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This is a work of fiction. Even though I have drawn heavily on myth, legend and history--past and present--all the characters and events portrayed are artistic characterizations, and any resemblance to real people or incidents are painted foremost in that vein.

<file:///home/tomccc/Desktop/1NOVELS/LSOS/contents/page3.htm>

<file:///home/tomccc/Desktop/1NOVELS/LSOS/contents/page4.htm>

<file:///home/tomccc/Desktop/1NOVELS/LSOS/contents/page5.htm>

all this injustice

got me hating on these bustas

got me waking up to faces

thinking late on these buzzards

--"Rhyme2weep" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson



"Our father has sent me here once again to ask you to come home, brother. Sumeria needs you. It is not honorable for you to continue here among the vermin, drinking and marrying, while the heavy burden of Sumeria's very survival rest almost solely on the supreme One's over burdened shoulders."

Nimrod looked at his younger brother with an odd mixture of delight, surprise and a tinge of disapproval. It has been over twenty seasons since he'd last seen his redheaded sibling.

Azazel was just a boy of six summers, when he turned his back on the city and states built by their father to go forth and live among the people he privately called WoMans. He was glad to see his brother after all the time that has passed, still he chafed at hearing Azazel call the little people vermin. And the reasons for that were many.

All Sumerians, he well knew, referred to the little people of the Lowlands as vermin, or sometimes, chattel, but Nimrod had not been among his own people for so long he had forgotten the sound of the word. His ears once took in that sound like his lungs took in air, but now it resounded to him every bit the ugly foulness that it was. If Azazel thought to accomplish more than all the others who had come before him, he couldn't have started off on a worse footing. With one word he had brought rushing back to Nimrod's mind everything he had left Sumeria for.

Nimrod, publicly, called the little people "Halfhighs" because most of them were little more than half the height of the average Sumerian. Some of them, he called wife, son and daughter, and he knew Azazel had to have been made aware of that. But maybe the boy forgot his manners to the subconscious mind of habit.

Anyway, it was still a joy to see the whelp, but he could not help wondering what new thing young Azazel expected to achieve. He had been through this before with others from Sumeria and his response had always, and always will be the same.

Nothing can save Sumeria. The 'Shining City' had been built on the bones, blood, and toil of untold millions of Innocents. It was an abomination in the face of all in the universe that is right, good and just; a cruel, grotesque monument to an insane Magician's lust to play at being Creator. He had no intentions of returning to Ur to help Onanes prop of his illusion for a little while longer. Better the Giants go quietly and swiftly than thrashing about, prolonging the misery for everyone.

The Giants of Sumeria has lorded over the earth since time unknown. They were his people but he never knew them until he was seventeen seasons old. When he finally met their acquaintance, all he ever wanted more to do with them, was to crush them off the backs of the little people.

He had fallen into a deep depression, he discovered that everything he ever believed to be right, good and true in the world were nothing but spokes, in a giant wheel of deception, lies and illusions. He had been stripped of his anchor to reality, learned things about all that he trusted and loved more than life itself that left him hating life, and himself, for being such a naive dupe of evil.

He thought the darkness that had fallen over his once bright, carefree world was never going to end because each new day, every investigation into the truth, only lead to more disillusionment and more mental anguish. He was young, and had no one to talk to about his feelings because in all Sumeria, he felt like he was the only thing that was real, the only one who

could see beyond the glitter and pretensions, into the real core of what Onanes had built.

Then one day, a strange old man suddenly appeared in the high city.

He was born of the Giants, but none in the shining city knew him as father or grandfather. More strangely than even that, Onanes had avoided the newcomer like the plague, even though the gnarled finger the old man pointed at Sumeria was aimed most of all at the great Sorcerer who had created it all.

Nimrod was eighteen seasons old when he first heard the prophecies of the one in Sumeria the Giants called "old Lunatic." The despised one's real name was Sungodyus. He was toothless, bent and possessed of a deep, booming voice that belonged with a far bigger man. The rest of the Giants hated him for what he had to say with such annoying volume, but the man's words struck a chord deep in Nimrod's heart at a point in his life when he desperately needed affirmation that the things he was seeing and feeling about Sumeria wasn't isolated to him and just born of one rare incident. No, it wasn't an anomaly, this great wrong that he experienced and sensed in Onanes' world, it was the real Sumeria, and Sungodyus' message had finally given reality to what he thought no one but he could see.

He became a student of the old prophet and for two years sat devoted at his feet despite the fact that those bloody and scarred feet were ever without boots or sandals, and any other Sumerian would have found the old pauper, whose tattered clothes and unkempt hair, which had twisted into thick ropes that hung shamefully past the length of the glory of most women--, too contemptible to spit on, much less, look up to as a mentor. But to Nimrod, a beloved mentor was exactly what Sungodyus the "lunatic" became.

Nimrod had once offered the homeless man everything afforded the son of the richest Sorcerer on earth and the old Sage had not just refused his heartfelt proffer, he aggressively accused Nimrod of being a stumbling

stone in his path.

Nimrod hated with a passion to see the prophet getting thinner and more bent every day. He hated to see the battered feet and angry bruises that yet another attack from the Giants of Sumeria, had inflicted on the weak old man. Many a day, in the beginning, he wanted to fight and avenge Sungodyus for all the pain and shame, the Giants heaped upon his head. He had transferred all the love and reverence he lost for Onanes and Sumeria, unto Sungodyus. Then he began to notice that Sungodyus reveled in his treatment as he traveled up and down the length of Sumeria, subsisting on nothing but ridicule, abuse, and the grubs and sparse offering, freely taken of the earth. The worse the assaults, the louder and more animated Sungodyus performed in his speeches, and the harder he attacked Nimrod for his pity and concern.

It was Sungodyus, who taught Nimrod how to understand and live with his growing ability to see and do things no normal man could. When it became clear to Nimrod that his beloved teacher was dying, he had risked again being painfully chastised by trying to help the old man. He had by then, made up his mind to leave Sumeria to live among the Halfhighs. He wanted Sungodyus to come with him, into the comfort of his care and away from all the hate and abuse, which was all he ever got from the Giants of Sumeria. Sungodyus, again refused him, this time with less vigor, saying only that he was sent to preach to the doomed, not the blessed. Like a lot of things Sungodyus said, which Nimrod didn't understand until later, he didn't know, then, what Sungodyus meant by calling the Halfhighs blessed. If the little people were blessed, he couldn't begin to imagine what a curse on them would be like.

Three days after that conversation Sungodyus died, but not of the old age, and poor health that was a clear harbinger of his immediate future, it was to the wrath and stones of the Giants, who had finally reached their fill of his incessant disturbance, that Nimrod's beloved teacher lost his life.

Three weeks after Sungodyus' death, Nimrod left Sumeria for good. He was twenty summers old, thrice married, a father of one, and as he set out

for the Lowlands with nothing but a pack on his back-- determined never to return--, he was also alone.

Nimrod never did sort out in his mind how much his mentor's stoning had on his decision to leave Sumeria, to live with the Halfhighs. He intended to abandon Onanes' city on a hill, even before the murder of the prophet, but to link his fate with the Halfhighs meant more than just breaking all ties with the high city, much more. He had a vision of himself, leading the Halfhighs in an attack on the gates of Sumeria. He knew that was his destiny. He hadn't quite reconciled himself with it yet, but the one thing he did know was that even if he resisted helping the little people destroy Sumeria, he wasn't going to help Onanes destroy the little people.

Sungodyus' cruel death was a factor in his decision to leave his father's creation, but it was only one of many, and maybe not even the most prominent one. He and Sungodyus had more in common than just the ability to see through Onanes' illusion; they both could see, and feel the energy building against Sumeria. The great will of creation, had determined Sumeria's fate. Sungodyus had his role in fulfilling what was destined. So did Nimrod.

Weeks before his death, Nimrod had witnessed Sungodyus, glowing with the atoms of the will of creation, as he pronounced a terrible curse on the Giants of Sumeria. It was then that he understood why Sungodyus had lived out his waning years in such a state of self-denial and hardship. He did not curse the Giants out of anger, or from a spirit of vengeance at how they treated him; he was announcing the desires of creation. He was compelled to give voice to terrible things and the more the Giants mistreated him, the easier it made it for him to live with being a prophet of such horrible judgment and doom.

Sungodyus was just the first harbinger of the bad news regarding the future of the Giants, for soon after his curse, the skies began to foretell more of the fate that awaited the lords of the earth.

When heaven is hell and the devil is god

There's nothing to sell and nothing to lose

And nothing to save you but the love in your heart

And the space in the world where you wanna pay dues

--"Towerofbabel" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson



As much as he would have liked to believe that Azazel had sought this reunion of his own free will, Nimrod knew that his young brother had only come to his home because of his reverence for their father, and not out of any kind of desire to reconnect with him. This was evident on the face of the one Nimrod only had pictures in his mind of as a small child. His brother was neither small nor a child any longer even though despite his great height and size, it was clear to see he was still very young in more ways than just his sparsely seasoned age. His flame-colored hair fell long to his shoulders and his beard was thick and full. His eyes were filled with rage and his hands were curled into the tight, angry fists of a petulant child. This was what had amused Nimrod upon first seeing his brother; the balled fists and building rage, yet the great internal struggle to hold himself still, which made him look somewhat like a constipated corpse.

"If you are happy to see me after so long a time, brother, your face does nothing to reveal it."

These words brought a harsh, choking laugh from the younger Giant,

"Why, of all people, should I be glad to see you; a traitor who chooses to live among those who are not worthy to lick the dust from the soles of my feet?"

"Is that how you think of me?" And now Nimrod set his gaze intensely on the face of the sibling he had not seen for so very long, his own brown

eyes searching for something that could connect them, something that could make him feel that his brother had not grown to become simply another Sumerian shell, with thoughts, or passion for nothing but their own bellies, and groveling before Onanes.

"It is what we all think of you."

Nimrod looked quickly away saying, "Then why have you bothered to travel so far?"

"You know very well why I have come so far, or have you lived so long among these chattel, that you have finally come to be as unthinking as they?"

"You're right. I know only too well what it is that has brought you here."

Yes, he knew that Onanes, having been shown the fate of Sumeria in the same skies that covered them all, now sought the aide of his eldest son in what could only prove to be a futile attempt to ward off the inevitable. He knew what Onanes wanted from him, and surely, after all these years Onanes must know that he had absolutely no intention of returning to Sumeria. He will never return to the high city, never become a member of Onanes' Guild of ruthless magicians. Never will he use his inborn powers to work against the great will of creation.

Slowly he lifted his gaze to meet with Azazel's once more. What if he were to speak the truth to this young man standing before him now? What if he were to tell him that there was nothing he, nor Azazel, nor Onanes could do to save Sumeria now that the skies had spoken? Instead, he said, "Even if I were to return with you, it would be no boon to Onanes or Sumeria. Remember, I made a vow before leaving home. If you do not recall, surely our father has told you all about it."

"Oh, yes, the sorcerer who wishes not to be a sorcerer and as a result refuses to make use of his powers for any reason. Of course I have been told of your obvious insanity! I doubt that there is one among our people

who does not know of the shameful actions of the lost son of Sumeria. Still, you must know that a sorcerer, who performs no magic, is very much like a strong man who neglects to exercise his muscles; and, whether you like it or not, brother, you are, and ever will be, your father's son. Whether you wish it or not, your father is, and ever will be, the most powerful sorcerer ever to walk the face of the earth."

"Onanes' works has nothing to do with me."

"You fool! It has everything to do with you! It is your blood. You were born with it, and you shall die with it and, whether you like it or not, you are obligated by blood to return to the land of Our Father and stand beside me as we fight to protect all that he has created. You cannot run from obligation, brother. You cannot run from blood, you cannot run from yourself."

Nimrod recognized the truth in Azazel's words. Countless times he had attempted to deny his ability to read the moon and stars like an open book. The signs of late were terrible to behold. To see such a fate for his own people would be unbearable if he didn't know just how much the Giants are the authors of their own tragic future. Sungodyus' words were true; there was no hope for Sumeria. Creation has declared the fate of the land. He could not deny this even if he wanted to. It was, of course, the curse of the enhanced; this burden of knowing, seeing, that could never be escaped. He could not elude the telltale signs of the skies. Never will he be able to find refuge in the peaceful bliss of ignorance.

Never will he find refuge.

Oh, but he had come close--at least for a while. He knew there was no ultimate escape, but here in the land of the little people; the people whom, he had come to love, he had come close to finding the peace of mind he had lost in Sumeria. Now, Onanes, in the madness brought on by his frenzied desperation to save his illusion, has tricked himself into believing that he could somehow succeed in challenging the will of the unknowable

One. Sadly, all the rest of the Giants were so committed to Onanes' ill-fated course that they, too, were willing to carry on a pointless struggle that in the end will change nothing, but in the beginning and middle will cause immeasurable suffering for all life on earth. It was already too late for Onanes; his evil had awakened the very defenders of Creation. But it was not too late for all the Giants. If only they would open their eyes and hearts, and see Onanes' creation and their part in maintaining it, for what it is. If only they could really see themselves through the eyes of reality, instead of through Onanes' smoke and mirrors.

Deep down, all Sumerians knew that their way of life was unsustainable, a parasitic house of cards, held together by nothing but robbery, blustery and terror. Most were not as guilty as Onanes, but they were all complicit in the great crimes of their Empire because they all could see what was before their eyes no matter what kind of cloak Onanes wrapped evil and injustice in.

The Halfhighs will soon be freed of their fear of the Giants. They will break through Onanes' wall of illusion and their rage will find no solace except in the complete desolation of Sumeria. All these things Nimrod had heard in the words of his teacher Sungodyus, and seen played out over and over again in the visions that would not leave him. A storm of cosmic dimensions was gathering. The Wizards of Sumeria knew that. Now, out of anger at a world that had grown to hate and reject them for their endless, ever-escalating atrocities, they will attempt to destroy everything in their blind effort to hold back the great shifting of the will of creation.

Nimrod still found it hard to believe that he and all his kind were an aberration--a lie, the result of magician's insane megalomania.

Onanes and his chosen ones, had forced their delusions of grandeur upon the little people for so long, they had long ago forgotten who they really are--little more than members of the WoMan race, selectively bred. They had since immersed themselves in the fervent belief of their own mythos. They believed themselves to be lords, gods and masters, divinely anointed

to rule in dominion over all in the world, as they willed, but Nimrod had been shown that the search for the true heirs of the earth was not in Sumeria, but in the Lowlands; where lived the dirty, ignorant, innumerable little people.

The source that gave the Giants their divine dominion over the earth was nothing so high, as the unknowable One, but only as high as a power mad Sorcerer.

The giants wallowed in their delusions and pretensions, but they all knew that the legitimacy of their grandeur was granted only by the authority of illusion, and the thaumaturgies of Onanes, whom they all called the "supreme One", or "Our father."

For all their history, the little people believed Sumeria to be the home of the gods and had worshiped them with a fanaticism that willingly gave up babes and virgins for torture and slaughter; but the Giants' ever heightening demands and cruelties had now made their victims far more angry and rebellious than reverent.

Nimrod had seen to that.

test

chasing rainbows trying to find

something in the rumors and the signs of the time

--"Chasnrainbows" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

--"Towerofbabel" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson



Nimrod let Azazel vent what was built up inside him, even though he felt foolish standing in the doorway while Azazel buzzed at him like an angry hornet. When Azazel finally paused, and looked like he was recognizing the same awkwardness of the situation, Nimrod turned and beckoned him to come inside. He managed to keep the mirth out of his voice and off his face when he spoke, but his eyes twinkled so gaily, Azazel's own blazing eyes registered a sudden confusion that seemed to take twenty years off his face. Seeing that, Nimrod wished even more for a warmer reunion, even so, his was a soul irredeemably lost to the demons of jest. He was not beyond teasing even raging Tonbigs when the mood struck him to laugh, which was almost always.

Nimrod smiled brightly and flung the door to his home open wide. "Oh, come on in, young Azazel," he looked around, to his left, his right, behind him, "you're embarrassing me with all this public display of affection." Azazel's stony expression nearly cracked at the mouth before he faked a cough and covered it with his hand. He brushed past his brother and then stopped just inside the door, blinking as he waited for his eyes to adjust to the dimly lit surroundings.

Nimrod had no Sumerian technology in his--Azazel couldn't bring himself to call it a house-- but he did have primitive means of giving light to the place and when Azazel's eyes finally adjusted enough to see clearly, he felt a strong urge to recoil within himself, to turn quickly and flee the site of his brother's defilement. It disturbed his wall of hatred, but for some reason, he felt bad for his brother and felt a need to close his eyes to

Nimrod's shame. How could one raised at the hearth of Onanes dwell content in such a vermin nest as this? The room in which their father hung his robes was larger than Nimrod's entire dwelling, with its crude wooden floors; the furniture, except for two chairs and a table was ridiculously small, the stone walls bare and dank like a cave, bathed in ridiculous shades of yellow and orange and red, as if the painter had been a very small child attempting to capture the majesty of the sky at sunset. It was a vulgar, shameful way for a son of Sumeria to live and that moment of fleeting weakness, he felt towards Nimrod, was transformed into a deeper disgust than ever.

Azazel folded his arms tightly across the front of his chest, steeling his emotional fortress, as if creating a shield from his brother, and all else that was repugnant and foul.

Nimrod watched Azazel, straining with every bit of intestinal fortitude he had, to keep down that which was roiling inside of him, threatening him with catastrophic embarrassment, and the dishonor of insulting his guest. It didn't take much to make him erupt with spit-snorting laughter to begin with, and something about Azazel's fussy, pontifical, yet loutish, petulant, demeanor struck him as uproariously funny.

Jocularly, aside, Nimrod felt a sort of paternal pride in the boy he had once helped raise. Based on appearances, he would say, Azazel had known nothing but success in his life so far, everything came easily and abundantly to him. Providential Sumerians like Azazel don't go on supplicatory quests, *Sorcerers* like Azazel, don't even get thought of, for such lowly undertakings.

