**Chapter 1: From Disappointment to Destruction**

Zev stormed out of the Sage’s alcove. That woman had no feelings sometimes. The wizened councilor had a bad habit of laughing when Zev failed. And this last time was the one that almost broke him.

Leaving the central castle of the seaside village, his mood was broody but truly no more than usual. He continued to stomp toward the door that led to the cliff-face battlements. Exiting, he slammed the door behind him, warning the guards to give him a ‘moment’.

As he rounded the battlement overlooking the bay, he made a bee-line to the ramparts and the pungent, salty wind hit him like a ton of bricks.

His cloak flapped violently in the torrential winds before he pulled up his hood and secured the edges, wrapping himself in a thin ephemeral cacoon of darkness and protection.

On the horizon, over the bay, a tempest rolled closer as the wind buffeted against the battlement walls and cliffs below.

Thunder and lightning rattled the sky. Waves and seawater-filled air crashed and pushed toward the village marina below.

The sea pounded out a beat like the drums of battle. Roar. Crash. Roar. Crash. Roar. Crash…

With a deafening crack, a colossal bolt split the sea, striking mere paces from the beleaguered vessel.

The sudden burst of bright light highlighted Zev’s rakish figure, hawklike profile, and glowing tan betraying his mood this day.

The stringent sea and violent weather were only additions to his already violated senses. He cringed and spit.

Zev watched as the ship valiantly raced against the maelstrom, but it was a losing battle.

Yet, even amid the chaos, he spotted a blue and gold glint on the hull - a diplomatic rune infused with magic.

As the ship careened sideways, Zev watched as it righted itself with a miraculous deftness, narrowly evading a crushing blow from the next rush of waves - a true testament to the skill of whoever was Captaining this unexpected diplomatic visit.

Despite his foul mood, the glowing symbol on the hull supplied the motive he needed at that moment.

Zev leapt into action.

Any second the tempest would claim its prize.

Zev dashed to the fourth rampart and jumped to the edge.

Without looking Zev knew the distance to the rocky turbulence below. It was roughly a thousand foot drop, giving ample time for this unique technique.

**Chapter 2: Kit**

In a practiced and fluid movement, he stepped off the edge.

Zev fell like a stone. The wind whistled in his ears and his cloak violently resisted the invisible friction.

Quickly, Zev repositioned his body midair. He crouched into a runner’s stance and posed into the “ready, set, go” foot racing position.

The hard wind slammed into Zev, the salty air knocking him back closer to the cliff face.

Falling… falling… falling… four seconds of ever harrowing time flew by… 3…2…1… Termial velocity achieved.

And then it was time.

He loved this part. This move was part of his daily training and over time had become a personalized and unique form.

Meer seconds had passed and he was just over halfway down.

With his left hand, palm pointed down and under his feet, he prepared to cast Shadow Path.

Shouting the vocal component of the spell while contorting his left hand, he pushed.

Mana build in his hand and with a bellow, “UMBRA ITER” he released the spell like he’d done a thousand times before.

*Sputt..Fizzle…Psss..*

*His spell failed… how!!?? There’s no way! He perfected this spell! He way going to die a horrible and meaningless death.*

*Scrambling, he pulled up his status and activity logs. Scanning over the last few entries, he cried “FUCK!!”*

*Activity Log:*

*Vosa the Sage of the Sea Kist Village has temporarilty debuffed you due to a critical failure.*

*Status:*

*Temporary status adjustment due to failure of “He Who Hesitates”.*

*Movement speed: -10%*

*Cast time: +10%*

*Training boost: +12%*

*Attribute blocks (24 hour): -2 AGI, -3 DEX, -2 STR, -1 INT, -1 WIS, -1 CHA, -2 STA*

Every split second he fell closer to the rocks and waves below.

500 meters…

Fizzle…

“WTF!”, Zev cried. Spell failure was rare for Zev, especially for his own unique spells. Panic started to set in.

375 meters to impact…

Filss…

280 meters to impact…

Gritting his teeth, desperation clawed at his mental state threatening his already strained concentration.

Fitzz…

“Vosa!!!,” he screamed in frustration as he fell.

Fiptze…

With a final grueling mental strain, Zev cast Shadow Glide for the 5th time dropping his mana pool to headache levels of depletion.

Whoosh!

A pathway-sized ribbon of ethereal darkness unfurled below his feet. Obeying his will, the shadow magic targeted and reached for the end of the pier as he shot down the slide of black light.

Counteracting the fast decline, he cast Shadow Grapple with his right hand reaching out towards the pier’s end. At the same time, he kicked out backward, pushing off the sheer cliff at his back.

