now is the time for change!'

Lilac married Asgas some years later and was soon with child. They named their daughter 'Darkmoor'. Lilac never told anyone what happened in the Darkmoor cave that day.

Lilac and Asgas were also blessed with a son whom they named after Lilac's father, who had been laid to rest in Blackwater with the past leaders of Aeden Aqueous.



Tally the Tryker

Tally's mother had spent all day finishing off the armour. It was made with the finest materials they could afford. She was a crafter by trade so it would save a few dappers for her to work throughout the night to make the armour herself.

She looked blankly into the candle reminiscing the youth of her son; he had grown so rapidly into a fine young Homin, she remembered how his father had taught him how to use a blade and to quarter carcasses, and how they had stayed up talking of what would be come of their only child.

Amber would have liked her son to lean a trade as it was a stable steady way to live, how ever Tally's father wanted his son to follow in his families foot steps and explore the lake lands for valuable resource information, with this job came honour.

But after all, it was Tally's life and not her own (How she would have hated her parents to dictate her own life!), Tally would live his life as he saw fit and she would be there to support him if needs be. She would offer only good advice, biting her tongue when she felt the need to criticize. Loving support is what a mother should give and she was a good mother.

Amber felt a tear begging to be shed for the lost years, but held it back. She refused to regret. There! It was perfect, she reflected on her hard work, laced with love and the finest lining. She hung the suit on the back of the door, blew the candle out, and headed to her bedstead.



Tally was a fetching young Tryker, his most noticeable feature being his green eyes, as the shade changed to suit his mood. The girls of the town found him attractive and it was a somewhat a difficult job for his mother to keep him on the right path. The last think she could abide was his mind not being on the task at hand on this most important stage of his life.

Tally awoke that morn with a strange feeling. The day he had waited for all his life was upon him, and he felt no fear, for possibly the first time in his life he was sure and no doubt passed through he mind.

He left his bedroom (his somewhat small bag all packed) and removed the suit his mother had left for him, as well as taking two letters from the table. He took the candle and replaced it with a new one and placed the stand on the mantle. Taking a letter from his pocket and set it down behind the stand he walked silently back into is room to get changed.

He looked rather debonair dressed in his new armor. After cooking breakfast and putting it on a tray, he knocked on his mother's door and beamed a smile at her as he entered.

„Oh Tally you look just like a...silly me I guess you are one aren't you", she joked.

„Here mother, I have made you a heart meal. Thank you so much for my suit, is it all the more special for it was crafted by your own fair hands."

„I hope the others see it that way, Tally. I am sure it's not the normal way they are made", his mother said worried.

„Please eat mother, eat, and take good care of yourself while I am away", Tally said with a tremble in his voice.

„I will never hold you back Tally, do you know that?", Amber quested

„I know mother", he smiled again at his mother.

The Bell rang loud outside. Tally kissed his mother's head and grabbed his bags, promised to write her letters every day and told her to look after herself.

Tally put his bags on one of the mektoubs and took the reins. There where a few young Trykers amidst the group, excited to be leaving the lakes for the 'real' world beyond and make a new life for themselves.

„Hello", exclaimed a boy behind him, „My dad owns the Mektoubs of this caravan", added the young boy.

„What's your name?", he asked.

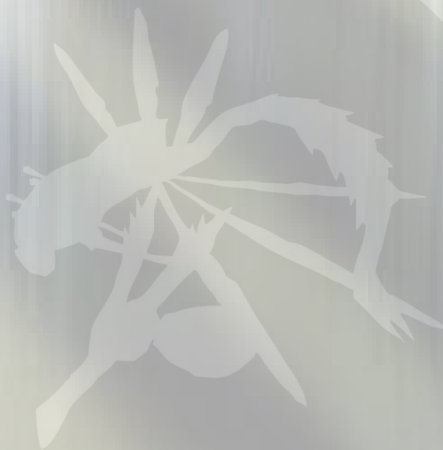
„Tally", said Tally.

„Oh, Hello Tally! I'm Betnea. Where you go'in?", he enquired.

„I'm going to Zora", said Tally with pride. „To become a Priest of Ma-Duk!"

Tally was one of the first Tryker priests on Atys and followed his god throughout his whole life.