The little bundle of red hair he left behind him, when he abandoned the high city, was now a hulking, impressive specimen as far as size mattered. Nimrod had never met a man, outside of Onanes' house, who could look him in the eyes without tilting up his head, and his brother now stood shoulder to shoulder with him, if the boy didn't actually surpass him in height by a hair's width.

By his markings and attire, Nimrod could see that Azazel was a Sorcerer of the highest rank, impressive indeed, for one so young, which is why a sudden pang of deep concern suddenly put a damper on his exuberant mood. No Sumerian cur, ever humbled itself, to plead for a thing, what great plot of Onanes and his Guild of Magicians, that one of their highest member, could be persuaded to embark on what is basically a mission of supplication? What could have possibly enabled Onanes to convince this lofty, flame-haired Giant, into attempting what all the times before, was a female and child's quest?

Nimrod's Mother, Sisters, Sumerian wives, had all spent brief visits trying to lure him back to Ur--Onanes' vast compound. There was also a visit from his young son--a moment he tried to block out of his mind. Now stood his first adult male, and he a Sorcerer of the highest cloth--a man it did not take the sight of a seer to see was as full of pride, as he was of muscle, and hostility.

Onanes was up to something, and whatever it is has to be big--very big, which means the Halfhighs are in grave danger. It was always the little people who suffered the price for Onanes' glory and Sumeria's supremacy. The slaughter and torment of WoMankind is the only payment Onanes' reluctant benefactors accepted.

i don't wanna take a chance with you

say the wrong thing and make the wrong move

- "Oleskool" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson



At forty-three seasons, Nimrod was in the prime of his life. Azazel, at twenty-four, had barely entered onto the threshold of manhood. By Sumerian standards he was still more boy than man; and, Nimrod thought, much too young to be weighted down by the thick, pure gold that adorned his neck, wrists and fingers. He was clothed in the attire of a peaceful visitor though from his demeanor, he may as well have been painted and dressed for battle. The blazing blue, silk robe he wore was accented with real diamonds, crushed and sewn into the image of bright shimmering stars. As much as Azazel was repelled by Nimrod's sparseness, Nimrod was equally put off by his young brother's extravagance. It was just another example of the wrong that defined Sumeria. People in the Lowlands regularly starved to death and frequently went to bed hungry, yet a 24 year old whelp from Sumeria walks around with enough wealth on his small finger, to feed a thousand Halfhighs for a season's length. Nimrod thought about how, for Centuries the Giants had enslaved and robbed the Halfhighs, and then when they didn't need them anymore, had set them free with nothing but a legacy of broken families, brutality, and ingrained dependency. He thought of how Onanes had taught the Halfhighs to worship him and his illusion, stripped them of their inner spirituality, and then had shown them that what they believed to be their god and creator, considered them to be worth nothing.

The little people of the Lowlands, as a rule, led rough, brutal lives and most did not live very long before succumbing to the violence, poverty, stress and exhaustion that haunted them from the moment of birth. Sumerians by contrast, lived for centuries and it was not uncommon to meet old Giants who had seen ten thousand winters pass. Onanes--the

great Sorcerer-- was said to be as old as WoMankind, the first Man-creature ever born on earth. All any Sumerian could say for sure about Onanes' age was that before even their oldest, grandfathers' father, there was Onanes.

No one but Nimrod had any firsthand knowledge, of Onanes' life. Nimrod knew of the woman who gave birth to the first man born after the "Great Devastation." He was the only soul living in the flesh that did know of such ancient history. Onanes has never told the truth of his origins, so neither the Giants, nor the Halfhighs knew who they, or Onanes truly were, or whom, they truly sprang from. Nimrod knew. That's why he felt no real sense of betraying his kind by linking his fate with the Halfhighs. He was not betraying his blood; he was just defending the less irredeemable half of it.

Onanes was older than the hills of Erech; a boy tossing ice when the tallest mountains of Arrata were mere snowballs. Azazel, by comparison, was newer than Nimrod's first pair of man-size boots. The flame-head's manner and demeanor however, was that of an old graybeard. Looking at him, kept that threatening explosion of mirth, bubbling barely containable at the surface of Nimrod's lips. He didn't want to laugh at Azazel. The boy was mad enough at him already.

"Sit down and relax, young Azazel." Nimrod motioned to his favorite chair--one of only two in the house big enough to accommodate one born of the Giants. "All that I have, I gladly offer to thee, my eyes rejoices to see you again after so many years. I--;"

"Why do you continue to ignore the supreme One's summons when you know the great urgency of all that is at hand?" Azazel snapped his question with startling venom, his voice unnaturally high with the strain of the anger he fought so very hard to contain. Before Nimrod could reply, there came the sound of swiftly approaching steps and entering the room was a small woman--one Azazel would call vermin-- and a young, but much taller girl close on her heels. Each of these carried a wooden tray, painted white, with autumn leaves adornments, laden with cool drinks and

choice morsels they had prepared. The woman planted herself exactly halfway between Nimrod and Azazel. Nimrod almost did laugh aloud at his Halfhigh wife, wondering how she managed it without first taking measure.

in so many wordz

how can i say

how can i tell you how much you mean to me

when i love you more everyday

- "somanywordz" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Azazel sized the little female up swiftly with his gray-blues eyes. She had the curvaceous figure of a female in her full maturity, though in Sumeria one would have to look at her up close to see she was not a stunted dwarf. Her figure was in perfect proportion; her breasts were firm, rising mounds beneath her lavish white gown which was of the same cloth as his own attire. The complexion of her skin was only a little darker than his own, her hair a thick mass of light brown curls, streaked with gold. The curls, she had pinned atop her head, setting her high cheekbones and kittenish chin on full display. Azazel noticed to his surprise, considering the poorness of the rest of Nimrod's wretched place, that a bracelet around the female's left ankle was adorned with green emerald stones, and the band she wore around her middle finger was of pure, white gold. The most striking thing of all to him, was the way she carried herself, head high, shoulders squared, eyes open and direct, like a-- Azazel was taken aback by just how much she looked like a highborn, Sumerian lady. He had never seen a vermin female with her hair so carefully combed and her eyes lifted. The little shaven-head, vermin, slaves in Sumeria would never dare lift their necks, and neither would they indulge in such vanity regarding their appearance, or own such finery to show off in. The few wild vermin he had glimpsed on his way to Nimrod's home were filthy, dirty little rodents fleeing into the brush as he passed on his mount.

Azazel shifted his examination to the girl who had entered the room with the woman. She had obviously seen only thirteen or fourteen seasons and

had no curves or mounds. She imaged the same wide eyes of the woman, though her pupils were green instead of brown. She had the woman's deeply set dimples, her face differed from the woman, mainly in her lips, which was all the difference in the world, the girl's lips were indescribable, soft, full, beckoning, like an object of irresistible enchantment. She had the same glorious head of hair as her mother, only darker, her skin was also darker than the woman's, a delectable brown color, like something edible, so smooth and unblemished, he had a disturbing thought of what it would taste like if he licked the girl's arm. In height and weight, she was the proper size of the typical Sumerian child of the same age and body type, and Azazel felt, as he gazed from mother to child-- to the one, whom he once shared a hearth, the sickly, sweet bile of realization. Yes, yes, of course. He had been told of this gross dishonor to the house of Onanes. The vermin female was his brother's wife; the girl was his brother's own child.

The little woman stood proudly and boldly before Azazel and he felt rise within him, more than a little of the hunter's bloodlust. He did not really wish to bring her harm, for he was not of that segment of Giants who derived pleasure from raping and killing the vermin. He would never speak such blasphemy aloud; but there was a part of him that thought that perhaps the vermin were not such lowly beasts as he had been taught. Perhaps they were not capable of building great cities, or reaching the superior condition and intellectual heights of Sumerians, but they accomplished things in their own primitive world that made it hard for someone as intellectually honest as he to believe *all* Onanes teachings concerning them.

Onanes taught all Sumerians to hate the vermin. He forbade any civilized contact with them, he forbade marriage with them, he forbade, worship, commerce, and any kind of interaction with them at all, except if it were violent or demeaning, or senselessly cruel. It did not seem to bother the supreme One that it was common for men to hunt the vermin like one chased a wild boar. Killing the vermin was something that some Giants saw as a divine obligation because of what Onanes taught and because of

the shroud of legitimacy Onanes' mystical approval wrapped over their own lust to do evil. Azazel was certain that there were other Sumerians who, like him, felt that treating the vermin so callously cruel was wrong, but he tried not to give the subject very much thought. The supreme One all but sanctioned the mistreatment of the vermin, so it couldn't be that wrong, and who was he to question the wisdom and ways of the Most high? And yet his brother's wife,-- a vermin--, stood before him now, looking so much like his own mother and sisters, he was close to the blasphemy of thinking Onanes wrong, if not a blatant liar.

He could not look upon the woman and the girl without being overwhelmed by a wide variation of emotions all at once.

There was the anger he felt in seeing that Nimrod, his brother, had defied the supreme One yet again, by bringing into existence a thing he sensed, could crumble the entire Sumerian world. Who of honest intellect, in Sumeria, would ever be able to look at the girl and think of the vermin as unthinking beasts again? The girl is Sumerian. *Curse Nimrod!* Now he knew why the wise one forbade contact with the vermin. He saw the evidence of the great one's unmatched foresight and wisdom in the girl's wide green eyes, her long, curly hair, and her light bronze skin. The girl was not only beautiful, hers was unmatched by the highest paid courtesans in all Sumeria. This while nature has yet to give her the full array of charms due her. Who in all creation can hate a thing of beauty?

He was concerned about what the presence of such Halflings would do the psyche of the average Sumerian. Most of all he was afraid of what it would do to himself. Already he was planning in his mind to speak to the supreme One about putting a halt to the hunting of the vermin for sport. At the same time, he knew that ultimately the final question will be; who would survive to fill the universe: the Sumerians or the vermin? Onanes has longed preached that the two could not survive the future together. This had never really ringed true to Azazel until today. He had discovered this day, in the face of the daughter of Nimrod, that the supreme One is never wrong.

He still could not resist admiring the little woman who had placed herself between him and his brother. He knew of the fear the sight of Giants intensely filled the vermin with--especially the females. Who hasn't heard of vermin females who are routinely raped to death by men more than twice their size? Yet, the tiny creature stands before him as if she would protect Nimrod from the strength of Azazel's right arm. Azazel both loathed and admired her. Loathe; because that's what he was taught to feel for the vermin. Admired; because it was what he truly felt for this particular one. That was until she opened her mouth...

"Since you showed no signs of keeping our custom of offering refreshments to a guest on arrival, I thought I'd better act before you set a precedent that would lead to the total breakdown of Oman society."

"Omans," is what Onanes magically named the little people of the Lowlands because he said they were beasts --spiritually connected to a beast--the woman. His chosen seed, the Giants, he named "Humans" because he said they were spiritually connected, not to the filthy woman, but to him. They were his seed, his own creation; the seed of first man--the sons of god.

The woman's tone was impudent and lacking all proper humility. Azazel hated Nimrod; even so, Nimrod was still a Sumerian--a Sumerian man. The woman could not have disrespected his brother more if she had kissed a lover in front of him. Talking to him in such a tone, before another Sumerian man was worse. Azazel felt deeply insulted on his, *and* his brother's behalf. For the first time since he'd arrived at Nimrod's door he looked at his older brother with a gaze other than one of loathing and displeasure. He searched his brother's eyes to share with him a common expression of indignation. The utter glee he saw on Nimrod's black face nearly sent him into a spasm of fury. *If Nimrod cared not for his own honor it was unSumerian to leave unconsidered the honor of a guest!* The woman should be chastised! In Sumeria any man who owned her would beat her severely. His ridiculous brother stands there with his eyeballs dancing like beads of water on a hot plate. Nimrod had not only turned his

back on his father, land and people, he has shed everything about himself that was Sumerian like a snake shedding old skin...Shedding *him*. Azazel felt the long ago, agony of Nimrod abandoning him with renewed intensity, and his hatred for his sibling leaped to new heights.

Seemingly blind to the look of utter fury on Azazel's face, Nimrod's wife chattered gaily on, saying, "And too, your precocious daughter would be plaguing me still had I not agreed to let her show herself before her father's brother."

Nimrod looked gape-mouthed at his wife. He wondered how she and their daughter knew Azazel was his brother. They might have heard Azazel address him as such, but it was unlikely. Nimrod's house was massive, by any other standard than Onanes' humongous castle, which sprawled over nearly half a mile. Azazel was standing outside the door when he called Nimrod 'brother.' He and Azazel certainly didn't look alike except in height. He was still heftier than his young brother, but judging from the width of Azazel's shoulders, that was a thing certain to change in time.

Nimrod's hair was black and curled tightly to his scalp; his eyes were dark brown, his nose wide with nostrils that flared like the wings of an eagle prepared for flight. His lips were full and finely etched.

Azazel looked as if he was purposely designed to be Nimrod's direct opposite, straight hair, long thin nose, and formless lips.

There was a small mole at the corner of Nimrod's left eye, a spray of freckles across Azazel's cheeks, but the most striking difference between the two brothers was their skin color. While Azazel's skin was pale, freckled and most times blotched red, Nimrod's was smooth and very dark, like black silk pulled tautly over well defined muscle, glowing with a brilliant blue sheen that made him appear to shine with the glory of the heavens. Yet, these two were indeed brothers, not mere hearth brothers, but brothers born of the same father. Their immediate father was not Onanes, but Onanes was the father, of their father, and the only male parent either of them had ever known. They were far from being the only

products of the seed of Onanes. Onanes was directly and indirectly the father of all WoManbeings, including the Halfhighs. What made Nimrod and Azazel close brothers was not the sameness of the blood that flowed through their veins, but the fact that of all the seeds of Onanes, they were the only two raised by Onanes' hearth. The sprawling compound was full of people; wives, concubines, slaves, sycophants and Sorcerers, but Onanes had never taken in any children save Nimrod and Azazel.

Onanes had searched many years for what he found in those two. The old Sorcerer had wept with joy when Nimrod was born - or so he was told. Nimrod could not imagine the cold Onanes weeping over anything.

By the time Azazel was born, Nimrod had already long dampened the fire of enthusiasm that had once burned brightly within the great wizard at the time of his birth. Nimrod was very disappointing for Onanes' purpose. He refused to learn the language of the Dead Ones, for even as a very small boy, he had sensed the great hatred and anger the Dead Ones had for the race of men and women. He sensed that all their works were toward the destruction of WoMankind. He did not want to be a sorcerer empowered by them. Onanes' frustration at Nimrod's obstinacy always stopped just short of murderous rage. Nimrod knew how desperately Onanes wanted him to learn the language of the Dead Ones. He was not willfully defiant. As a boy, he wanted nothing more than to please his father, but Onanes wanted to possess his soul--to make him his creature. His soul was already taken. The unknowable One had touched him early--possibly in the womb. A woman--Onanes' mother--was his guiding spirit. He never told Onanes about these things. He knew Onanes hated anyone to put anything before him. If Onanes knew his own mother spoke to him everyday, Nimrod sensed the old Sorcerer would have tried to kill him.

Nimrod lost a lot of attention when Azazel was born. It was the best day of his life. He began to feel freer than he ever had since he was born. With Onanes' milky, all seeing eyes directed elsewhere instead of on him constantly, he had space to think things over in his mind. He did not know if Onanes could read minds, but the great Sorcerer did have a keen sense

that was almost as potent, Onanes could *feel* betrayal and dissent. Nimrod had witnessed this power of Onanes to sense dissension more than once. Of course, the great Sorcerer knew Nimrod was in subtle rebellion against him, but Nimrod always made sure that his thoughts of leaving Sumeria were cloaked by the only bit of his inborn powers he was willing to use.

Nimrod was not at all sure how his first wife knew Azazel was of his immediate blood, but he did intend to question her on the matter as soon as they were able to find a moment to themselves. It was a true mystery, because the Halfhighs did not breed in the diversity of colors common among most Sumerian couples. The Halfhighs have been so fractured, and inbreeding for so long, one type of Halfhigh, rarely, if ever gave birth to one not of the color and physical makeup of It's parents. The Giants of Sumeria were never a people divided by appearances. The static Sumerians--products of Onanes and his diverse, meticulously chosen wives --retained that original, scrambled gene pool that forged Onanes earliest Ancestors. It was no oddity, or matter of curiosity, for a woman of Azazel's coloring to give birth to a babe of Nimrod's hue, or vice versa. A Sumerian may well have surmised that Nimrod and Azazel were close brothers based upon the fact that they were two, of the three tallest men on earth, or by the similar width of their broad shoulders. For an Oman to come to such a conclusion was a mark of an enhanced thought process that intrigued Nimrod. It was something of foresight--of the power.

Nimrod had a half dozen Oman wives. Tonight was not his first wife's turn to share his bed. Neither of them was as excited about it as they used to be, when it *was* her turn. Seeing the little woman standing there so boldly before the menacing Azazel, when he knew her heart was surely threatening to burst from anxiety, excited him in a way not even his newest and most passionate mate could manage.

There were no Oman customs as such, though he would never call his wife a liar. The Omans have certain codes regarding respect and honor, but they lived too harsh an existence to give much thought to the more mundane aspects of civilization. She actually thought to protect him from Azazel.

He had taken her for granted too much, for too long. Maybe it was time to stop taking in new wives. Maybe he had too many already. He loved all his wives, but this day he regretted that he was taking from her by dividing his love among many. He was teaching the Halfhighs new ways of living. Maybe there was something unheard of in Onanes' world, that he should teach the little people regarding male and female relationships.

you're my money, you're my pot of gold

you're my ship come, in you're my silly dreams

you're my highest high, you're my rainbow

And your love is all the heaven I need

--"chasnrainbows" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

As both Nimrod and Azazel surmised, the fear within Arnutha was great, but she was determined to keep this hidden from those around her. She heard true hatred and malice in the Giant's tone when the flame-head's voice rose. The fear of such venom directed at her husband far surpassed any fear she had, of the red-headed god, or anything else.

