(Game 79.5 A - ‘Gone with Wind’ Chronicle)

While on land-leave and awaiting our final exam (affectionately referred to as ‘The Crusher’) to become official members of the Fighting Eel Drakes, many things occurred that I believe would be of interest to the archives maintained by the guild.

 I was informed by Rahlee that I was requested by a friend of the guild known as ‘Wind,’ along with Captain Nadir, to locate some sages of Noctus that were broken out of a Noctural empire prison a few months ago, sages on the path of ‘Pure Spirit’ that align with my own perspectives and views. Caution had to be taken as this was not an official guild contract and would be performed ‘pro bono’, so they were asked to assemble some selective members of the guild that could be stealthy. Therefore, Rahlee recruited Surin and Tahima, both able to move quickly and go unseen and unheard. It was clear the team would need to move quickly and quietly due to the sensitive nature of our charges.

 We were brought to a building in the Green District where the sages had been under protection and investigated it for any signs of abduction. After a while a contingent of people in Samazar Sentries uniforms arrived and told us that we were under arrest for disrupting a crime scene. Thankfully, Rahlee checked them for paperwork and Tahima could tell that something was off about the dye used in their uniforms, and after a short altercation (and a fortuitous moment where INDRA just so happened to be walking by as the altercation began), we were able to determine that they were not legitimate sentries but led by a member of the Jade Pillars.

 We then did some investigating and discovered through a combination of some found airship fabric and a description of a masked figure with an airship harness that we should check the manifests at the nearby airship towers to determine if any ships were making their way to Kaewan. We were able to determine that one ship that had recently left, the Glorious Dawn, had been loaded with two cargo crates listed as containing ‘mechanical parts,’ with a heading that could reasonably bring them bach to the Empire. We launched in the Diamonds Edge after loading it with my and INDRA’s Fighting Eel Drake ships and shipped off in pursuit. We eventually were able to close the distance with the cargo ship. As we closed, it was apparent a battle would be unavoidable, and we then began boarding actions as we tossed grappling lines and pulls our ships closer together. After INDRA pulled countless defensive constructs off the vessel and we subdued their defenses, we went below deck to discover that the crates did not in fact contain the abducted sages, but only stolen constructs from Samazar. Still an important discovery, but not what we were looking for. In fact, it was clear we were on the wrong ship.

 I took some time to educate the captain of the Glorious Dawn about the true worship of Noctus. However, in the bottom of the ship, we found one woman, a thinblooded dragonkin, who told us a story about seeing Noctus fly across the sky a few years before the War of Flames, and upon seeing the Dragon was filled with a sense of calm and hope. She had been conscripted and forced into service, and was reluctant to speak due to the actions of the Empire. We ensured her that she would be able to return with us to Samazar and to safety. We then transferred some crew from the Diamond’s Edge to assist in bringing the Glorious Dawn back to Samazar, while we returned ourselves to see what else could be gleaned.

 Through the favor of the Guild of Wind and Flame, INDRA discovered that there was a particular ship – L’Vistige – that was from Dessenora, docked in the Merchant’s District earlier in the day. As it was a hostile vessel, the Sentries attacked it, and tossed alchemists fire upon it before it was able to cut itself loose and fly in the direction of the Sun Peaks, leaving a smoke trail behind it.

 We once more got onto the Diamond’s Edge and made way to follow where this particular ship was heading, only to find that it had been brought to the ground due to the damage caused by the fire. We followed the trail to a cave, where we had to contend with swarms of scorpions, oozes, stone squid, and other large hulking creatures found deep beneath the surface. Before we had entered, Tahima warned us through the eyes of a scout that there was an undead presence inside. We all were in agreement that any necromancers encountered would have to be dealt with swiftly, but none were seen in the natural section of the cave.

 However, as we moved deeper, we found the natural cave gave way to a more sculpted section, in which we had to cross some pools of acid. I was nimble enough to cross a log that was suspended over a large pool of acid, but was unable to keep my balance upon it as INDRA picked the log up in order to assist Surin who was slipping in. This resulted in Surin avoiding the pool, but as a consequence, caused me to slip completed into it. Thankfully, Noctus’s blessing protected me enough to get out of the acid, but what I did not know was that the next part of our journey would be the most dangerous.

 We traversed hallways in which every other step was littered with various traps, interspersed between undead. It seemed as if no matter where we moved, spikes would be pressed into our faces (as Nadir experienced), buzz saws slicing at us from below, or jets of flame bursting suddenly out of the floor. Surin made quick work of every trap he encountered, but we found plenty on our own with the grace of a karkadann in a alchemist’s shop.

 After opening one final door, we encountered some tomb guardians and some individuals that Rahlee stated spoke the language of the Hinterlands, along with a lone necromancer. We quickly incapacitated the living and destroyed the undead, and at the back of the room, came upon a prison cell that contained what we came to recover – two dragonkin sages tattooed from head to toe with the teachings of the Dragon Noctus. We gave them what we had on hand and let them rest and recover for the journey home, and they agreed to allow me to meet with them and learn from them further. They mentioned that their faith was old, thousands of years old, but now everything had changed since the coup that allowed the blood purity sect to take over Kaewan and empower the Empire to rise. There is much that can be said, but I am grateful to find those who validate my claims, even if they seem farfetched to others. It gave me a great sense of inner peace, as if the path I chose to walk a year ago, to join the Adventurer’s Guild, was the right one. We were able to bring them back with the help of Wind, and they are now safe once more in the city of Samazar.

 It went to show that even when things seem lost… it just takes the tenacity of a few to tilt the scales and make everything right… that those second chances that are given are because we are always learning, and growing, and become more than we were before, and that any of us can do better when afforded that chance.

 I feel Nadir was able to find himself a bit after this mission. He seemed more determined when we got back, and more sure of himself.

 Surin was invaluable in skill to get us wherever we needed to go, and I believe is more resolved than ever in creating a new world.

 Tahima was able to discover that the sages were absconded due to a rare text collector, wanting them for their rare tattooed skins. I was not told how this information was acquired, but Tahima is not one to shy away from the esoteric. However, it does not matter, as she is like me in many ways, forging her own path and seemingly always reaching towards the light.

 Rahlee, of course, was ever resourceful, and often was the first to enter a room. It is of no question why Rashad chose to elevate them to being the official Chaptermaster in Samazar – Rahlee leads from the front, and although they showed some signs of fear when things were dangerous or harrowing, it never once stopped them from driving forward. Never once.

 The one bittersweet moment was when I learned that INDRA was choosing to walk another path with the Guild of Wind and Flame, but I rejoice because they will become stronger and better by his presence. Ambition – when directed justly - is a blessing.

 For now, I will close that my short land-leave gives me all the more reason to be successful in my training so I can get back to where I belong – at the sides of my allies in Samazar.

 And to any who read this – May you all find shade and solace beneath the dragons wings (…if you choose to).

 Xurek, Claw of the Dragon