-Zorai-



The Brave Guardians of the Zoraï Watch Tower

The moon was pale and mellow as it shone down upon the five guards of the watch tower, it was a quiet night and the guards where jesting and ridiculing each other as a mark of friendship and to make entertain each other on this cold night as they had done on many others.

The fire burned brightly in the curling mist and the gingos howled as the night was crawling in. The five men stayed close to the fire, for on this night the chill seemed more prevalent than usual. The outpost was a key post for if anyone where to attack Hoi-Cho, they would come from the east of the land. There had not been a sniff of trouble for a very long time.



The guards sat down and began to feast on the banquets their loving wives had prepared for them. They all loved and respected their wives dearly, as their days must have been hard for them without their husbands around all through the day. They would tell each other tales of their children of the in-laws. All in all it was a job like any other and you made ends meet as best you could.

Ygrene was the youngest of the guards and had joined at his mother's advise. HE was happy to be a guard and being able to spend time with his two brothers Alocá and

Dlrow. He had always looked up to his brothers, being in awe of them since he was a small child. His brothers were his seniors by many years and loved him for bringing cheer and good spirit with him wherever he went.

It was Dlrow and Alocá's turn to do 'the rounds' as they where commonly known, this meant to go around the outpost and looking for uncommon signs which was seldom and scarce these days.

„Dlrow, do you hear something?“ whispered Alocá

„I fear not, Alocá, you must be on edge tonight.“ replied Dlrow passively.

„I have a strange feeling in these hours of darkness Dlrow....“

They carried on around the area with some stealth.

„There it is again“, whispered Alocá.

„Yes, I heard it too, a chattering din almost like a cacophony of teeth on a snowy night?“, replied Dlrow.

„Yes, Yes that's it“, started Alocá.

„We had better return to the others and with haste“, he added.

They broke into a sprint back towards the outpost main gates the chattering could almost be heard now by a strained ear.

They reached the gates of the outpost and it took both the men's strength to shut and bar the gates. Once secure inside the barracks they sounded the alarm, in the hopes the ringing bell would alert the sleepy town to the west. Hopefully, they would have time to prepare their forces. "Kitin, kitin!" the two brothers shouted, their voices full of dread.

The waiting guards leapt to their feet and began to gather wood from the vast stockpile behind them.

Struggling under the weight, YGreene slipped through the side door and began to set down a wall of wood blocking the way to town. On seeing their little brother piling up the wood, Aloca and Drow decided it would be best to assist him. They realized his plan, and knew that if it came to a last resort, it would not be in vain.

The other two guards were furiously ringing the warning bell of the outpost, sweat dripping from their arms. All the guards knew that the sound of the bell was only drawing the Kitin closer to the watch tower. Selflessly, the guard continued to sound the alarm, knowing they were bringing the repulsive beasts towards them, bringing the impending doom with them.

When the kitin were so close that the guards couldn't hear each other over the hideous noises of their chattering, the guards knew it was time. They bowed their heads as one and prayed to Ma-Duk to spare their friends and families and those that they had helped in Hoi-Cho.

The fire was lit, without any malice or a selfish thought amongst the guards they watched as the wall began to burn. They saw the lights of Hoi-Cho appear one by one in the distance, and knew that their sacrifice was not in vain. As they watched the wall set fire to the wooden outpost they bowed in respect.

The homins of Hoi-Cho built a graveyard out of respect and admiration for the five brave guards who gave their lives to save many. This is the memorial of remembrance to those 5 brave Homins. May the story of their feat never die away.



The hand of Jena

Many, many moons ago, when Atys was new to Homins and the land mysterious and exploration was compulsory, there was a tribe of Matis. Respected by their people and feared by their enemies, the tribe consisted of gracious homins, content with their lives and blessed with many children. One particular child stood out and his name was Elgnis.



Elgnis was fearless and craved to be like his father the tribal leader Elaser.

He would do anything for his father and endeavoured to please him in any way possible, which resulted in Elgnis getting into a lot of trouble at times.

Being a tribal leader was no easy job as Elgnis would know himself, because one day, far from now, he would have to take his father's place as head of the tribe. (A fact his father reminded him of daily). His

father was a very busy man. Elgnis was mischievous and liked to do different to what he was told, like many Homins his age.