Her husband took everything too lightly. She had witnessed men of her clan, gutted, like gaped-mouth fish, for being a fraction too late in recognizing a threat directed at them. Nothing ever threatened her husband because he was so big and strong. Nimrod was not used to challenges; he would not recognize grave danger if it came at him with the speed of a shellbit until it was too late.

She felt she had nothing to lose in standing up to the flame-haired Giant. She lived to be beside Nimrod and to be loved by him; if anything were to take him away from her she felt her life would be worthless, meaningless.

Like most lowborn, Oman females, the best she could expect from life was to be the breeding sow of a man who hopefully wouldn't treat her too brutally. The Omans knew no other way, or reality, but what the Sumerian gods had thrust so violently upon them. Because the Sumerian gods has for so long treated them as if their lives, and existence was meaningless and without value, it was the only way they could see themselves; for how could the realities and ways of the gods be wrong?

Arnutha's world had been awash with rape, murder, slavery and great cruelty, since time unknown, and it had been long accepted by the Oman race, as how things will always be. Then one day, there came to the Lowlands, the black giant from the high place. Nimrod was a high one

from the shining city, who gave the Oman people, and her, a glimpse of a different reality. Nimrod was good and fair and kind, and because of this, she came to revere him in a way she would have never conceded to the other gods. Despite her diminutive size, she was fearless in her devotion to her husband.

Like all Oman females, and other small, hunted creatures of nature, she had, over the years, developed a sixth sense that alerted her immediately when danger was near. The Oman female is always prepared to flee no matter what she's doing. Arnutha sensed a threat to her husband in the angry figure of Azazel, but she had no intention of leaving her gullible husband to face it alone. Standing between the two Giants, even as she plowed forward in the task of creating bright, rambling conversation simply for conversation's sake, she recalled the time when she and Nimrod first met...

It was she who sought to find him.

Insanity?

Her mother had died believing so, as had her father and every other member of her clan who passed before Nimrod had grown to be such a much loved figure to the Oman people.

Alone, she had gone to the Red Forest in search of him. Once she found his beaten path, it was as easy to track him, as a herd of Tonbigs. But she was going to him. She had not expected him to come to her. It terrified her when she heard him thrashing towards her a short while after she entered the dark woods. Blindly and panicked, she fled, suddenly terrified of coming across a snakeman, HuRex, or some equally terrifying monster, maybe even one of the murderous wild men who roamed the outskirts of most villages.

She had heard the tales of the black Giant who had come to the Lowlands and never left. She heard that he lived alone on the other side of the Red Forest. She heard that he did not murder or rape or loot, or hold anyone as

a slave. Instead, he hunted and killed the vicious Monsters that terrorized the Oman people; freed many of the people from the cruel task-masters who enslaved them; mediated disputes and stopped clan wars wherever he went. Wherever he appeared in the Lowlands, they say peace and justice followed. She'd also heard that he stopped the Shamans from forcing people to worship the gods by their whims; that he brought a halt to the ritualistic sacrificing of men, women and children, and the forced extradition of people, to the shining city, as tribute to the lords, within. She'd heard that already, he had enlightened, and given many of her people the gift of logic and had taught them to build houses, like those in which the Giants lived; houses made of logs and mortar and great stones, rather than the sticks, leaves, and mud, that made up all the dwellings in the Lowlands. This is what excited her most...the permanent villages. Though her own Clan remained a largely nomadic bunch, migrating with the changing of seasons, she had witnessed some of these places where the people stayed in one place throughout all the warm and cold months. She longed to one day live in such a wonderful place; to live in a log or stone house that lasted forever. She heard a lot of things about the black Giant. Of all of it, the one thing that stuck most in her mind was that he lived alone.

She had never before, ventured into the depths of the Red Forest. There were too many fearsome Monsters--Rexes, Dragons, Tonbigs, Ograpes, and Snakemen. The trees were broad and towering, with their leaves and outermost branches so fiercely intertwined, that not a single ray of sunshine infiltrated their mighty stand against the intrusion of the light. Inside the Red Forest, it was everlasting night, and every bit as full of danger as its foreboding atmosphere promised. There were always loud, terrifying screams, always something dying in protest and agony. No Oman ever entered the red forest alone. None, but the Outlaws, entered at all, except during harvest time when people needed to gather enough vegetation to last through the winter months. Even then, the people only entered the dark woods in large parties, protected by vigilant warriors with knives, swords and spears.

To find the black Giant, she had not only entered alone, into a nightmarish world where death sat patiently waiting at every turn, she had gone there knowing that on the other side, there lived, in the fullest manifestation, the persona of the nightmares of all Omans. The people worshiped the Giants, but they feared them, far more.

She had always been desperate to escape the life that awaited her as an Oman female. There were even times when she thought she preferred death, but those times were in her darkest moments. She did not really wish to die; she was simply convinced that to live a life of constant fear, in an universe filled with cruel, demanding gods, who offered no protection, or hope for a better existence, was another kind of death in and of itself.

They said the black Giant, brought salvation and aide to her people. They said that he freed slaves and sought to end the mistreatment of women and children. They said he had eyes that shone brighter than the stars and a smile that made his face appear to glow brighter than the sun. They said he had a laugh, which sounded louder than rolling thunder, and a kind heart that was bigger than the widest ocean.

They said he lived alone.

She had always been bolder than it was safe for a woman to be. Her mother had warned her that unless she learned the ways of a real woman, she would never find a man to take her under the protection of his hearth and right arm. Her lack of proper submission before men and gods would make her no man's wife and every man's prey. Men had no use for a woman who refused to respect men, or the gods they represented. She had already suffered many beatings at the hands of her brothers and father, not just out of anger, but out of fear of what would become of her if she were not broken of those bat-bit ways she had, that caused women to mumble and shake their heads in quiet distaste, and made men wish either to destroy her physically or conquer her sexually. Yet, she could not be broken, not through threats, nor fists, nor frightened pleadings issued behind tightly closed doors.

She was twenty seasons old, the year she first sought out the Giant, an age when most Oman females had born many children and were closer to the toothless than the unused, as she was. She was beautiful, her face without line or wrinkle, her eyes clear and unsettling bright. Men wanted her. Some tried to persuade her. Some took her against her will. None convinced her. She fought. It was a thing so shocking to the Oman male, mind-set, she knew her wild abandonment to fury was the only reason she survived her fights with men. They thought her bat-bit, or possessed by spirits, and it was not long before word was spread that it was not worth the trouble to bother her. But she was not naive; she knew that her hard won peace would not last long. Soon she would be thrown out of her father's house and forced to allow herself to be taken by a man in exchange for food and housing and protection.

When she began her journey into the Red Forest, she felt as one in a dream. She didn't want to die and something inside her assured her that she would not; that inside these dark woods, there waited something glorious and wonderful and new, something meant only for her. She felt that this - her journey into the forest, her fascination with the black god, were predestined, a path that had been plotted out long before her birth. For the first time in her twenty years, she felt that her life had meaning and purpose.

She did not know what she expected to happen if she found him. Every Oman knew of ripped and broken women and men who were accosted by the Giants. She has seen Giants. She has seen the rods of many Oman men. She has imagined the phalluses of the Giants. Reality most likely would not equal her imagination. She had nightmares of being raped to death by huge Sumerian phalluses since she was a girl. Every Oman female lived with the same fear and had the same nightmares.

They say he was big even for a Lord of Sumeria--the biggest man in the world. She will find the black Sumerian and see for herself. She did not know if she would live or die. All she knew was she wanted to be taken like a wife by the Giant they called Marduk.

The first time they could have met, she fled. She did not look back. She knew it was he. She wanted to stop and face him, but instead she did not stop running until she was almost back to her Clan's Hold. That night she slept in a cold, damp cave on the edge of her people's village. Soon after falling asleep, she dreamed about the black god from the high place. She awoke the next morning more determined than ever to face him no matter what happened to her. She groomed herself the best she could and began retracing her steps of the day before.

She heard him long before she saw him. It was early in the day. The sun gave no light to her path but even monsters sleep and the lack of screams gave her ears as much sight as her eyes. For some reason he was walking about, heading towards one of the new permanent villages. She stood directly in his path and waited.

Listening to him whistling and tromping about, it occurred to her, that he moved and tread upon the earth as if nothing in the universe could harm him. For one who lived with fear as a constant companion, every single moment of her life, it was fascinating to listen to him as he stomped so noisily toward her. The whistling sound he made was so pure and clear; she forgot all her fear and stood listening, trembling with excitement. The evidence of his fearlessness thrilled her. Even the three-headed lion had enemies to be wary of. No lone creature she knew of moved on the earth with such ruckus.

Nothing could have prepared her for the shock she felt when he first came into view. She had seen many Giants in her lifetime but none so pleasant to the eyes as the one who stood before her now, eyes wide in surprise at the sight of her, sweet whistle dying abruptly on his lips. He looked so comical and harmless in his confusion, it was the one thing that kept her rooted to her spot. Where was the ferociousness--the cruel eyes, the imperious demeanor? The biggest man in the world was the least threatening creature she had ever come across. The eyes housed a gaze so gentle, she actually began to feel herself the bolder of the two of them, even though he stood well over twice her 5 foot height and was broader

than three of the biggest men in her clan side-by-side.

She watched as he raised both palms of his big hands and took several steps backward. She knew he thought her frozen with fear and she laughed inwardly at the growing concern on his face when she did not run at the opportunity offered by his retreat. He waited, watching her, head cocked to the side, and when she made no move to turn from him; he slowly bent his mighty frame towards her level. "You hurt?" He spoke in the Oman tongue, but his voice was so deep and booming, she did not immediately understand him. A heavy silence passed between them before he tried again and this time, she heard him clearly. It was then, that she knew for certain she had nothing to fear from the Giant, and that she knew she would never leave his side even if she had to sleep outside his door like a dog. She decided, for the first time in her life, to willingly be a woman the only way she knew a female, who wanted something from a man, to be --a way she had avoided, and despised her whole life.

She had observed the females of her world her entire life, the indignities they bore, the pain they suffered, the hardships they endured. The manipulations and tricks they learned to use to get what they needed to survive under the power of the oppressed slave, which was the Oman male. She had seen her own mother, tearful, seductive, cunning, submissive, degraded--all to get something she needed from the man who kept her. Usually, it was just to leave her in peace, or food for her children. She had seen other women with their fluttering eyelashes, sickly sweet smiles, their coy glances, enticing postures, tousled hair and licked lips. She had watch women old and young become different creatures when a certain man came around, women who moments before were hurt, angry, depressed or fearful because there was things they needed or wanted, and things they didn't need or want and a certain man was the key to it all. She had never been that way because she had never before wanted anything from any man.

She had never practiced the ways of a woman. Now there was something she did want. It stood over 10 feet tall in front of her. She wanted to be a

wife to the black god from the shining city.

.

She had never learned to be coy or subtle.

Before the confused Giant, she loosened her top and let it fall. Her heavy, round breasts separated. She tilted her head upwards and tried to hold him still with her eyes. She was wearing a knee length, leather dress of the type she always wore no matter how hot, or cold, the season. She watched his face closely as she unhooked the dress and let it slide down her hips.

He told her later...

Wanna stand you up

wanna lay you down

wanna benduova

wanna turn you around

--"Benduova " from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

--"Towerofbabel" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson



He had three wives back in Sumeria. He had been living alone among the Halfhighs for nearly a year. He gave no more thought to entering one of the little women than he did to thrusting a Runbit. He had great experience with what it was like to lie with a woman, the pure ecstasy and majesty of it, still, somehow he had managed to live without it for a year, with no thought for when, or if, he would ever know that kind of pleasure, ever again.

When the little Halfhigh undressed before him, his whole insides lit up in flames. It was torturous watching her as she stood before him, one leg crossing the other, as if to hide the most secret part of her--as if it was he and not she who had exposed her nakedness. He ached with the desire to take her like a wife, but all his conscience could focus on was how slight she was. She was small--too small--a fully grown woman in every way...for a little man like her, but he felt his rod rising and could not imagine it in her, could not see the little woman impaled upon *him*.

He had once witnessed Sumerian males with Halfhigh females. The horror and brutality of that day still haunted his dreams at night. The biggest reason he broke with Onanes and left Sumeria was what he witnessed being done on that fateful day in his young life.

Arnutha remembered him shaking his head as if to clear it of unwanted clutter. He told her later he was trying to break the trance her eyes and his

loins held him in. To lie with her was impossible and unthinkable. He could not rid his mind of the horrible things he had witnessed on that long ago hunting trip he took with that group of Sumerian criminals. May the Unknowable One banish him to the hottest depths of Hades if he should ever stoop to gain his pleasure at the expense of another's torment. He had thought her to be sick, or crazed by the bat's disease that eventually caused, bitten animals to foam at the mouth and die in agony and insanity. She had to be...Otherwise she would have flown in terror at the sight of him. She was not of the new cities, but of the wild Clans that still roamed the harsh lands, living more like beasts than WoManbeings.

He did not know what to do with the strange little creature. She did not appear to be sick. He knew though, that the bat's disease worked slowly. He would not leave her to die in such agony. He could take her home and watch her. Maybe it was not the bat's disease at all. Maybe she was just insane. He has seen how the wild Omans lived. It was a miracle they were not all brainsick. Then she shifted her stance, deliberately parting her legs and exposing the pink of her flesh. He knew then that she was not acting sickly or insanely, she was acting with determined calculation. He looked at her with new eyes and it dawned on him that she was the one that had startled, and fled from him the day before. The little Woman had deliberately sought him out. It struck him as incredulous. She wanted him to take her!

He got a bigger surprise when she spoke the first time. He knew there were Halfhighs who spoke the Sumerian tongue. A long time ago, before Onanes forbade any civilized contact with the Halfhighs, save those that were kept as slaves within the gates of Sumeria, the Giants used to work all the little people as domestic and chattel slaves. It was not impossible that a remnant of that segment of Oman society kept the language of their masters alive in their generations. The little woman couldn't be a Halfhigh from the shining city because one of those wouldn't have lasted five minutes outside the gates of Sumeria, much less in the Lowlands.

She was the first Halfhigh he ever met in the Lowlands who spoke in the

Sumerian tongue. As clear and precise as any one born in Ur, she asked him to take her to his house. He had been without female companionship a long time. She had awakened smoldering embers in him that were now roaring with heat. She was a threat to his life's philosophy, which was to do no unjustifiable harm, neither deliberately, piously, nor ignorantly. He should have dressed her and sent her home, instead he bade her to dress and led her to his house, as she requested. He would not lie with her no matter how much she enticed him. It would be a monumental improvement to his lonely existence just to have her feminine presence around. She might cook and clean for him and in return he would care for her and see that no harm befell her. He would not permit himself to touch her - not for any reason - and perhaps, in some small way, his kindness to her would atone for the evil that had been done to so many of her kind, by his people. Perhaps, he would earn some respite from the reoccurring nightmares in which he was forced to relive those gruesome rape-murders again and again. Perhaps, in his kindness to her, he could find some small measure of redemption.

He took the little female directly to his home even though he had hoped to spend the day among the Halfhighs, whom he had been teaching, and trying to reintroduce to things they had long forgotten. Progress was slow. There were so many different clans, with each hating every other one that trying to end the wars, slavery and rapes seemed an insurmountable task. Still, he could see some change in the Lowlands, though he sensed most of it was only because they respected him too much to act in their normal way when he was about. He was not discouraged by the slow rate of success because Sungodyus had taught him to be patient, his favorite motif being " Even the tallest, broadest oak tree started out as a tiny acorn." He would not give up teaching the Halfhighs how to live like they were meant to. He would not stop his mission to instill within them, the belief that they were beings of value. All they really needed was to know and internalize who they really are. They were aboriginal, and original, sons and daughters of the earth. Onanes had long ago usurped their birthright and stripped them of their inheritance and their knowledge of self; cursed, forced, and indoctrinated them to forget that they were the uncorrupted

seeds of first woman.

Once home, Nimrod left the Halfhigh female alone in his guest room while he searched for bedding for her. When he next saw her, she was naked again, staring at him calmly with light brown, fearless eyes. Her nakedness--even more so than before--stung his orbs like first morning light. He thought she understood. His command to her to get dressed was harsher than he meant to ever be with her. He had long ago discovered that sexual desire could destroy a man's good intentions quicker than any other thing. He had seen it drive men insane.

The woman obeyed him with the quiet, measured, stubbornness that he was fast beginning to recognize as her most dominant trait. He again, left her alone for a while, and again, when he looked in on her later, she was without a stitch of cloth covering her nakedness. She did not speak; but instead stood watching him with the concentrated intensity of a falcon seeking out its prey. Everywhere her eyes followed him, determined, patient, and waiting. Finally he gave up and allowed her, her will. He could not be harsh with her. She was hurting him; in more ways than one, but he knew she did not know. She was calculatingly aware she was arousing him, but she could not know of the mental and physical distress she was subjecting him to. To her, there was no reason he should be in pain of desire. She seemed fearlessly ready and willing to soothe him of that malady. He fed her, and finished arranging her bedding. Mercifully night fell. The sexual tension drained him like an open wound. He left her to her temporary space and stumbled to his own room, falling across the bed without removing, even his boots. He entered an uneasy slumber.

Arnutha mentally re-lived the deep frustration she felt when she heard him snoring, as if those events, of nearly fifteen seasons ago, had happened only yesterday. She remembered sitting for a long time, listening to the sighs and noises of his restless sleep, before finally, getting up and entering his room. From a corner she nestled and watched him dream, watched his phallus stir and rise to a frightening, but fascinating height. She approached trancelike towards his bed. Over the years she had

badgered him playfully to tell her about that night's dream

.