And then it was too late. The ship was caught. The storm mercilessly tossed the vessel around like a toy in a tub.

Determined as ever, Zev shot toward the mooring station closest to the ship. He cast Shadow Grapple and Shadow Net in the same move and latched on to the capsized vessel.

Zev secured the magical tendrils to the pillion and pulled.

Despite his debuffs Zev soon found he didn’t have to pull so hard.

The storm sent a gentle reminder in the way of tossing the boat directly at Zev. Wrong place; wrong time.

Barely dodging the ship, Zev spun and strained against the inertia. Grunting, he flipped the ship.

Zev's heart pounded as he scanned the tumultuous seas, searching for any sign of the crew or the captain.

As he strained against the inertia of the ship, Zev's eyes caught sight of a figure clinging to a piece of debris.

It was the captain, Kit, and she was barely holding on. Zev knew that he had to act fast if he wanted to save her and the diplomatic mission from certain doom.

He focused his mind, calling upon his training in the art of shadow magic.

With a surge of intense concentration, Zev cast Shadow Grapple once again and shot toward Kit, his body slicing through the storm with incredible speed.

He caught her just as the waves threatened to swallow her whole, pulling her towards him with all his strength.

As they fell towards the water, Zev's mind raced.

They needed to get to safety fast. He cast a **Backdrop spell**, creating a protective barrier around them as they hit the water with a resounding splash.

With Kit in tow, Zev began to swim towards the shore, his muscles burning with exertion.

The wind howled and the waves crashed around them, but he refused to let them defeat him.

He knew that he had the power of shadow magic on his side, and he would use it to overcome any obstacle.

Reaching the peir he pulled both of them to shore.

Besheveled and sopping wet, Kit visably seeths as she watches the last reminants of her ship sink in the unforgiving foam.

Chapter 3: Vosa

Conversation with the village Sage, Vosa.

Determine the Captain’s fate.

Zev’s duty as Magistrate

Kit’s not trusting Zev

Chapter 4: Dreams

After this day, Zev was exhausted and hit his pillow like ton of bricks.

He dreams came fast and hard. Visions of storms, portals, the distant Sanguine Mountains and the Scab Grove flashed through his scrabbling mind.

Portals

Preminitions

Chapter 5: Mission to Omuru

Quest

Gear

Leave

Travel

Show Blocked Status Sheet

Kit and crew

Docking

Harbor Master Orc

Stevedore and Cosair workers husteled around the Orc marina cleaning up from the storm.

Chapter X: At the Gates

As Zev and Kit made their way to the gigantic gaping hole in the mountiain in front of them. The maw seemed to ready to swallow all who entered here.

Standing over 200 feet, the gates to the city were held in place by two gigantic hands of a statue that was not excavated yet. Through the gate lay the city of Umuru and it’s ten-thousand Orc residents.

Examination of the undamaged buildings showed signs of master craftsmen. These areas that had not been ravengenge by time, excavation, or battle, clearly showed the marvel of engineering and asthetics.

Orcs are not known for their intelligence and certainly not their intelligence.

Further evidnce that this had been an old dwarven outpost could be seen in the walls and broken bas-reliefs on nearly every vertical surface. The whole city looked like a lake of broken, yet connectec, tatoos of stone.

The city had ovviously been excavated from a dwarven ruin. Cracked bas-reliefs, defaced statues, and crumblinkg hulking stone carvings of beards could be seen scattered along the roads.

As they approach the underground keep and throne room of the Chief Orc to deliver the diplomatic package, they are stopped by some nosey, drunken, and off-duty Orc soldiers.

With an indiscernible sleight of hand, Zev employs his newly acquired Puppet Control Gloves.

Sliding the two rings onto each of his ring fingers, a transformation took place before his eyes. The ring seemed to unfold and create a wristlet and an embedded gem in the palm connection.

Instinctivly, he clicked each of the gems in his palms with the same hands index finger and the magic was activated. The gems glowed slightly creating just enough shadow to begin. Shadow and light hand in hand flickering back and forth in the torchlight of the city.

Pulling one a matchstick out of his bag of holding, Zev put it between his teeth and slipped it to the side of his mouth.

With a suble and quick flip of his hair he activated the matchstick, a puppeteering tool of his own devising.

Two simaltanious clicks of the gems in his plams, activated the power of the Control Rings.

Five shadows filiments shot out of Zev; two from each ring and one from his matchstick.

After a moment of stuggle Zev has five Orc soldiers escorting thgem to the city keep to meet the Chief directly.