One day he was eavesdropping on a conversation between his father and the warriors of the tribe. He heard that they were looking to explore the lands far to the east of the camp which swarmed with thieves, so they had to travel with care.

Elgnis seeing a great adventure ahead of him decided he would be the one to explore and bring back all the news of the strange and mysterious unknown lands. He would have great tales to tell on his return and that would be told for years to come how the 'Great Elgnis' travelled to the far east and brought back information to make their tribe the greatest tribe in Atys! Elgnis decided to set off straight away. Adventures waited for no man!!

He set off into the jungle, dreaming of great battles and lost princesses. He dodged trees and rocks while acting out his peerless tales through Atys.

He picked up a large stick, „This will be my sword!!“, Elgnis proclaimed. He looked around to see where he was.

He gasped as he realized he was lost and it was getting dark and cold. “Oh no!”, he cried as he remembered the thieves; there were thieves around these parts! His tummy grumbled and ached ever so much (he hadn't eaten anything all day!).

Elgnis plunged to his knees and began to sob erratically. He was surely going to die out in these harsh elements.

He had never been away from the camp on his own before or away from his beloved Father, with no way of knowing here he was and no food or water his hopes where damp.

He shivered and his teeth began to chatter uncontrollably.

He fell into a deep sleep.

In his dream he saw his father's face as he found Elgnis' body soulless and cold. Then, seeing his family and tribe, he began to cry. Floating on a silver mist, he felt something warm on his shoulder. He turned and saw the most beautiful woman he had ever seen: hair as dark as the night's sky, eyes as green as the forests of home and lips as red as blood!

„Am I going to meet my Grandfather now?“, Elgnis asked the elegant lady between sobs. The woman touched her lips and hushed him with a smile that would make angels cry of happiness. For no reason, Elgnis smiled at her, the mist he was floating on escalated upwards and took the Shape of a large and consoling hand
He felt warm and at peace with his life, and slowly fell to sleep.

„Oh My! He's Here! Elaser He's here!“, the voice was some way off but it woke Elgnis from his sleep. „Elgnis! My Son, I feared I had lost you forever!“, cried Elaser over come with Joy. „Father, Father! I had the most amazing dream, I Am so sorry I ran away it was a silly thing to do I love you father and I promise not to do it ever again!“

„Elaser Sire, please study this area! It is like nothing I have ever seen before!“ commented a tribal sage.

They looked around and saw they where standing in the palm of a very large hand.

„Elgnis, my son, my love, and the reason I wake each morning with a smile on my face, what happened to you last night?“

Elgnis told the tale of his night to the tribe as they sat in amazement and listened to his every word.

From that day the place was known as „The Hand of Jena“ and is worshipped by homins from all over Aty's. For its believed that Elgnis was saved from death by the beloved goddess Jena. The Matis tribes still leave food and water at this spot as a mark of respect and love for the goddess and anyone she might bring there.



The Yubo and the Carpenter

Long, long ago, so long that no one can remember any more, in this very Region lived a carpenter and a yubo.

The Yubo was evil and grasping. One Day he said to the Carpenter „If you build me a house, I will pray for you in return that Jena brings you good fortune.”

„I do not want your prayers”, replied the carpenter disrespectfully. „My fortune is in my two hands and my axe.”

„Just you wait”, said the Yubo to himself „You will not get away with this!!”

And he pondered day and night how he might be revenged upon the carpenter.



Finally, he had an idea.

Going before the Zorai High Council leader he said:

„Your Majesty, as I visited the Heavens yesterday, whom should I meet but your honourable father. All is well with him, of course, but he did mention that he would like to have a temple built in his honour”

„Since it is not easy to find carpenters in the heavens, he asked that you send him your own, who is said to be a fine craftsman.”

„Why not indeed?”, replied the Zorai High Council leader „but how am I to send him there?”

„There is no need for you to worry about that your Majesty. We Yubos have ways of arranging these things”, the yubo assured him. And then he explained his plan.

They would have a wooden hut built, shut the carpenter inside, and light a large fire outside. When the hut caught fire, white smoke would begin to rise up to the heavens and on the smoke the carpenter would rise also.

The Zorai High Council leader agreed to this plan, and told the carpenter of it.

„What am I to do?”, lamented the carpenter, when he returned home. „The Yubo is determined to take my life!”