Nimrod never has.

and when i miss you, i wanna kiss you

over and over and over again

and i'll never diss you, girl i insist you're

more than a lover, more than a friend

--"Benduova " from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

He was back in Sumeria. His first Sumerian wife, Timber, stood before him. She was a tall woman, tall enough to stand nearly chest-to-chest to him when she lifted her large breasts. Not many Sumerian men were so high. Her hard, pointy nipples marked him, her flattened mounds lay hot and heavy between them. He wrapped his arms around his Sumerian wife and drew her tight against him. It was the thing she loved best; her greatest pleasure was in her breasts. She liked to feel the pressure of him hard against her chest. She leaned against him, pushing him back towards the bed. He walked backwards until he felt the mattress against the back of his knees. Laughing, she shoved him over, landing on top of him. Her nipples--wanting, needing to be kissed, sucked, tongued, stood taller, reaching for his lips. Timber, his wife, his first and most passionate love, the mother of the first-born son, finally she's come to him, ending his solitude, filling his life again with love and pleasure. She said that she would not come, the thought of leaving Sumeria and living among the "vermin" was too outlandish to ponder. She swore if he left her, he'd never see her again, but now she's changed her mind, the sweet cherry of her breasts fills his mouth again, like pure spring water to a man dying of thirst. Her flesh--beautiful Timber's soft, warm skin--so hot against his own.

There were three in Sumeria who called him husband. They each refused to follow him to the Lowlands. He did not try to persuade them.

Asa, his second Sumerian wife, was small by Sumerian standards. Dark-haired, beautiful and irresistibly perky, she was still more of a clinging nuisance in his life than anything else. Why did he marry her? He was not attracted to small women. After the rape-murders, he never thought the pictures in his mind would allow him to impale an undersized woman. She

was far bigger than a Halfhigh, but she was still too undersized for his taste in women. She expressed her love for him soon after they met. Never in his life had he known anything to exude so much joy *every* time he came around. She was like a whelp, excitable, frenzied and totally uninhibited. She was sunshine in the flesh, not bright in the thinking sense, but nothing ever lifted a sagging spirit like the bubbly bundle of energy that was his smallest Sumerian wife. She did not think deep enough to be sad, moody or anything else but pure light. She made him laugh. Timber satisfied his flesh, little Asa made him feel like the most wanted person in the world. Six months later, he married her despite his misgivings. Of all his wives, he was counting on her most, to keep loneliness away from him in the Lowlands. He never thought for a moment, that she would refuse to follow him. She had not only fiercely rejected the thought, her loud, insulting reasons, were the spew of the lowest, stupidest, most hateful riffraff that Sumeria spawned. It shocked him, not just because she was highborn--the Sumerian elite hated the Halfhighs every bit as much as the Sumerian dregs--they, especially the Ladies, just thought it beneath them to express their feelings as profanely. The bigger reason for his shock was that she managed to muster up so much passion for something besides nocturnal activities. He didn't think she thought, or felt that deeply about anything else.

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His third wife, Sun--Inanna, she was an impossible match for him, at the point in his life when he met her. Her type were the most desired, of all women, for many reasons, among them, beauty, brains, stature, bearing and haughtiness, which Sumerians mistake for class, and strength. Even in her elite category of women, she stood out like the most flawless diamond, and twenty year old men, who had yet to make a mark in the world didn't wed women like her. Normally. She became his third wife. In the beginning of their relationship, she captivated him thoroughly, in all ways--sexually, mentally, and spiritually. He had never hesitated when he proposed marriage to her. From the moment they met, he knew she was meant for him. His senses told him their union was a match made in the

stars. Her intuition must have spoken the same words to her because against all odds, she said yes to his marriage bed. It wasn't long though, before she regretted it thoroughly. He didn't know what soured her, but he was also young, preoccupied, depressed most days, and more devoted to Sungodyus, than he was to anything else on earth. She blamed him ten times a day for her mistake of falling in love with him, right after she cursed the stars. There was no making her happy, or getting along with her, even though they both confessed that they felt that the tie between them was a cosmic bond, even though, she stole looks at him, when she thought he wasn't aware, that he had never seen in the eyes of any woman, who didn't love a man, mind, body and soul.

He had no delusions that she would follow him to the Lowlands, so her verbose, emotional refusal was no surprise to him. What he didn't expect, despite knowing he would always carry a part of her with him, was that of the three women who called him husband, she was the one who shed the most heartfelt tears when he informed her of his decision to leave Sumeria. In the end she was the one he found it hardest to walk away from.

None of them could understand. He was fighting for his life when he left Sumeria; the need to distance himself from all that was the root of evil, and heavy with lies and illusion. Sumeria was not real. He had no choice. He had to leave to link his fate with truth, justice and genuine creation.

In the world of his dream Nimrod's manhood leaped. Fire shot up and down the length of his phallus. Beautiful Timber had engulfed him inside the heat of her center. But something felt different; Timber was a big woman, the heaviest woman he had ever lain with. The weight on top of him was too light--even for Asa. He looked down the length of his long frame, tried to discern through his grogginess what was happening to him. Why couldn't he see?

Moans. Sounds of passion...Or pain?

Indiscernible. He knew the love noises of all his wives. A year, ten years,

a man never forgets a single detail of what it's like to make love to his wife. He did not like the sounds he heard. There was too much pain in the grunts and moans. There was the thinnest of line between the sounds of pain and pleasure but he could hear the difference as clearly as the inflection between the pitch of a gong and a wind chime. He had once heard the worst sound any creature ever made. It was when he saw his kinsmen raping Halfhigh females to death. This was closer to that sound, than it was to the love noises of his satiated wives. Why couldn't he get up? By the beard or breasts of the unknowable One, he will not do this!

He told her later, during one of her many requests about that night's dream that he had awakened face to face with his worse nightmare.

Arnutha was determined to stay with the black Giant. In her world a woman only held onto a man in one way. She untied the strings of the front of his pants. It had sprung out at her with a startling presence--like a small animal flushed from cowering frozen beneath a sheltering bush. In her hands she held it--the object of so many of her fears and fascinations. It throbbed beneath her touch like a beating heart. For a long moment she held her position motionlessly, feeling his life warm and hard in her grasp--gathering her courage. Finally she climbed slowly and quietly upon him. Her naked body glistened with perspiration. The center of her being was wet with anticipation. Above him she spread her thighs and lowered herself.

He pulled himself from that realm between sleep and wakefulness and looked down to see who was on him--his throbbing shaft. It was she, the little Halfhigh, her eyes were shut tight, her face a mask of pain, his phallus--huge and throbbing-- pierced her like a grotesque act of murderous violence. He shook off the remaining affects of his deep slumber and sat up. He reached for her; his disorientated mind another victim of the insanity of desire. At the same moment the sounds changed, it froze him. He had seen the evils of sexual intercourse. He had also experienced the beauty of it. There was no greater beauty in the universe than a woman lost in the throes of pleasure. He sat still as a statue and

listened to her in the dark. He felt the tight grip on his phallus loosen.

She was breathing hard, moaning, gasping and it was all music to Nimrod's ears. It has been so long. He lived with little hope of ever getting intimate with a woman. He was not returning to Sumeria, and no woman there, would live in the Lowlands.

He had never even fantasized about being with a Halfhigh female in such a way as this. The mere notion of it caused his insides to recoil. It wasn't the haughtiness of his brother Azazel that repelled him of the thought; it was more the memories of a long distant atrocity that had seared his brain, that, and what he saw as the fragileness of the people of the Lowlands. They were to be protected and defended, not used and taken advantage of.

For a brief moment Nimrod felt sickened as he thought about the aftermath of his taking the Halfhigh female like a wife. How would he ever live with having done this thing when the fever of passion is over?

Arnutha smiled inwardly as she remembered her first time as a wife with the black Giant. She remembered feeling as if the force of Nimrod's orgasm unhinged her from the anchor of her being. She remembered screaming and thrashing about uncontrollably. She, who had felt dead inside for so long felt as if every particle of her existence was bursting with life.

It could have been a scream of death. Nimrod, lost in his own explosive release barely heard her. When he stopped jerking and crying out she was silent. Beside him, he could feel her staring at him in the dark. He wanted to ask her if she was all right. Something held him back. The silence between them demanded to be left undisturbed. Wordlessly he stroked her, his hands resting upon her left breast, trying to feel and measure her heartbeats. Her soft, even exhales eased his concern. The softness of her--the smallness, evoked emotions in him that felt like a separate entity from the spirit within him. It felt as if a guardian angel--*her guardian angel*--had entered his body to ensure that forever he would protect and care for her. He wanted to give her something--the moon, the stars--the universe.

To give her the universe! Was not it already hers? Onanes has taken everything from her kind. For her, he will give it back.

When the still of the night was shattered, it was her soft, calm voice that broke it. His thoughts were of giving her the world. Her aspirations were less grandiose. "Now I am your wife," she said. Nimrod heard no question asked. It was not a probe but a statement. All Nimrod could think about in his mind was *Is that all you want?* Out loud he responded. "Now you are my wife"

He heard her exhale, and felt her body soften as if she had melted into him.

can you hear it when i touch you

girl i've got so much love for you

i just know it has to speak through

so much love so much emotion

so many words just couldn't do

to show my love for you

--"Somanywordz" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

She got what she wanted that night, 15 seasons ago. She had hoped that if she survived lying with the Giant, his loneliness would force him to make her his wife. She was tired of being hunted and afraid. She wanted the protection of the biggest man in the world. She had never thought or planned that she might fall in love with him. Seeking him out was never about love. But she did love him. Loved him more than she feared death. He had more than protected and cared for her since they'd been together; he had given her tremendous joy. Nothing was going to take him away from her. The flame-haired Giant would have to kill her before he would ever harm Nimrod. She knew that Sumerian men--besides her husband--were no different from Oman men. She knew what infuriated them more than anything else. She talked. And before her husband's brother there was no evidence of god ordained humility in her tone.

Azazel's fury grew redder and redder upon his pale face.

His brother's disposition did not go unnoticed by Nimrod. There was nothing he loved more than to tweak and tease. The madder he could teasingly make a man or a beast when he was in the mood for some harmless fun the more he enjoyed it.

"Greet, brother, my daughter, Indianan" Nimrod spotlighted his daughter with an animated flourish of love and pride in his movements and on his face.

The girl beamed like the brightest star in the sky at night.

Azazel glared into the intensity.

Nimrod continued, "And Arnutha my first wife here, and undisputed queen of my domain."

"Domain?" Arnutha snorted with feigned indignation.

Nimrod had grown used to her, self-deprecating wit and sharp tongue. She was like a Mute when they first met. Over the years she had opened up with an outgoing personality that was the joy of his life. He did not know that at that moment she was baiting Azazel, exposing him, trying to get Nimrod to stop playing so much and start seeing what she saw--a very angry, dangerous Giant in their home. But he did know that she delighted in taking him to task when he praised her. He saw that she had no intentions of returning to her closed-mouthed ways just because Azazel loomed before her, red-faced with anger.

Arnutha turned to Azazel, her fearless eyes gazing directly into his, a thing that was unheard of in Oman culture where women avoided eye contact with male strangers, at all cost. It was all Nimrod could do to hold in the rumbling in his gut as he watched his tiny wife before the huge Azazel, shaking up every sensibility the young Sumerian has ever known. His wife didn't know what a grave breach in protocol she was perpetrating, and what an effect it was having on Azazel, and would have on any Sumerian man; or did she? Sumerians did not brutalize their women the way the Omans did, but not even the Halfhighs put such commitment into keeping the female resigned to the societal norm of her inferior status.

"Do not listen to him. He is only showing tail feathers to impress his brother. He is nothing but a glorified errand boy here. Even his youngest wives order him about like a dancing bear."

The grin on Nimrod's face vanished. He saw now that his wife was doing more than just being her usual playfully, sarcastic self. She was trying to upset Azazel. Why? He could not fathom. She was a strange, reckless woman when he met her and it seems time had done very little to change

her. Nimrod did not know what his wife was doing or, why, but whatever it is, had gone beyond teasing into something dangerous.

Azazel was shocked that his brother would allow himself to be humbled so, by a woman. For a Sumerian woman to talk so familiar among men was grievance enough, but how dare a vermin--*this beast*-- speak so freely and disrespectful about his brother? And for her to take such liberty to act so bold before him was an affront to his honor that he would not abide. Azazel roared, " **Woman, you! --**"

"Would you not take some wine, uncle, to quench your thirst after your long travels?"

Azazel couldn't believe it! It was one intolerable affront on top of the other. Now he was being not only addressed, but *interrupted* by a mere girl. Azazel's head snapped around from woman to girl, and back from girl to woman.

Despite his concern Nimrod's jaws were aching, the tears seeping from his eyes flowed as fast as he could wipe them away. Azazel had turned so red; their mutual parentage was ten shades more obvious. Nimrod pictured he, and his brother exploding into a million pieces at the same time. Wouldn't old Onanes love that? Both his precious sons brought to him to be buried in a leather sack. One dead from indignation, and the other dead from trying to hold in a buildup of laughter that could have blown the tip off mount Kish.

"**Drink up, young El,**" Nimrod used the pet name he had given Azazel, when his brother was a whelp of only three seasons. It took a monumental effort of will to get those few words out and he had to pause before saying more because his insides were shaking. Azazel took the goblet of wine and drained it quickly, staring daggers at the girl all the while.

Nimrod saw the look on his wife's face as she watched Azazel beaming animosity at her daughter. He spoke quickly.

"**What news of Sumeria?**" he blurted, not really caring.

Azazel did not answer, in fact, refused to answer. He could see Nimrod was having fun by him, but he could not properly chastise his brother's wife and daughter in his brother's own house. He decided his only recourse was to deny their presence.

The wife of Nimrod glared at Azazel. Azazel glared at the wife of Nimrod. The girl, Indianan, looked upon her uncle with open adoration. Nimrod looked at them all with a body that was aching from head to toe. The silence and battle of wills between his wife and brother dragged on like the march of a snail parade. His brother had come all the way from the high city to see him for a reason, and that reason was to talk. But he wasn't talking with the wife of Nimrod present, and the wife of Nimrod wasn't leaving with *him* present. Nimrod knew his wife, Azazel didn't. This was fast becoming a standoff for the ages.

It was Azazel who blinked first. First he started to fidget, and then he exploded at Nimrod in exasperation.

"Will you never be a man and command your woman! I have things to do here that are of great importance! Bid the woman leave us alone to talk!"

Nimrod wanted her to keep quiet. The look on her face when Azazel demanded that he order her leave the room made telling her to go the last thing on earth he was going to do.

"You are a guest under my roof, brother, and I know it is against the custom of our people, not to do all possible to accommodate a guest. But I must beg of you understanding. This is the queen here, and I am but a mere errand boy."

Arnutha turned to Nimrod. The love in her eyes shone like dewdrops beneath the morning sun. She was afraid for her husband. His lack of caution made her desperate to stay and protect him, but something Azazel said pierced her heart. She would not have her husband's brother thinking he was not man of his house. She was an Oman. She had seen men die and kill for far less an insult to their honor. Besides, what could harm the

mightiest of hunters? She was being irrational. Arnutha turned to Nimrod. In her eyes was neither the obstinacy of her initial entrance amidst the two Giants, or the anxiousness of the moment passed.

"Enough, milord," she said in a voice more suiting to Azazel's expectation of what tone a woman should take with a man.

"We have toyed with our guest enough. Your daughter and I shall leave now. Will my husband require more of me before I leave? Wine? Meat?"

Nimrod understood her intention and it moved him deeply, though he cared not that all the universe knew that the son of Cush, loved his wives. Nimrod saw that neither he nor Azazel had touched the offerings already laid before them. He shook his head and looked fondly upon her.

"The hide of the Runbit does not suit thee," He whispered to her softly.

"A woman in love will wear any skin."

Her eyes held his for a long moment before she turned with them cast down toward Azazel.

"My lord, brother of my husband and great lord, Nimrod, by thou permission I will leave thy presence."

Azazel's face softened immediately. He was so surprised at the complete change in the woman, his latent admiration for her came full surface. The words were out before he realized he was talking to a vermin and not a Sumerian Lady.

"Thy presence will be sorely missed for the light of beauty thy taketh with thee, my Lady"

The flame-head even performed a small, bent at the waist bow.

Nimrod looked incredulously at his brother and his wife. The girl Indianan looked as if she was about to faint. Nimrod wondered where his wife learned the manners of the Sumerian highborn. And young Azazel...? The

boy was practically charm in the flesh. Of course, he shouldn't have been shocked in Azazel's case. Azazel was as highborn as one gets in Onanes' world.

Arnutha tried silently to get the attention of her daughter, who stood fixated on the person of her red-headed uncle. Finally Arnutha turned to Nimrod.

"Permission to speak, milord?" Nimrod, playfully, looked around. Who was this "milord" that required such submissiveness?

"Oh come now, Arnutha, don't you think--"

Arnutha winked and made a slight head gesture in Azazel's direction. Nimrod sighed. She had an outdated view of Sumerian society. It was true Sumerian women were subservient, but not in the way they used to be when all the Halfhighs slaved for the Giants, and not in the way of her people's societal norms, now. A Sumerian woman wasn't expected to ask for permission to speak every time she opened her mouth but only once when entering among men. None of his Sumerian wives held to even that code of Sumerian etiquette. Some Sumerian women did, some didn't. Nimrod thought of the argumentative Sun--Inanna. He almost laughed aloud. He decided to follow his wife's lead, though he didn't like belittling her and playing a role just so the wet behind the ears, Azazel, wouldn't think less of him. Azazel already despised him. What did it matter what he thought of him as a man?

"Speak woman." Nimrod said with all the enthusiasm of a slug getting somewhere. Arnutha rolled her eyes at him before turning to Indianan.

"Come daughter. I've already told you, you can't marry your uncle." The girl glanced one last time at Azazel and followed her mother out of the room.

Nimrod leaned back in his chair.

"Sit, brother, and let us discuss what you feel must be spoken between us."

Azazel quietly complied. He welcomed the chance to relieve his feet of his great weight. The long journey from Ur had been more taxing on his strength than he wanted to show. Once he got used to the surroundings, it felt good to be in the house of Nimrod. No, it felt good to be in the presence of his brother again. He had not felt so at peace in a place since--since Nimrod packed up and left him behind 20 seasons ago.