As insurance, neither of them trust the Orcs and don’t think Diplomacy will be taken seriously. In which case they wold have to escape fast.

Zev given Kit the matchstick. She puts it into her mouth like Zev had done. He laughed. She grimaced, smiled and just dit it.

He told her just as they were about to enter the keep that they matchstick only need be held or on her person to work. She put it in her hat and winked.

After Kit almost gets them into a brawl with 5

Chapter W: Dipolomat-Shiplomat

Zev and Kit enter the city after some small molestations from locals.

They make their way tot the Orc Chief to deliever the diplomatic poiuch.

The Orc has someone read it to him.

He rejects it angrily and kills the reader.

Zev and Kit begin to back out of the room when the Orc chief’s expression changes from anger to greed.

Quest:

A new source of power has been noticed. Find and take control of this new and powerful mystery.

Kit leaves as the chief orders a large contingent to find the source of power.

Chapter T:

Zev had already been in The Land for seven years.

His first days, like many other Chaos Seeds, were non-trival.

In the first week, Zev had died and respawned three times; each death teaching a lesson about The Land and its inhabitants.

It was only a few years later when he got his first Mark.

*Mark:*

*“Suicide is Painful” –*

*Status*

*Name: Zev Roka*

*Race: Strand/???*

*Alignment: ???/+5 Chaos*

*Profession:*

*Specialty:*

*Abilityies:*

*Skills:*

*Talents:*

*Marks:*

Chapter Y: Time to Return

The voice relayed the repercussions of the demons averice.

Zev and Ricther are given the joint quest to return to the Mist Village.

A time locked portal map is rewarded. Additionally, a single-use compass-like object was given to Richter.

Chapter N: Bloodbath

The caverns were full of Werms. The Orcs blew through the first wave of twenty in minutes but then they kept coming. All the while the draw of Chaos became stronger. Pull them all to dive deeper into the cave system.

Battle gore.

Chapter M: The Chaos Lord

Zev stepped out of the shadows leary of this monster that had come out of nowhere.

The Chaos Lord just stood there… looking at him and stealing glances around the room.

Chapter L: Prime Time

Zev becomes Ricter’s Prime Vassal.

Zev’s previously hidden status information unlocks and unspools…

The sensation makes him first sharply inhale then exhaled in a wave of relief and exhilaration.

Quest Complete!

You have FINALLY succeeded. All status information, logs,

Reward: Your world is transformed.

Class reward: Access the sea of chaos to receive this unique item

Looking away from the screen, Zev noticed the wold looked more vibrant and when he concentrated a new popup appeared.

Advanced Concentration Activated:

At the cost of 25 mana per minute you are able to dicern “puppatable” things.

He glanced at his puppets.

Orc #1: This Orc is currently your puppet. Puppets are not intelligent and only are as good as their master at accomplishing anything.

Excited both he and Richter begin to review his information for the first time ever in The Land.

As Richter reviewed his screens his eyes grew wide and his mouth fell open. He kept reading.

Meanwhile, Zev had no idea what the sea of Chaos was but concentrating on the words in the prompt offered more information.

Would you like to access the sea of Chaos?

Yes or No?

Not knowing any better, Zev chose ‘Yes’.

Before he could say or do anything else, a dinner plate-sized tear in space opened right there. The ragged and flaring edges screamed with the static of chaos.

Take your possision.

But before Zev could do anything else he was hit directly in the forhead with an object.

“Ow!”, Zev cried unexprectedly.

The Chaotic hold closed and on the ground the item that hit Zev layed in a dirty burlap rag that had opened slightly to show an ebony flash.

Reaching down to pick up the object, he held the package in his hands. Opening the loose flap revealed eight tiny ebony gems and a note.

Zev,

Examing the gems in turn they each had the same description.

Ebony Control Gem

These gems can be used to augment an existing item.

*Puppetter*

*Shadowmancer*

*Magistrate*

*Chapter O: Wand do you want?*

*Kit can’t get out of the harbor and meets bvack up with Zev and now Ricter as they make their way tot the City vault.*

*Zev’s puppet soldiers lead the way and when they reach the Vault, they are incepted by the chief.*

*Richter kills the Chief and is awarded the city.*

*They get the wand.*

*Xuitrix falls for the trap and is simaltaniously punished for failing his portion of the quest.*

*They are compensated for the failure of the Quest giver.*

*They are given a new quest that will get them back to the Mist Village by traveling through six other portals along the way.*

*Even though Zev saved Kit’s life, She is conflicted though because he is the Magistrate of the Sea Kist village and yet he expressed no concern for the village or its diplomatic duties.*