„I'll tell you what to do”, his wife replied, „It is quite simple. Tonight we will dig a tunnel from our house to the hut, and tomorrow you shall use it to escape.”

The next day they took the carpenter and locked him up in the hut. Then they piled on moon

wood all around and set fire to it.

As white smoke began to pour from the hut, the Yubo started to call out „There you are, look! That’s him! Do you see how the white smoke carries him to the heavens?”

Actually, no one could see anything of the sort, but they all dutifully pretended that they could.

Meanwhile, the carpenter had hurried home by the underground passage, and was warming his toes by the hearth.

He sat there for a whole month, without so much as showing his face. The whole time he thought about how he might get his revenge on the yubo.

Eventually he went out, and made his way straight to the High Council. Everyone stared in astonishment, particularly the wicked yubo. „You have returned!” gasped the Zorai High Council leader.

„As you can see, Your Majesty, I have come straight from the Heavens,” replied the carpenter

„That temple of your father took some building - they have a very old-fashioned way of going about things up there.”



„But now he has got a temple he can be proud of, and very satisfied he was too.”

„There's only one other thing he would ask for, Your Majesty. You see, he hasn't got a yubo for the temple. And as you well know, Sire, a temple without a yubo is like a harvester without a pick.”

„So your Honourable Father would like you to send him one. Not just any old yubo, mind you - a temple like that deserves a really special yubo, your Majesty.”

„Your father did say he would like to have yours, as the fame of his learning has reached the heavens themselves.”

„Why, I should gladly send him to my Father.”, said the Zorai High Council leader. „But how am I to send him there?”

„The best way would be to send him as you sent me”, replied the carpenter. „It is definitely the quickest way.”

The yubo turned pale, but in the end he agreed. „If the carpenter came back”, he thought, „so can I.”

So he did not even protest too much about being shut up in a wooden hut and having a fire lit all around him.

The flames leapt high, oh so high! Up towards the heavens

The carpenter, who was watching and listening more closely than the others, also noticed a thin black column of smoke, and heard the faint cries of anguish

The carpenter smiled to himself as he watched the yubo's soul make its way up to the heavens. He turned to his faithful wife who was also smiling.

The Herb Fairy of Zorai

Homins in the North East Province talk of The 'Herb Fairy' who lives in the distant mountain wilderness and looks after the herbs that grow there



She sees to it that their flowers thrive, that they bear fruit in time and that there are no fewer and no more than there should be. She is always willing to help poor Homins who come to the mountains to gather herbs, but she will often punish the wicked and the mean.

They say that the Herb Fairy was once a beautiful young girl who was called Ability. Not only was Ability more eye-catching than the white stinger Blossom, but she could sing so sweetly it brought a tear to the eye of those blessed enough to hear her. Her laughter rang out like the bells of

the heavens, and when she walked it was as though a fleecy cloud had floated to the earth.

The girl possessed uncounted skills. She could embroider a flower that would put a living flower to shame and she could embroider a bird that no living bird could rival but she was most fond of gathering healing herbs and knew all their names and properties by heart. In short she was so clever and so bright that everyone called her Ability until her real name had been forgotten.

Ability was a maid to a cruel and selfish Grand Sage. Anyone failing to carry out his order could be hanged at once. But Ability was free as a bird! If she did not feel like making Grand Sage tea she would not make it for three days and three nights. If she was not in the mood to bake she would not bake for seven days and seven nights.

Not even a cruel Grand Sage could make her do anything against her wishes. The poor Homins loved Ability for her kind heart, but the ladies-in-waiting and the Grand Sage's courtier laughed at her and secretly called her the wild woman of the woods.

Ability did not mind that. Only before the High Sorcerer, who was a particularly wicked man, did her laughter and song fall



silent, and she never looked him in the eye. It is said Ability was to marry and that her love for her husband burned with the passion and promise of the Fyrosian Desert.

It is also said that the high sorcerer had him murdered out of spite, for he was secretly in love with the untamable woman. Whatever the truth Ability left her life with the court and made her way into the 'Miracle Mountains' of Zorai.

Village maidens gathering herbs here sometimes hear the Herb Fairy sing in a sweet voice, though very few have seen her. But every year, when spring returns to the mountains, it is said that if a good and honest Homin follows the warm springtime breeze to through mountains, they will bring home some Precious Herbs...