I got this

And you can take or not this

I'll put you on my list of the dissed

or on my hot list

--"Bless u " from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson



Neither Azazel, nor Nimrod knew more of their birth parents, than their names, or any other intimate but Onanes and the women that cared for them-- women whose names and faces changed every month because Onanes wanted them to attach themselves to no one but each other and him.

Besides Onanes, Marduk was the only thing Azazel was ever given a chance to love in his life, and then one day even he was gone. He had never forgiven his brother for leaving him behind. He did not understand, at six years of age, that Onanes would have never allowed Marduk to leave Sumeria with him. He did not care about the politics of his abandonment then, and he cared nothing of it now. Marduk left him. So many nights he lay on his bed, like a small lump of pure hurt, thinking if he cried hard enough, his only, and best friend would come back. At first none could reach or console him. After a while, the pain of missing Marduk lessened, and he then latched himself, mind, soul and body, to the only other permanent thing in his life. His father Onanes became as the breath of life, itself to him.

And now that he was a man, there was nothing on earth, or in the universe that he would not do for Onanes, no sacred or hallowed thing he would not desecrate, no soul he would not crush. But even so, deep down he knew if Marduk--now the traitor, Nimrod-- had asked him to come with him, he would be living among the vermin today, by his brother's side; and the truth of that infuriated him. None would ever know! He would die before

he would let Nimrod, or anyone else know the truth. But he knew, and when he thought about it, he wanted to kill Nimrod because it was there. He thought the wall of hatred and rage he had been building against the memories of his love for Marduk was impenetrable. Never would he have believed that one look at his brother, after all the years of building his wall of contempt, would nearly send it crumbling at his feet.

For the sake of his father, Onanes, he had traveled 1600 miles to get the lost son of Sumeria to return to Ur. He had come willing to do, and say anything it took, to accomplish for his father what all others had failed to do. He had come to be on his best behavior, he had come to be warm, friendly, persuasive, and every other thing just short of outright begging, but now that he was here and his brother was sitting across from him, all he wanted to do was fight, even if it meant the failure of his mission. He searched deep within himself and found there was no warmth in him for his brother--only a temple-throbbing rage.

"Tell my son, Marduk," Onanes had said to him, just before Azazel left the high city to travel to the house of Nimrod--as if he, the supreme One, was the father of one, and not of multitudes. **"Tell him to please come back home. Sumeria needs and misses its lost son"**

Azazel could still feel the heat of the fury he felt at seeing the great Wizard; the builder and creator of the most glorious people and state in the universe, standing there with his face distorted with worry like an old hag. **"Please,"** The first man, and Lord of lords, had said. Even the lowest, most worthless Sumerian male would prefer to die a thousand deaths before they would utter such a disgusting word. The word had no place in the Sumerian language except on the tongue of women, who had men who despised them. No Sumerian knew aught of humility and groveling. It is the great Wizard himself who had spawned such a proud, haughty people. How is it that the father of pride says "please," not once, but over and over again?

For nearly two decades Onanes had been sending emissaries from Sumeria to the dung pit where Nimrod dwelled. Each contingent departed from

Sumeria with another piece of the love Azazel once had for his brother. Each one returned without Nimrod and he would see the disappointment on the supreme One's face and burn with anger, and his hatred for Nimrod would glower like red-hot steel. Finally, he could stand being left behind and waiting no longer. The next time Onanes felt it time to send supplicants to the Lowlands, he asked that his father send him alone. His intentions were to bring Nimrod back by any means necessary and if he had to dishonor himself by wheedling like a woman he wanted no Sumerian around to witness his shame. But there will be no wheedling this day. He cared not whether Nimrod returned to Sumeria or rotted among the stinking vermin. He would ask as he had promised, but he will not ask twice, and he will not ask in the way of the Runbit, but in the way of the three-headed lion. He had long hated Nimrod, but today he had learned to despise him as well. To see him with his vermin wife, standing there as if what he took to his bed were born of the highest Sumerian families. A Sumerian cripple would spit down on him. He had heard that his brother had many vermin wives and children. He did not want to believe it. It was inconceivable that one raised in the house of Onanes could debase himself in such a gross manner. What Nimrod was doing was no different from ramming the nakedness of dogs, and then raising the whelps as your own pride. And how is it that he does it any way, by what sort of sorcery?

Azazel remembered, even though he was only six years of age at the time, how Nimrod always had something negative to say against their father for using magic to make Sumeria great, as if he was trying to indoctrinate in him the same hatred of learning the language of the Dead Ones that possessed him. Nimrod hated Onanes for using magic but he hesitated, not a moment, to use it to try to build his own little empire with his teacup wives, and the filthy, vermin rabble.

He had come to be on his best behavior, but the rage was too strong, the bitterness too deep. Let Nimrod return with him to the high city and let the supreme One rejoice over the return of the son he has never been able to let go. Better yet, let Nimrod refuse, and the sound of steel ring out between them.

" Tell me brother, how is it that you, an avowed hater of magic and sorcery, can ram so many vermin females and not only avoid crushing them with your great size, or ripping their insides to shreds with your renowned, gargantuan cock, but also manage to bring so many healthy, half-breed vermites into the world? No vermin female has ever survived giving birth to a Sumerian seed before you. What magic, brother? You despise our father because he has used magic to create Sumeria, and to make us gods among the vermin. You refuse to use your power to help our father save Sumeria, yet you hesitate not a moment to use sorcery to further along your own pathetic attempt to build and rule an empire among the vermin and to keep wet your insatiable cock. You pretend to care so much about the vermin, but I know why you will not help our father. It is because you want to replace him as the most omnipotent being on earth. You are trying to fill the world with your seed just as he has been doing since time memorial, only you think because they multiply like Runbits, while the Sumerian race loses the lust for breeding as It grows more superior, the future belongs to the vermin. Like our father you have considered the odds and placed your bet, but you are wrong, brother. The future has, and always will belong to Sumeria. With, or without you we will survive. And we will rule the earth, forever!"

A wicked gleam leaped into Azazel's eyes.

" Have you heard about the chariot that flies like an eagle our father has conjured for Sumeria, brother?"

Nimrod stood up so fast he almost stumbled over his feet. He flew at the seated Azazel.

"What?"

Azazel leaned back and smirked, smugly.

" Like a great big silver eagle it flies. Can you imagine such a thing? Do you think our father could have made such a foray into the depths of darkness and escaped with such knowledge unharmed, alone? Have you

forgotten that we were raised together for a reason, brother?"

Azazel was huffing like a rich Oman. Nimrod had stopped listening. The stars. *The stars*. Now he knew what Onanes' great gamble is. His Father intended to evade his fate by escaping above the earth. Nimrod felt sickened. He knew that the Dead Ones, and the first race of men were on the verge of populating other worlds before they blew themselves up. He never dreamed they would give Onanes such knowledge... And they didn't, they wouldn't. To have done so would be against all they yearned for. Onanes had forced it from them, but how? Such magic would have taken--could Azazel possibly be that powerful a sorcerer? ...Impossible. Somewhere in Sumeria, there is another great Sorcerer, a mighty one. He had to be young--grown to power within the twenty years of his absence from Sumeria because he knew every wizard in Sumeria, and what they were capable of. Where could Onanes have possibly found such a powerful young unknown? And if Onanes has such power as Azazel and this young unknown to help him, why is he still trying to get him to return to Ur? The stars. Onanes cannot escape to the stars! With the billions of galaxies and worlds up there, Onanes could flee the wrath of the Omans forever.

Nimrod felt his heart pumping furiously in his chest. He had been lazy and slow in doing what he knew he had to do. Mostly, because deep down he didn't want to move against his father even though he was feeling more and more like the unknowable One has chosen him to liberate the Omans from Onanes' tyranny. Despite all, he still loved his father.

He should have tried to destroy him long ago.

His brother accused him of marrying and eating at the expense of his duty. How right the flame-head is. It is over twenty seasons since he left Sumeria and he has done nothing to tackle the great obstacle he knew the Omans had to overcome if they were ever going to be free of terror and injustice. How will he look his beloved Arnutha in the eyes again, or his other wives, his children, the rest of the people of the Lowlands, who have grown to love and revere him? He had failed them all in the most

inexcusable way; he had dawdled. Hope? His only encouragement was that maybe Onanes had the means, but not yet the capability to sail to the stars. Maybe that's why he still needed him. It was hope. It was time...Maybe even enough time to take advantage of a second chance. But the hope was slight and the time was short. He had to act! He had to prepare the Halfhighs to march on Sumeria before it was too late. Onanes and the Dead Ones will not let the little people progress. They are bent on destroying them, and the Halfhighs only hope is to destroy Onanes first. If Onanes escaped beyond their reach, the little people will never be free of his tyranny. They will never discover who, and what he truly is. If Onanes escaped to the stars, he will forever be the hidden god, forever, revered and worshiped, and forever causing death, destruction and misery on the earth.

Nimrod was only half listening to Azazel, who was still taunting. Azazel, seeing this, raised his voice.

"Yours may be greater than mine, but mine is in no way insignificant."

Nimrod didn't know what Azazel was talking about but it entered his mind to strike his first blow against Onanes by killing this powerful wizard that was his younger brother. It would have been a prudent thing to do, but for all his renouncements of his Sumerian heritage, deep down, he still is what he was born to be. He was a Sumerian, a cruel, heartless group of people to outsiders, but among themselves, obsessed with chivalry, law, tradition and a childish sense of honor--as if sadists, murderers, torturers and thieves can really know anything about virtue. Still, not even for the soul of the universe will he act treacherously. His brother did not come arrayed for war. He came angry, but he did not come marked for a fight. Nimrod had offered his brother refuge under his roof. Until the flame-head left, or commit an act of aggression against him, he was honor bound to defend Azazel with his life.

Nimrod knew Azazel would be the murderer of the Halfhighs, if it will be anyone. Onanes was not nearly as big a threat without Azazel. He should kill Azazel now. The Halfhighs will curse him for this one day, but by the

beard or breasts of the unknowable one, he will not act treacherously!

"It is a mad path that you have undertaken brother."

The haughty young fool was still talking, oblivious to the fact that only a disabling sense of honor stood between him and a right arm that is destined to shed much Sumerian blood. Numbness, and a sorrow that lie in his belly with the weight of a boulder, dampened any urge Nimrod had to shut him up.

"If you think you and your vermites can stand against me, our father, and the Sumerian race--," Azazel's voice rose to a scream." We are gods. *Gods!* And those beasts that call themselves Omans will never supplant us! You may think so, even our father thinks so, and he worries like an old woman, but I know different, because I will not let it happen! If you really care about the vermin brother, you will teach them their place. Rule the beasts all you want, but do not teach them your Sumerian pride, do not try to make of them Sumerians because the universe cannot contain two races of gods."

Nimrod stared at Azazel. He had so many causes to kill the young Sorcerer he was paralyzed into immobility by the sheer number of choices. His brother had insulted his family, his honor, his house, and his very integrity. Any one of those things would have sent the meekest Sumerian into a murderous frenzy. The fact that Azazel was a bigger hindrance to the liberation of the Halfhighs than even Onanes made him Nimrod's greatest enemy.

He was physically the biggest, most powerful man on earth, his, was not a lifetime of affronts and challenges. He laughed like he did because no man or beast threatened him. A Rex walks unhurriedly while other beasts scurry from bush to brush, with eyes darting in all directions at once. He was Marduk. By the scruff of their necks he dangled mighty daggercats from the grasp of his left hand and carried them like a she-wolf carried her whelps. What could be his brother's reason for issuing to him such a clear, life or death, challenge? He knew of his brother's love and devotion to

their father. If anyone knew what a hold old Onanes could have on one's soul, it was he. His brother was bound to resent him for defying Onanes, but did hatred run so deep within him? Did his brother really want blood to flow between them?

By Sumerian standards his brother was still a whelp, with all the rashness and reckless bravado inherent to youth. He is also Sumerian, and old enough to know that some things are not done to a Sumerian man in his home, in the presence of his family. Azazel is of the Giants, he knew what he was doing. The challenge had been made. Nimrod had a legitimate and honorable cause to snap the flame-head's neck. Why then, had he not moved from his spot? Why couldn't he ever do what had to be done without first being forced into action? Azazel wanted a fight. Azazel is the greatest threat to the Halfhighs, yet something held him back from attacking. Sorcery? Was Azazel marked by magic? He knew from his dreams that Azazel could one day devour among WoManity like an insatiable, bloodthirsty monster, though, whether he fulfilled such a destiny--or another, was entirely up to Azazel's own will. Sorcerers had the power to affect their own destiny, that normal men did not have, or had not learned how to tap. If Azazel chose the course foretold by his dreams, will WoManity find it as hard to kill Azazel, as did Nimrod?

The words Azazel spoke were so wildly speculative, Nimrod marveled at his brother's lively imagination. He had no aspirations toward empire building. What he was building for the Halfhighs was a fortress, a place of refuge from the endless raids and attacks from the Giants and other predatory beasts. Living as man was intended to live, and doing the just, true, will of creation, is all he aspired to. He was not with the Halfhighs to rule them, but to protect and defend them, to teach them, to help them progress towards their inheritance, and to ensure that at least some strain of Sumerian blood will live on into the future. The Halfhighs are the future. The Giants could either submit to the will of creation, or vanish from existence. Their blind sense of superiority will destroy all traces of the haughty fools forever. Whether they could stomach it or not, Sumerians and Halfhighs shared the same first progenitor--old Onanes

himself. The only difference was the selfish, evil machinations of Onanes, his merciless scheming to hold onto glory by any, and all means available. Onanes knew he could never own and control the entire species of WoMankind, but by creating a chosen race and keeping the rest of the WoMan species divided, he could own a race of king and queens, and through them rule the world.

Even though he had the sagacious powers of one born to foresight, Nimrod was long in opening his eyes to what his heart was telling him. The man he revered more than the sun was truly evil. The evidence of it was not hidden. Onanes sought not to obscure his wickedness because it would never occur to one born first, of all men, that others had Creator-given rights of their own, and were not put on the earth by the unknowable One, to be the fodder for his lusts and desires.

Nimrod was wrenched from the blind naivety of his innocence regarding Onanes and his "kingdom" in the most horrible way. The way it happened transformed his very soul. And it caused him to break a bond that he once believed--like Azazel clearly does now-- not even death could unbind.



You and I are not accursed

Before the moon there was first

Black love

In god and all the starry universe

Black love

The mother and the father of the world

--"Blaqluv" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson.

Nimrod had grown up, as has his brother Azazel, indoctrinated to believe Onanes, was the great benefactor of the world; that he was the all-loving father, but that was before he left the house of Onanes and went out to experience it himself, and saw that Onanes' world for most of WoManity was more like a creation of the Saurians, than a creation of a WoMan, who loved his children. It was during this period that he had his first vision; a dream so long and vivid, when he awoke, he felt as if he had lived a lifetime in it. In the dream he was shown the history of WoManity from beginning to present. Onanes' part in that history has made the old Wizard, and all he has built, an abomination before the collective will, of WoMankind. Onanes *was* a great Benefactor--to Sumeria--*his* creation, but the old Wizard's works were devastating to the WoMan collective, because to mold this world's reality in the image of his own diseased mind, Onanes had to offer up WoManbeings, as an unending supply of sacrificial lambs to the evil, disembodied Saurians. That is why Nimrod left Sumeria-- not as Azazel claimed. Azazel spoke of the Giants as being gods. Azazel should have known better than to speak such nonsense to him. He had changed Azazel's diapers, and he knew every highborn person in Sumeria. He knew of all their stupidities and vices. The Giants were only gods in the sense that they dominated and lorded it over the weaker, smaller Halfhighs. If the word "god" meant tyrant, then the Giants were greatest of gods. Other than that, they were nothing but more of the

same in a world corrupted by Onanes' dealings with the Dead Ones, --the strong preying on the weak. They may be gods in a sense, but as reward for their reign, as the leading ones of the earth, they are worthy of nothing from the Halfhighs but their scorn. They have failed the responsibility and honor allotted them due to Onanes' deserved rights as first man. To whom much is given, much is expected, is one of the primary laws of the universe. It was the first will of the universe, to ensure righteousness, justice and the protection, and the ascension of all creatures. Onanes failed to live up to his responsibility. Instead of doing the will of creation, he used his place of honor and responsibility, only to do the will of Onanes. As a result, he and all his works has been condemned to destruction by the true will, of creation.

What enraged Nimrod more than any of the charges his brother spoke against him was those made about his family. It was the one charge that Nimrod could not resist speaking to.

Nimrod had returned to his seat, and was sitting as still as a stone during Azazel's emotional rant. When he made the slightest movement, Azazel, who had been watching him intently, leapt from his seat and took a step back with his hand on his long blade. Nimrod did not move to stand. Again he did not know why. Onanes had marked Azazel with some sort of protection spell. Nimrod tried to summon up some of that within him, which he had left latent for so long. He hated the use of magic, but all that could battle sorcery was sorcery. It was time for him to become that which Onanes has for so long tried to coerce him to be. He will break Onanes' spell, until then he had to be calm, the excitable Azazel could try to take his head at any moment. To his brother Nimrod said softly, " Would you, even now that I have allowed you to humble me as not even a Halfhigh would be done so without murderous retaliation; as a final insult draw steel under my roof of hospitality? We both know what you have done here this day, brother. Do not think you have to see your folly to its conclusion. Sit down and let us speak as men and brothers and not as enemies."

Azazel's body was wound as tight as a bowstring. He wanted to fight. He couldn't believe Nimrod would take so many blows to his honor--one after another.

Nimrod could feel power growing inside him. Power, he always had but never seriously tried to use. He was putting that energy to work against Onanes' spell. Meanwhile he kept talking. " You accuse me of using magic to make love to my Oman wives without killing them." Nimrod said to Azazel in an even tone, even as he struggled to concentrate on another matter. " And you are right. I do use magic to make love to my wives and to keep my children healthy and safe."

Azazel's narrowed eyes widened with new attention. Nimrod continued.

" It is a magic called love, brother. This strange magic I use is me, taking my time when I lay with my wives, then, when they are ready to receive me, being tender and gentle. You say no Halfhigh female has ever survived being rammed by one of us...Tell me brother, how many of our people do you know, who do not despise the people of the Lowlands? How many do you know, who would look at a female Lowlander and see a woman, who is as deserving of life and respect as any Sumerian? Everything dies, in one way or another, when it is hated and despised, oppressed and eternally denied the slightest bit of justice. We Sumerians are Giants in a world of Pygmies, instead of being just, caring and helpful in our strength, we are hateful, cruel and haughty. We are a race steeped in the mysteries of magic and omens and pretentious theatrics, but we know nothing of this magic, called love. It is this magic that allows both my wives and children to survive the process of birth." Nimrod felt something shatter around Azazel. His mind touched another's, and for a brief moment, his spirit was assaulted by an outpouring of pure hate. It was the convulsions of a weak demon because it fled the instant its energy made contact with Nimrod's highly enhanced atoms. Nimrod returned his attention to Azazel.

"You see brother, when one of my wives gets pregnant, until her offspring is born she is undisputed queen of Marduk and all that is his. Nothing her

heart desires is denied her, no tasks she demands goes undone. The entire household of Marduk becomes slaves to her every whim. It is a mighty fall indeed for the wives of Marduk once she and her babe safely crosses the travails of childbirth. Love, young Azazel; that is the magic you see here in the health of my children and the robust spirit of my tiny wives."

The protection spell that covered Azazel was broken. Azazel was now as vulnerable as a baby bird, but Nimrod still did not regain the desire to kill him. He will leave it for another day. All he wanted was to see his brother's back on the other side of his door. Azazel had done all he could to provoke a duel between them. Something about such foolish bravado made Nimrod realize just how young Azazel was. It brought back memories, memories that left him feeling wracked with guilt. There was something he owed Azazel. The debt was now paid in full. He will let Azazel live--this time. The next time, the flame-head shall reap what his arrogance sows. Nimrod stood up. He thought Azazel was as aware as he that there was nothing left between them, nothing left to be said and nothing left to do but walk away from each other or fight. Azazel's reluctance to leave surprised him. Nimrod had all of Azazel he intended to take.

"Come, young El. You have my answer to Onanes' summons. It is the same as I gave my mother when he sent her here, and my Sumerian wives and my--son." Nimrod paused, as if suddenly stricken. His voice carried not the same weight when he spoke again. "Tell me brother, what news of my son, Ashur? He must be as big as you are, now."

A long passed memory of a ten year old boy turning his small back on him to go to his mother and grandfather, flitted painfully across Nimrod's mind.

Already, at only twenty seasons, Nimrod had three Sumerian wives before he left for the Lowlands, but they were all new to him and he spent time with them only long enough to bear one child, with one of them. None of his Sumerian wives, or his child chose to leave Sumeria with him. The thought of living among the "vermin" revolted them. Nimrod never

thought of his Sumerian wives anymore...except Sun--Inanna, whose heart-wrenching tears in the face of his departure still sometimes played over in his mind. In over twenty years, he still hasn't figured her out. His Halfhigh wives, filled the places of his Sumerian wives in his heart, but a million Halfling children could never fill the void left inside him by the absence of his firstborn. The last visit with his Sumerian son was brief and cold. The boy had seen only 10 seasons. " Will you come back with me father?" were his son's first words in 6 years to Nimrod and his last since. At a "no" answer, the boy would hear no reasons or explanations. He turned his back on Nimrod and would have no more to do with his father.

Azazel despised his brother's son, almost as much as he hated the father. The son of Nimrod had long ago earned the reward of the most vicious murderer. The blood-thirsty tyrant raped, and rampaged amidst the Sumerian people as he willed. Not to mention what he did to the vermin, whom no laws protected. Azazel, who was the one who usually executed judgment against wayward Sorcerers, had longed petitioned Onanes for the permission to take the head of the son of Nimrod, but the great Wizard shields his grandson despite all.

Within the son of Nimrod there was a burning desire to please his grandfather. Ashur never stopped cultivating, and honing his magical potential. This was why Onanes tolerated him. Azazel remembered a time when the son of Nimrod was nothing more than a needy little sycophant, with just enough ability to use the language of the Dead Ones to be inducted into the Guild through family connections. Today, it seemed Ashur's power grew by the hour. None had ever seen such rapid progress toward becoming a high ranking Sorcerer. Azazel more than feared what will happen if the psychopathic son of Nimrod kept growing in power as he was. The supreme One was blind to the danger Ashur represented because Ashur seemed so devoted to him. Azazel felt that Ashur's worship of Onanes was an act, but he didn't think there was anything he could, or really needed to do about it. The supreme One was not to be underestimated. Woe to Ashur if his evil heart also harbors treachery against the All-father.

When he felt his silence had been significantly rude to Nimrod, Azazel spoke to Nimrod's question. " My nephew, and our father's grandson, is well," The hate and spite of his response hovered over the room like a storm cloud.

Nimrod bounded forward and before Azazel could react, grabbed the longhaired Giant by the neck as he has done to 800-pound cats. He jerked Azazel to his feet and shoved him toward the door. " Get out! " Azazel still made no move to leave. "Damnation!" Nimrod roared. The sound of feet pattered like furbits as they scattered down the corridor behind Nimrod. One pair of light steps echoed the opposite direction and stopped closely behind him. Nimrod grabbed the suddenly docile Azazel by the neck again and lifted him until the tip of his toes barely brushed the floor. " By the beard or breasts of the unknowable One, I swear if you do not--"

--" My husband, no!"

Nimrod did not feel the tiny tug at his shirt. He lifted Azazel off the floor. His hands tightened.

" *Maru!*"

It was a gurgled, barely audible sound, but Nimrod heard it clearer than the screams of his wives and children. Nimrod froze. He stared at his pale-faced brother and blinked twice. Standing before him was not a scowling behemoth, but a small, bright eyed toddler he used to bounce on his knee twenty seasons ago. *Maru*. He remembered like yesterday, the first time Azazel so charmingly, mangled his name. He remembered the big, wide eyes, in the tiny white face, the little arms reaching up to him, the furious force of pure glee that had the entire tiny body in a fit of perpetual motion.

living in the land of self deception

to be an honest man is self affliction

but I aint going out like I don't know

that I'm a predator with a dragon by the toe

--"Dragonbythetoe" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson



He had been away on a two-week hunt in the Lowlands. It was the first time he had been away from his little brother, the first time he had killed, and the first time he witnessed the cruelty of Sumerians upon the Halfhighs.

Nimrod was just a youth, more innocent than most because of his isolation in the house of Onanes. He had yet to learn the way of the world, or the strength of his right arm. The course of his entire life was shaped by the events of that first foray into the world Onanes proudly reigned as high god over. The things he witnessed were as a brand seared forever into the fibers of his being and every single thing he did in his life since that day was a direct consequence of the events that shattered his innocence so brutally.

A group of Giants decided it was time to initiate the dark son of Onanes into the pleasures of the hunt. Nimrod was pleased when the men asked him to join them. At seventeen seasons, he was already taller than all of them but he had never associated with any male Sumerian outside the house of Onanes. His little brother was his only male friend. He had not yet learned how to determine the character of people from the words they spoke, or how to decipher the true meaning hidden within the foul, sardonic chatter, of superior minded fools. But he learned very quickly. His inborn powers soon gave him clear indication that he was around gross evil. Even though he didn't know this aspect of his nature, then, for what it was, he felt sick to his stomach.

His potential new friends soon showed they were the lowest kind of life form that Sumeria, or Hades produced.

The hunt, for a long time, was once a high necessity for the WoMan race, especially after the Great Devastation. Animals bred much faster than people, add to the more natural animals, the monsters and Saurian remnants who survived the Great Devastation, it was no matter of wonder that the hunt became a culture in itself, where young Sumerian males learned to kill animals ten times their size before they learned what their phalluses were for.

The hunt was still of monumental importance for the Halfhighs. Wild animals and monsters of all kind, constantly devoured among the little people. For the huge Sumerians with their great houses, walled cities, iron weapons and powerful Sorcerers, few things were a threat to them at all. They had become the hunters of the predators. The great hunt had become a game for bored and idle men. Nimrod's joy in being asked to accompany the men was not in the hunt--he had no real desire to kill anything for sport-- It was in the opportunity to escape the stifling atmosphere of Onanes' compound for a while and in the chance to spend time among other Sumerians.

During the long ride into the Lowlands, there were a lot of winks among the men and a lot of laughter and loose talk about all the "wild pretty beasts" the men were going to "bag." Nimrod's intuition told him things were not as he thought they would be. He was never slow to recognize any situation. He could not imagine what sinister deeds the men were plotting, but he felt certain, they were talking about the little people when they laughed and mentioned, "pretty beasts." What were they going to do to the Halfhighs? Curiosity alone, kept Nimrod riding with the Jackals. He had been among them long enough to discern completely their characters. This would be his last time ever having anything to do with them. They were no good. That was the least of it.

Isolated, in the house of Onanes, Nimrod never knew what really went on in the real world. Sumeria was his father's creation. He would not be

Onanes' creature but he still idolized the great wizard, as did all Sumerians. How could anything built by the supreme One be so rotten and putrid at its core? He knew the men were bent on evil, but how was he to know that murder and rape was a pastime in beloved Sumeria, and that men--his own people--ate at the table of iniquity like soulless dogs?

"Ever had that thing go off, boy?"

Distanced mentally from his fellow travelers and lost in his thoughts, Nimrod did not hear he was being addressed.

"What is it houseboy, you too good to talk to us common folks all of a sudden?" The scruffy, black-haired Sumerian, whose close in eyes were so heavily lidded, he was peering through slits, had grabbed the reins of Nimrod's elephant and caused the animal to stop. He was not the only one of the men who had noticed the change in Nimrod's mood. They all had been exchanging glances for some time, while Nimrod rode along oblivious to what was brewing around him. Where before, he was excited and eager to make a good impression on the men, he had become withdrawn and quiet, and they didn't like the judgment they all felt had been handed down on them.

Nimrod emerged from the depths of his thoughts and looked at the strange looking man, who was glaring at him, the pupils of his crossed eyes, tiny, with an odd mixture of trepidation and bravado.

"What?"

"What?" The ugly giant parroted mockingly. He looked around at the others. "This houseboy thinks he's too good to even listen to us all of a sudden. I guess we must be starting to sweat and it's bothering wizard boy's delicate nose--."

"--Watch it, Uptup--nish," the only man darker than Nimrod in the small party warned. "Do not mock the great wizard. His eyes and ears are everywhere."

"Ptuhp." Uptup--nish spat in disgust. " This is not the All-Father. This is his houseboy. Am I not also the son of Onanes?" He turned again to the young Nimrod. " I said boy, have you had your cock milked yet?"

Nimrod, young as he was, had known women carnally. Since he was an infant Onanes had paraded women in and out of his life. He had gained the size of a full-grown man early. He was handsome, intelligent and good-humored. More than a few of his "Caretakers" had shown lustful interest in his nakedness.

Nimrod stared at his antagonist, mutely. The man laughed.

"Houseboy here doesn't even know what his cock is for."

The other men joined in. The biggest man Nimrod had ever seen outside the mirror, and Onanes' house, laughed with the biggest noise. His expression of mirth was overkill, his eyes kept darting at Uptup--nish, as if he had to be sure Uptup--nish took notice of how much he appreciated the wit. Uptup--nish blessed him with a direct address.

"Maybe what wizard boy needs is to bag him one of those plump, little pretty beasts eh, Sargon?"

The curly haired, mammoth man, nodded enthusiastically.

"Nothing in Sumeria that can grab and milk a man's cock like a pretty beast from the Lowlands" Uptup--nish declared. The hollow laughter of the men intensified, Sargon's bordering on the hysterical.

Nimrod had heard enough. He snatched Uptup--nish's hand from his elephant's reins and squeezed until bones rubbed. Tears leaped into the repulsive Giant's crooked, beady eyes.

" Wonder what the females of Sumeria will think if they find out their men prefer to engage in bestiality over ramming them." Nimrod spat, sarcastically.

Uptup--nish moaned and winced in agony.

"What?" Nimrod squeezed harder.

Sargon leapt from his elephant and drew his long blade. The blue-black Giant, who had warned against mocking Onanes, leapt down behind him. He grabbed Sargon's massive shoulders and turned him around. "Don't be a fool, the supreme One will crush us all if we harm his son."

Nimrod shoved the weeping Giant with the force of his disgust. Uptup--nish fell off his mount unto the ground and lay there moaning and holding his abused fingers. Without a word or thought, Nimrod turned his elephant around, and headed back for home. Sargon helped his friend up from the ground. The pain in Uptup--nish's fingers slowly subsided, and as his agony lessened, his rage soared and the urge in him to strike out was like madness. He climbed on his elephant. Out of the corner of his eye he glimpsed a small movement in a bush not ten yards away. A fever arose in him like fire. "There!" he shouted. All the Giants knew what that meant. Uptup--nish kicked his beast. The elephant bounded forward. A small figure of amazing resemblance to Ashur squealed a loud drawn out sound and dashed out from behind the bush. The Giants whooped with glee. In unison they all followed Uptup--nish in the chase.

The young Oman was a lookout. His piercing yell was a warning signal. A group of Omans was out on forage for food. The men were hunting for meat; the women were searching for edible vegetation. At the sound of the alarm they all turned as one, and ran for their lives. The elephants were already in sight. They had overrun the young lookout and his blood splotted red the legs of a couple of the great beasts. The Omans looked back at the fast approaching elephants in confused terror. Never had they seen the great mammoths move so fast. Akar was the fastest runner in the clan. The Mammoths had overtaken him as if he was running in deep sand. They were gaining on the entire group with the same unnatural swiftness.

Given enough warning, the Omans had always been able to escape the Giants, losing only a few of the slower women once in a while. They had never before encountered elephants specially bred for speed. There were

only a few of them, a few unnatural beasts bred by men with unnatural tastes and too much time to put toward quenching them. Some magician had undoubtedly aided them--probably for money. Onanes forbade that sort of mercenary use of magic, but as Nimrod had so rudely and recently discovered, beneath all the beauty, glitter and gold, Sumeria and its people were as filled with dung as the sewers that ran beneath the streets of her Citi-states.

Nimrod heard all the commotion; the thunderous trample of the elephants practically shook the ground. He wanted to know once and for all what the Giants did on their forays into the lands of the little people. He turned his beast. His was not one of the mutants, it moved fast for its size but it was no match for the speed of the other elephants.

Malcolm took fire in the stomach and the chest for you

Medgar walked a mile by himself in a viper's nest for you

Patrice was tortured like an animal to the death for you

Jesus Christ your Messiah?

--"Bless u" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

The elephants ran even better than he'd hope. Never had they captured so many vermin at once. The fat Sorc had delivered exactly as he promised. Uptup--nish felt he had never spent better money in his life than what he paid the greasy little Mumbler. The slaughter of the males was fun but exhausting. There were so many of them, the exertion actually tired him out, but there was one thing that could never be boring. Uptup--nish looked over at the herded, terrified females. His phallus throbbed. "Now we're going to see who the real men are, eh Sargon?" Uptup--nish slapped his hairy companion on the back.

Sargon was nearly as tall as Nimrod and almost twice as wide as the young adolescent. As hairy as an Ogrape, he was also almost as wide as one. The ridge of his broad forehead sloped low over eyes as tiny and dense as a pebble.

"Wager, you mangy curs," Uptup--nish bellowed. All the excited Giants, excited and anxious by the killing and anticipation, in some cases, of more rape, impatiently gave attention to Uptup--nish. "I hold that I can out ram all you dogs"

The blue-black Giant spat. Uptup--nish was only being his usual swaggering self and his insults meant nothing. But the blue-black Giant was aroused and did not want to stand still for Uptup--nish's bragging mouth--especially after this morning. He saw how helpless Uptup--nish was in the face of the rage of a mere boy. He saw the tears. He no longer respected the loudmouth braggart.

"A thousand glitters say I can ram more of the vermin than any of you curs." Uptup--nish crowed, as if he wasn't heard the first time. A smirking grin gave his unshaven face a demented twist.

"That's because you have nothing to spurt with," the blue-black Giant

yelled. "All you do is bump hips" All the other Giants but Sargon erupted with laughter--like a boiling pot blowing off it's cover, as if they had long desired to strike some kind of blow at Uptup--nish even if it amounted to nothing but support for ridicule of him. The leer on Uptup--nish's face vanished. His long blade was in his hand so quick it seemed to have materialized from thin air. Even so, the blue-black Giant had his blade out only a fraction slower. Sargon stood beside his friend and slowly pulled out his own steel, which was more the width of an ax than a sword. The blue-black Giant's heart fell like a stone. Uptup--nish saw it in his eyes and grinned. At that moment, one of the Oman females bolted, screaming hysterically as she stumbled, fell, rose to her feet, and fell again. The rest of the Omans females absorbed her panic and fled past her.

" They're getting away!" one of the Giants screeched unnecessarily. The other Giants were already chasing the women down. They fell upon them like HuRexes, plunging brutally into one female after another. The screams were so bloodcurdling, Nimrod, who was almost on the scene leapt from the great beast that carried him and sprinted the rest of the way on swifter feet.

He could not believe his eyes. The bodies of dead Half-highs lay strewn around on the ground in every direction he looked, in every position imaginable. The sadism of the Giants left no taboo undone upon the bodies of the dead. Upon the living, the broad backs of half a dozen Giants were rising and falling atop of what looked to be broken dolls, only these dolls were screaming in a high pitched siren that froze Nimrod's blood like ice. He saw one Giant climb off a small woman, his bloody phallus dripping her life as he cuffed violently another--knocking her to the ground and falling on her with a grunt. Nimrod saw his eyes and knew the man was lost in a fever and could only be stopped one way. Nimrod stopped him. The Giant's head skimmed across the ground like a topside kick on a pumpkin sized rubber ball. His shoulder spouted blood. The severed head landed against Uptup--nish's back with a thud. The annoyed Giant looked around with murder in his eyes. He saw Nimrod striding purposely towards him. His eyes widened. He rolled off the broken,

moaning female he had been pounding and called out in terror. The other Giants looked up, hovering over the Oman females like vultures trying to determine if they really had to leave their prey or if the noise they heard was nothing. The remaining Omans, who were huddled together like frozen Runbits, gathered their wits and fled again. The Giants all saw Nimrod run down the scrambling Uptup--nish, who was crawling away as fast as he could on his hands and knees, his pants, rolled around his ankles, the greatest hindrance to his chance to survive the next seconds. Nimrod caught him. His blade laid the squealing man open into two men--both bleeding and dying in agony.

The huge Sargon roared.

The hairy Sumerian moved with a swiftness that belied his size. In one fluid motion he had his pants up and his blade poised. Like a distressed Tonbig, he charged Nimrod bellowing at the top of his lungs. If he, a man that had thriven on intimidation his whole life, thought the young boy would retreat in the face of his fury, he was wrong. Dead wrong. Because Nimrod did not shirk, Sargon ran up on him too closely. Nimrod reached out his right arm and caught the behemoth--charging full speed at him-- by the neck. Sargon's feet dangled and his eyes bulged round, nearly completely out of their sockets. The sword in Sargon's hand clattered to the hard ground. The Giant's tongue flopped red and bloated from between his lips. Nimrod held him suspended in the air.

Behind Nimrod, three of the four remaining Giants attempted to attack him from the back while he strangled Sargon. The Fourth--the blue-black Giant--stood between Nimrod and his would be Ambushers. The blue-black Giants' blade flashed with lightning speed. Nimrod heard the clanging of steel behind him and came out of his trance-like preoccupation with Sargon.

Nimrod was still very young, but even then he knew it was foolish to leave his back exposed so long just so he could overkill a man. Nimrod tossed Sargon to the ground and whirled. He was surprised to see the Giants fighting among themselves. It was not an even fight. The blue-black Giant

was holding back three of them but it was easy to see who would win in the end. They were all cut and bleeding. "Go boy!" the blue-black Giant hissed. Nimrod was undecided whether to help his unlikely ally or not. He intended to kill them all for what they did to the Halfhighs. He saw the blue-black Giant raping the Halfhigh females to death along with his fellows. He knew the blue-black Giant had taken part in the slaughter of the little men. And he knew it wasn't the first time rampaging in the Lowlands for any of them.

The blue-black Giant decided things for Nimrod. "You aint no killer boy, and these curs aint no fighters. You taking them on would be as much murder as what we did to these little people. What you done to Sargon--" the blue-black Giant laughed heartily, and struck a vicious blow upon one of his foes nearly cutting the man in half. "See boy? I can kill these curs at any moment I choose." When Nimrod still didn't turn to leave the blue-black Giant's voice grew pleading. A sword thrust sliced the Giant's leg open. Blood spurted. Nimrod lurched. "Don't you understand boy!" the blue-black Giant yelled angrily. Nimrod halted. "I knew I should never have took up with these jackals. Believe it or not my Mother raised me better. " The Giant's voice choked. "All my life I've been told the vermin were beasts. Aint trying to excuse myself boy, because the first time I saw a little man I knew he was every bit the same animal as me, just smaller. I'm just trying to make you understand who's really to blame."

Nimrod thought he knew what the Giant was saying and he couldn't have been more shocked if he had been hit by lightning. He also had trouble with some of the things Onanes taught, but he had always swiftly stuffed such disturbing thoughts far in the back of his mind. He never imagined others saw those things as he did, and he still wasn't sure, but his senses were telling him, the man had just spoken against the supreme One. It was an inconceivable thing for any one to speak disparaging of Onanes--especially to someone who actually lived in Onanes' house and was so close to Onanes' ears...unless...

"I guess I just wanted to do wrong more than I wanted to do right," the blue-black Giant said, breaking through Nimrod's thoughts. "It started out

with small mischief. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought I would become a murderer and a rapist, an unrepentant murderer. But I'm repenting now, boy." A thrust, the blue-black Giant could have easily blocked, came in and sliced across his belly. The Giant grimaced. " Don't you see boy?"

Nimrod saw. His intuition was right. He turned to leave.

"Pray for my soul, boy" the blue-black Giant called out.

Nimrod did not reply. He had no intentions of doing anything for the jackal but leaving him to his death. Nimrod knew the blue-black Giant would kill the other two as soon as he left. Then he will either kill himself or bleed to death from his wounds. The only goodwill he was willing to concede to the man was that at least in the end he reclaimed a little of his WoManity--unlike the other Giants. And his feelings about Onanes and Sumeria, Nimrod knew , would never be the same. He lost something this day, and he had no delusions about ever getting it back.

The senseless slaughter of the Halfhigh males, and the brutal rape-murders of scores of the tiny Halfhigh females, haunted Nimrod mercilessly for a long time. He blamed himself because he knew the men were planning to do harm of some kind to the Halfhighs even if he never would have imagined in a million years that they could deliberately set out to massacre defenseless people. He should not have allowed his anger to cloud his senses; he should have stayed with the group. He could have prevented what happened.

Guilt was why he made Halfhigh women his wives and treated them with the gentleness and permissiveness of a personal genie. He had begun hating everything Sumerian that day of the massacre. It was the day he finally gathered the strength to break from his father. He did not actually leave Sumeria until three years later only because Sungodyus had entered his life and he didn't want to leave his mentor.

He was in a suicidal funk when he returned to the high city that day. All he had ever believed in; all he had ever thought to be good and right in the

world was proven to be just another Onanes illusion. He was shattered. Despair had taken Nimrod's spirit and he had no desire to live. Then a small bundle of exuberant life came running up to him screaming "Maru! Maru!" The sight of his excited little brother instantly lifted Nimrod's heart, but he looked around wondering who was this "Maru." Then the little arms reached up to him and he knew who Maru was. Maru, in three-year-old Azazel speak, meant I love you I missed you. Nimrod had picked his little brother up and when the child burst into tears and cried. "Where have you been?" Nimrod's own eyes threatened to blur from emotion...Because people can be so cruel to other people, because life is so hard and fragile, because he--the child's only and closet friend--, did not tell his little brother before he left, he would be gone for three months.

Three years later Nimrod would leave Azazel again, this time for nearly 20 years. It was the worse mistake of his life, not only for himself, but also for all WoManity.



yahweh is so big he can part the red sea

allah's big too, almost as big as j.c.

But jesus is world, big and in charge

buddah is big, round the middle dawg is large

the god of the state is a big mutta too

Almost as big as the god of voodoo

the big banging god got planets for balls

but as for being the creator of all

yo, they all too small

--"Too small" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Nimrod stood before Azazel, like a statue, for so long as these memories of the past played in his mind; Azazel grew disconcerted and lost the bearings of his emotions. It was instinctual for rage to rise up against rage, and hate to match hate, and violence to meet violence, but what do one do when a man is raging at you one moment and then is suddenly standing before you with a faraway look in his eyes, as if he had forgotten what he was about, and that you were there even though you stood eyeball to eyeball with him?

"Marduk..." Azazel called softly. " I am sorry, brother. I'll go if you wish. But if you would just tell me first why you have turned your back on us, mayhap I can leave with a little less bitterness toward you. Tell me brother, what has Sumeria done to turn your heart so cold against us?"

Nimrod blinked again and the tiny child was gone. The red-headed, blue-eyed Giant was back, but in those double bright eyes Nimrod saw the past and the future.

"You really want to know young El? Will you have the truth?" All traces of rage was gone from Nimrod's voice and he tenderly spoke the pet name

he had given Azazel right after Azazel had at the age of three, dubbed him, Maru. "Or will your gleaming blade come flashing from its scabbard each time words are spoken of our father that are not flattery."

Azazel paused before answering, "Marduk, I yearn to hear your reasons for your rebellion against the supreme one but I ask you on your Sumerian blood do not blaspheme."

Nimrod startled. Blaspheme? His mind reeled. Blaspheme whom? Only the unknowable One can be blasphemed and who would speak against It, that has made all? For the first time Nimrod began to see clearly how Onanes' insidious works had unbalanced his brother. Onanes had always been revered in Sumeria, but since when did he become a being that could be blasphemed? What has been going on in Sumeria since he left? His son? What in the name of Hades, is Onanes doing to his son, Ashur? Nimrod had suddenly become fearful of Azazel. He wished his brother away, back in Ur. He was afraid to speak anymore to him, afraid of his brother's instability. He had made up his mind not to harm a hair on Azazel's head this day. He could never look at Azazel in anger again and not see that crying three year old asking, "Where have you been." Where has he been? For Azazel, when he needed protection from Onanes, and for Ashur, his son? He had left Azazel, unconsidered, a second time. And his son; he should have moved heaven and earth to get the boy away from Onanes. Now it was too late. Azazel was completely Onanes' creature. He knew in his heart his son fared no better. Nimrod did not want to tell Azazel the reasons for his break with Onanes. It was a long story going all the way back to the very beginning of WoMankind's survival after the Great Devastation that ruined the earth. There was much in it Azazel would find "blasphemous." Azazel's moods lashed about like the tail of a crocodile. Now he was quiet and contrite, the next moment, he could be swinging his long blade at Nimrod's neck. Nimrod didn't want to take the risk of talking about Onanes to him.

"If I cannot tell the story truly and freely, brother, I ask you on your Sumerian honor to give me leave from telling it at all."

It was unSumerian to refuse the reasonable request of a guest and Nimrod was walking a fine line. He didn't want to tell Azazel the story, but he didn't want to breach propriety with him again either. What he wanted was for his brother to leave his house.

"Okay, Marduk I need to know. You can give your reasons as freely and truthfully as you believe them."

The last words Nimrod wanted to hear from Azazel.

"El, I swear to you, you will not like what I speak to you. It has been a long, trying day for both of us--and my family. Let us end it now and part ways in peace.

" No, Marduk! I will not plead. But I need to understand. It is a cruel place that you have left me in brother. I am filled with hatred for you, yet there are memories and emotions that will not release me. I need to know that you have good reasons for being such a traitor to everything I love and revere." Azazel thumped his chest with his fist. " By my father's beard, I swear there will be no violence tonight. Tell your story brother, and I will pick and chose what I believe. That which I don't believe will be no cause of upset for me."

Nimrod paused and considered. Azazel is volatile and unpredictable. How hard would it be to contain him without harming him too much if the need arises? Nimrod decided he could manage it. He sighed deeply.

"Okay, young El, but the story is a long one and I must insist that you bed here tonight after I'm finished. None of my other guests from Sumeria would spend a moment after sunset here. The forest is alive with unseen perils at night and it is already dark."

Azazel's eyes softened for a moment before instantly regaining their hardness. "It is too late." He said too softly to have wanted to be heard.

At that moment, Nimrod's entire family of 6 wives and 10 children entered the room. Arnutha was already present, watching Azazel with hawk-like

precision. She neither liked, nor trusted him. If it was treachery the flame-head was planning, he will have to get to her husband over her dead body. Then will her husband wake up and avenge her death. And Nimrod will live on, to be more cautious and less playful in his life.

"Will you not allow us to sit and listen too, husband? We have all long wondered why we cannot visit the great city where half of our family lives, why, the children cannot know their Grandfather." It was his youngest and latest wife who had spoken. Nimrod felt within, an uncommon anger, for he was being manipulated. They all knew if he wanted to talk to them about Onanes he would have done it long ago. He was protecting them. How could he tell them that Onanes would not even concede that they were the same species as he and would never accept them as family? The older wives had chosen his youngest, most vulnerable wife to be the lightning rod for them all. He would soon forgive them for manipulating him in front of his brother but he would find it harder forgiving them for that.

Arnutha turned and glared at all the other wives. Nimrod placed a big hand on her slight shoulder, stilling her into silence. He reached out to his youngest wife, an ebony skinned, brown-eyed young woman, of 21 seasons named Sun--nutha, who was so shy and timid, Nimrod had yet to mate with her after three months of marriage even though he knew that a Halfhigh female that age and that beautiful had almost assuredly known men forcefully, if not voluntarily. Because of her age and crippling shyness, or fear, which could gain him neither marriage dowry nor help with the work outside the house, her father had given her to Nimrod as a gift and refused to take her back. The man promised to kill her if she returned home. The woman would not last long, homeless and unprotected in the Oman world. His marriage to her had more than a little of the stench of slavery about it but he could not leave her to her fate. She did not love him. He did not see her enough to know if he loved her. She avoided him always. He did not seek her out. She was free to go. She stayed. He did not resent taking care of her.

Somewhat to his surprise, she came to him when he reached for her. He lifted her effortlessly unto his lap. To her directly, he said. "You can sit and listen." The other wives and the children settled down behind Nimrod. The wives knew they had angered him but they got what they wanted, and they knew his anger at them would not last long. Their husband could not stand unhappiness in any of his wives. They had all learned quickly enough that though their husband was as big as any three or four of them together, the real power in the house of Nimrod belonged to his tiny wives. Besides, they had a right to know. Their husband was a fair-minded man. He could be made to see the truth of that easy enough.

Nimrod started the story of the life of Onanes. Shortly he paused. Suddenly, as if remembering the unpredictability of Azazel, he lifted his youngest wife from his lap and gently set her down clear of the path between he and his volatile brother. Then he leaned forward in a position of readiness and began to speak...



No matter how they hate you

discourage and debase you

what they will tell you aint true

but I know who loves you

And I would say to you

Never! Never! Forget who you are.

--"Say2u" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Long, long ago in the past, a race of beings roamed the earth, who, after many eons, evolved to become highly intelligent. They are called the Saurians, or Ancient ones. After they died in the flesh, they became, known by those who communed with them as the 'Dead Ones. "

Because they were the first, of all flesh, and the most powerful beings on earth, the Saurians became known as the "gods," or "most high ones" or "first ones" to all other creatures.

Their leader--queen of their collective--was called the "most Ancient of days."

For time unknown the Saurians lived on the earth with no strong creature beside them to compete with. Even when the black, bipedal creatures known as WoMans, appeared on the earth, the Saurians ruled with total power because like all the other creatures, compared to the oldest Saurians, the WoManbeings were small and weak. The Saurians treated them like the same chattel slaves as they treated all other creatures.

In those days, the earth was a paradise for the Saurians but the worse hell imaginable for the other species of the earth because the Saurians had no rival to oppose them in whatever they wanted to do, and all the Saurians ever wanted to do was eat, rape, kill and enslave all the other species to

feed their monstrous appetites. They were insatiable in all their hungers and because they never physically stop growing--neither did their gluttony.

In those times all species were sentient. The birds, snakes, men, equines, felines, bovines, all could talk, think and breed with one another. All but the Saurians were innocent of evil.

From the ceaseless rape the Saurians perpetrated on all the other creatures, many hundreds, of different kinds of offspring were born to the "first ones" of the earth. Some were huge and could fly--like Rexes with wings-- from the saurian raping birds. Some were bipedal creatures with scales and forked tongues from the Saurian raping snakes. Others were Giant, man-like beings from the Saurians raping the black, bipedal creatures called women--collectively known as WoMans, or Cushites.

There were many other half creatures birthed from the Saurian raping Bovines, Tonbigs, Runbits, Wolves, whatever they could catch and hold still long enough to impale, the Saurians ravished and they raped, day and night without respite. Most of these half creatures were as evil as their fathers and by their Saurian blood they became born leaders, Lords, and gods over all, of their Kind, and sometimes even over other creatures. Because of them, the earth became an abominable thing, full of nothing but rape, death, torture, slavery and every other evil, night and day.

The Saurians were of many shapes and sizes and though all of them were slaves to their appetites, not all were abject evil. This difference between the psyches of the good Saurians and the evil Saurians, were that species only weakness. They fought constantly among themselves, but because they were a hive collective, they still stayed in power because the queen mind always settled the major wars.

The Saurians were widely diverse within their species. Some Saurians were naturally big, some small--although none ever stopped physically growing. Some were highly intelligent, some stupid, some white, green,

black, yellow and every other color in nature.

Because they lived such long lives, there were always millions of Saurians in different stages of growth and evolution. They were born very small and they would stay in a certain stage of development for thousands of years. This is why at some point they were small enough to rape Hawks and at other points they were big enough to rape bulls and even Tonbigs. It was always unbridled lust with the Saurians when they approached other creatures, but it was not always rape. Some Saurians were gentle and compassionate conquerors, even if they were careless and callous in their inability to relate spiritually with other sentient beings.

If they were not killed unnaturally, the Saurians sometimes grew as big as small hills. It was their constant raping or copulating of/with every living thing that eventually led to their downfall.

Their supreme leader forbade them to copulate with the creatures called women, because she knew they were not only as smart as the Saurians were-- during their early stages--, they had an advantage over even the Saurians in their physical form. The creature called woman and her seed were restricted to be used only for food and labor. When they were incidentally raped, despite the Saurian queen's decree, they were supposed to be killed, which they normally were anyway.

Over time, some Saurian breeds deliberately disobeyed their queen because the creatures called women were beautiful to behold and, too, they noticed that the rare child born to them from such unions were extraordinarily intelligent, big and strong. They saw in their sons a means towards a power grab for themselves. These Saurians took the creatures called women for wives and protected them from the hate and fear of their kind.

Eventually, these forbidden unions gave birth to the Giant, man-like beings that eventually destroyed the Saurians high gods, and took the surface of the earth from them. These Giant Half-breeds were as

intelligent as they were big and they would teach the WoMans, or Cushites many things,-- things of war and magic that the Saurian high gods never intended for them to learn.

Most of these Giant, man-like beings were as evil as their Saurian Blood, if not necessarily their Saurian fathers. They treated all other creatures-- including their own mother's kind,-- the same way, the pure breed Saurians did. Others of the Giant, man-like beings loved their Mothers exceedingly. Even though they were the sons of the Saurian gods, and the sons of the weak creatures called women, these Giants chose to claim their lesser blood over their Saurian blood. They called themselves the "sons of Woman" Later when men grew to hate and dominate females; they were called the "sons of man"

The Giants who chose to align themselves with their Mothers' blood organized all the other creatures of the earth and made war on the ancient Ones. These wars lasted for hundreds of thousands of years, ending with the beings called WoMans, or Cushites eventually coming out on top of even the Giants who had led them.

Because over thousands of years, the sons of woman, evolved to be every bit as intelligent as the ancient Saurians, the ageless war finally ended with both sides developing weapons powerful enough to destroy the world and one another. Inevitably, they did, but not before the Saurians had raped and pumped more of their blood into the WoMans. It is said that these Hybrid seed of the Saurians escaped the earth for the stars before the Great Devastation that killed most life on this world. It is also said that some of the pureblooded WoMans, or Cushites did the same.

One of the WoMans escaped the Great Devastation another way. Or was he one of the Saurian Hybrids? It is said, that over time, it became impossible to tell the pureblooded WoMans from the Saurian mix breeds.

This man, who survived the Great Devastation, without fleeing the earth, did so by hiding in his own deep, underground shelter. The man's named

was Ut-napishtim. He was a scientist, and because he was the mastermind behind all the great weapons the WoMans developed, he knew what was going to happen in the final battle between the sons of woman, and the first ones of the earth, he knew when it was going to happen, and how to survive it. He did not flee the earth with the others of his wealth and position because he had big dreams, visions of being the last man on earth, filling it with his seed and ruling like god over it all. His dream he shared with no one but his pregnant wife.

Ut-napishtim had dreams of forever, but events didn't work out the way he planned.

Ut-napishtim was an old man. The poisons in the atmosphere, caused by the great explosions that destroyed all life on earth, but a miraculously saved remnant of many creatures, soon caused his death. His pregnant wife, who was only 23 seasons old, was left to give birth and raise their child alone.

As was her husband, the woman was a scientist, her name was Sun--lil, and she shared her husband's vision, if not his megalomania. Their scheme was not without planning down the smallest detail and the babe she named "Onanes" which meant in her people's tongue "father of multitudes." Those multitude of children, she envisioned, she had a name for too, they would be called WoMans, for her own glory, and because a man and a woman together had created them.

Onanes, who later--after he became the world's first sorcerer--gave himself a secret magical name, would change his Mother's name for her seed too, from "WoMans" to "Omans" to punish her seed, and magically strip his Mother of her rightful honor as first one, and creator/god of the WoMan species. Later he would rob her even more by breeding a different seed from his mother's and naming them "Humans". These Humans he gave, through Sorcery, rule and dominion over the earth and all its creatures--including the WoManbeings. But I get ahead of the story. These things happened much, much later.

Since the days of the oldest fathers Onanes had been god and king and it was time for new ideas and new ways. It was the females of every household that most encouraged the sons of Onanes to rebel. Under the example of Onanes' precedents, there was no protection, consideration or joy for the female gender. The example of Onanes' cruelties upon his many wives and concubines trickled down to poison the relationships of all men and women and made life more and more unbearable for everybody.

It eventually did reach the ears of Onanes that certain of his sons were plotting his downfall, and that all his children were supporting them in their rebellion against him. Onanes' rage was terrible to behold and all, of his household--wives, slaves and sycophants,--fled his grounds in terror of their lives.

Onanes knew that he could not exact vengeance on his sons because all the people were with them. His sons will surely be coming for him, so he slipped away under the cover of darkness and fled. He could not face his children knowing they were in a more powerful position than he. Death, was far preferable to one who had always been first and highest, than to have even a single word spoken in challenge against him go said without swift retribution. He had not the ability to punish or subdue an entire, united, WoMan race, so he left from among them and set off to unknown parts. He vowed to return as tears of hatred and frustration streaked his cheeks. All the sons and daughters of Onanes were going to rue the day they had deigned to exalt themselves against the will of the father of all. As he walked, alone, through the perilous night, his rage became a living, breathing thing beside him. He played over and over again in his mind how they had all whispered against him and stood with the Plotters of his humiliation. He will regain his high place and never again will they have the chance to be so unified, never again will they know peace and harmony. He would see them living like deranged animals for time indefinite before he allowed them the strength of unity again. His heart grew harder with every step he took and bitterness and hatred burned within him like bubbling acid.

He had traveled for nearly a week before he ever felt the tug of fatigue and hunger. He had left paradise--"

Nimrod paused. This was a point he wanted to stress because it would become of great significance to the rest of the story. He looked around at all the wide-eyed faces listening to him and plunged on even though he was very weary of the long day. From a window he could see darkness had fallen.

" In the area where they settled, Onanes and his mother worked hard to restore the fruits and vegetables that were poisoned by the explosion that annihilated her people. Being a botanist, as well as a genetic researcher, the woman knew all about how to grow, and cultivate life. She called the area "the garden of Eden", because "Eden" was her daughter's name. Later Onanes expanded the area, changing the name of it from, Eden, to Lumeria, which meant "Paradise"-- because the rest of the earth outside the garden, still recovering from the Great Devastation, was hard, barren and lifeless. Nothing grew, except desperate, ever starving creatures, struggling to survive on a planet that gave nothing easily or freely. By contrast, the hard work on the garden--which Onanes accomplished mostly by enslaving some of his children, even at that early stage-- had paid off immensely.

Fleeing from his sons, Onanes left the place that had long been WoMankind's home, with neither food nor drink. He had lived in the garden for so long he had forgotten what the rest of the earth was like. There had never been a need to go outside the garden. It gave so abundantly in fruits, vegetation, and animals raised for meat, that the people hardly had to do anything at all to live well. Even slavery had become more a form of serfdom and domestic service than hard, forced labor.

Outside Lumeria was an entirely different world.

Many strange trees and vegetation, Onanes saw, as he finally looked

around his surroundings with an eye toward quenching his hunger. None did he see was of what he was used to. After three days of starving for anything at all to eat, he finally saw berries--juicy and inviting--that were black and looked very tasty. He reached to grab some only to draw back a hand filled with pain and sharp barbs that pierced his flesh like knife points. Blood flowed and the earth, for the first time in centuries, had exacted a price from him for its offerings. Onanes flew into a rage and ripped the berry bush up by the roots. He stomped its fruit into a liquid mess. He will not pay tribute to the earth, the universe or anything else! He is first man! From now on all creation will bow at his feet!"

Nimrod was really getting lost in the story now, and he was surprised Azazel let him get away with so much conjecture. He looked up. Azazel's expression was the exact same as the children's. Nimrod felt some of the emotions of the old days wash over him, --when he used to tell stories to the then, three year old Azazel. He decided it was safe to continue with his speculations about Onanes' state of mind even though he still held close to the truth as told to him.

"Onanes got his revenge on the bush, but revenge did nothing to quench his now painful hunger pangs. He searched for other sources of sustenance and found nothing. He was faint with hunger. He constantly thought of the berries he had stomped into the dirt and regretted sorely his temper for the first time in his life. He learned, by example of aches and pains, that the rest of the earth was a stingy, treacherous place and it gave nothing without taking. A few days after the berry incident, Onanes found a food he did recognize--mushrooms that were one of the favorite edibles back in the place he had fled. Starving nearly beyond reason, he devoured the mushrooms, stuffing as many in his mouth as could fit. Later that night he was rolling on the ground retching his bowels out, and all but begging for death. The only thing that kept him alive was the thought of the ones who had caused such misfortune to befall him. When he recovered, he emerged from his ordeal with earth poisoning, with a whole new respect for nature. He ate nothing new without tasting it and waiting first. He soon learned what was edible and what was poison. He grew stronger each day, and

more determined than ever to recover his high place. He continued his journey to nowhere, and as the days passed into weeks and the weeks into months, he felt better than he ever had physically. Mentally, rage and yearning drove him all but insane."

Nimrod again paused, and Arnutha looked at him closely, trying to find the playful mood that she had never felt far removed from him. But he was as serious in his rendition of Onanes' life, as Arnutha has ever seen him about anything. It was if he had waited his whole life to tell this story, and had edited and refined it to the smallest detail. He continued...

" I say "all but" only because sanity or insanity lent itself to so much subjectivity. Onanes was always the epitome of selfishness and ruthlessness, but when he left paradise, he crossed a threshold, that only those who are deceived by his illusions and sorcery, could deny has made him a raving maniac. But there are many who still believe he is the all loving Father."

Nimrod peeked under his lids at Azazel.

Azazel blinked but said nothing.

" After a year of aimless wandering, Onanes came upon high mountains that barred his way like walls that reached into the clouds. Onanes did not change his direction or turn back. He began to climb. When he reached the top of his first mountain, he could feel the strength of his muscles alive with power and he felt, standing alone on that mountain, more king of the world than he ever had before. He wanted his throne back, and he wanted it with such intensity the Dead Ones felt the pull of his atoms so strongly; they flowed to him like wind in a tunnel.

For the first time, the Dead Ones were able to break through into the dimension of the living and connect mentally and physically with a living flesh and blood being. Onanes' mental distress, and the energy wave of his desires and hungers were so powerful, the Dead Ones could feel him and

hear him like they never could before. They began to stream through the hole Onanes' throbbing energy force had opened up to them. They saw an opportunity to put into motion what they had hoped to do since Onanes' birth. The Dead Ones began to teach him their language. They began to show him how, with the right words and proper compensation to them, he could ask them for what he wanted. Onanes, with the help of the conscious dead, made himself the new earth's first Sorcerer.

Onanes had spent ten years in exile, wandering through wilderness and plains, valleys and highlands. The mountain climbing so enhanced him physically; he was now even bigger than he was when he left paradise. All the meditation and communions with the Dead Ones made his senses so acute, he could see with his nose, fingers and ears as clear as he could with his eyes. The endless hours of sitting stone still, atop of high mountains had taught him how to apply his mind over matter. He could will his body into hibernation so that his cells never aged and though his appearance matured outwardly, within, he was no older, ten years later, than he was when he fled from his son's treachery. Finally he felt he was ready to return to paradise and put into motion what he had been dreaming of for ten long years."

Azazel interrupted Nimrod. He seemed to be still reveling in the joy of what he had learned that was good about Onanes and his voice was more playful, than challenging--but only slightly.

" Now how would you know what Onanes had been dreaming? Is it written in some book I know not of? All these things occurred many millenniums, before you were even conceived of, yet you speak in such detail, one would think you were right there beside our Father."

Nimrod grinned sheepishly. " True, young El but I am a teller of a story. Will you not give me license to add an Artist's touch to my own renderings? It does not take away from the truth."

" Truth, Marduk? Do not so disrespect my intelligence, brother. You are as bad as the Priests. Say your story to be your beliefs, but do not call it truth, for none know of truth what he has not seen with his own eyes, and even then it is open to as many interpretations as there are witnesses."

Nimrod's brown eyes appraised his brother with new admiration. He had thought young Azazel, not a thinker, or listener, but a mere follower because of his blind devotion to Onanes. It was now clear the young Sumerian did have some understanding and was not the cow Nimrod had taken him for.

" You have uncovered, and shamed me in my arrogance toward you, young El. I will speak no more of truth. Only belief. I believe this to be an accurate rendition of Onanes' past, but I admit I know naught of it but what I was told. Do I continue, brother? Or, have you your fill of mere hearsay?"

"Will you not be kinder to our father in your great tale?" Azazel asked, almost pleading.

Nimrod shook his head " This is not a story that is yet another tribute to Onanes' beneficence. You did not have to come to me for one of those."

Azazel glared at Nimrod, his mouth a thin line.

" My husband, it is late. Let us show your brother his bedding."

Nimrod looked from Azazel to Arnutha and back to Azazel, his right brow raised questioning, for he too wished to end the long day and see his

brother off in the morn.

" I will hear the rest of the story, Marduk. If you will be so kind to a guest."

Suddenly I'm "Marduk" again . Nimrod thought wryly.

Nimrod resented Azazel's reminder of Sumerian etiquette. Azazel knew how much both he and Arnutha, wanted to end the night. He was determined to have his way. Nimrod wanted to laugh despite his mild angst. Azazel was shrewd--Childishly obvious, but still deviously effective. He patted his wife's arm and continued with story:

"Onanes had always been taller and bigger than any other man on earth. He now stood twice as high and wide, as all but the biggest men among the WoMans. His hair was shocking white, as was a long beard that fell below his chest. He stood out like a Giant among Pygmies. His appearance caused such a clamor among the people, the brave sons of Onanes, who conspired against him, ran out to see what had excited the people so. Onanes immediately fell upon them like a raging lion and slew them all with his bare hands."

"Azazel reared back and cackled. "Serve them all right, the traitorous jackals!" He snarled with satisfaction.

Nimrod eyed Azazel warily. He stretched and shook his long legs to circulate the blood before continuing.

" Then Onanes turned on all the people who had stood united against him and divided them into four groups based on their similarities. To each group he gave a different sub-name and drove them before him toward the four corners of the earth. Forcibly exiled from the paradise of fruits and vegetables and plentiful wild game, the WoMans set out weeping and wailing and Onanes bade them go with the smallest of provisions so that they would not try to gather again together, and they will only be able to survive by hoarding what they had and fighting for what was to be had. He knew that the earth outside paradise was harsh and unforgiving, filled with

poisonous fruits, as well as monsters and ferocious beasts that the little people would have a lot harder time fending off than he and his mother did, or even he alone. There were no big people among the newly exiled, because Onanes slaughtered most of them; they and their wives. They were the main leaders of the rebellion against him. With him in Lumeria, Onanes kept 50 of the tallest, most beautiful women, along with some little ones who he intended to enslave again. He chose the women specifically for their size and beauty. Some of the women he chose were a black or dark greenish color like he. Others were of all the different skin shades, facial features, and body types inherited from Onanes' diverse gene pool, resulting from his earliest Ancestor's incessant rape of every living thing. The one constant between his chosen wives were their size and the symmetrical perfection of their facial features.

Onanes did this because he said in his heart he would make a better and more superior people than did the Creator, or his Mother.

"You lie!" Azazel shouted. " For your own purposes! You cannot know what Onanes said in his heart!"

Nimrod's youngest wife--the shy Southlander, emitted a sharp "oh!" and cringed. Several others audibly gasped. Some of the children ran to their father and clutched at him. Nimrod could see steel, only in his first wife, and complete fearlessness only in his daughter, Indianan.

The red-headed Giant was truly a frightening sight when his face changed color with rage and his double bright eyes spat flame. Nimrod reacted calmly, but every muscle in his body was tense and ready to spring. He will not allow the excitable Azazel, to continue frightening his family.

"About what part, young El? Where he drove the people out with barely the skin on their backs? Where he divided them and set them one against the other? Or, where he said he would do better than the unknowable One? Or, is it his diabolical renaming of his exiled children? What do you call the little people, brother? You say I cannot know what was in Onanes' heart. And so it is true. But I do know the evidence of his works. Has he

not divided the WoMan race--Sumerians from Halfhighs, and each type of WoManbeing from another? Does not the Sumerian race rule and strut like pompous peacocks over the Halfhighs? Who was it that first decided that there would be chosen people? Who taught the race of Woman, prejudice, hatred and selfishness? I am Sumerian as are you, brother. Forget you, that I was raised with the same arrogance and pride of tribe and stature that bred all, of the Sumerian race? I know of which I speak brother, because I, myself, am a living, breathing, product of Onanes' great crime against WoManity...And so are you"

Nimrod half stood from his seated position. This time he truly meant to send Azazel off one way or another if the young Sumerian did not control his volatile emotions.

"Will you from this moment finally be restrained , or do my family and I bid you goodnight once and for all? I am made weary by your lack of self control. My--"

" The story, Marduk." Azazel's eyes burned with feverish intensity. "I'm sorry." His voice faltered, "Please..."

" Send him home, husband. He has frightened the children. "

She was looking at Azazel with that glare Nimrod has learned to fear more than any other thing. Nimrod touched her shoulder.

" Send him home." She demanded.

Nimrod saw the anger in her eyes, and a fear of the likes he had never seen from her. He wanted to do as she asked. But then he looked at Azazel. The young Sumerian had said the word "Please." His brother was asking for more than just a story. Nimrod sensed that in some way he did not understand, his brother was begging for salvation, though from what or whom, he was not sure. Could it be that Azazel sought liberation from a belief system that he knew to be wrong? Or was it from the vise-like clutches of old Onanes himself, Azazel was trying to escape?

Nimrod said to Arnutha softly, his eyes pleading for patience and understanding: "Take the children to their rooms. It is well passed their bedtimes anyway."

"Not mine, father!" Indianan blurted.

Nimrod paused at the desperation in her voice. He looked at her with tender love. "No not yours, my daughter."

He returned his attention to his first wife. For a long moment, she glared at him and battled with his will. It was a rarity for her to lose but she took her defeat graciously. "Yes, my husband," she said finally.

Arnutha led the children out of the main hall. All but two of the other wives followed them. Trying not to be too obvious, Nimrod studied Azazel. For a Sumerian to use the word please... Why was it so important to Azazel to hear this story? Nimrod told him in advance that the story was not flattering to Onanes, yet he had begged to hear it, he, a Sorcerer of the highest cloth, a prince, one of the highest born people in the world. Nimrod knew how much Arnutha had wearied of this day. He wanted to do her bidding but he could not deny his brother after the young Sumerian had so humbled himself.

Nimrod began the story of Onanes again just as his first wife came back to Nimrod's side after helping the other wives put the children to bed.

" And Onanes had determined in his heart, to create a better race of Men and Women than did the unknowable One, and his Mother, even changing his chosen ones of the original people's cosmic existence from WoManity, to Humanity."

Nimrod repeated the assertion, more to test Azazel's ability to still himself than to reiterate the story. Azazel did not react. It was a good sign. Maybe they will all get through this day peacefully after all.

"After having driven WoManity from the choicest land on all the known earth, except fifty of the tallest, healthiest and most beautiful women, and several future slaves, Onanes began to beget sons and daughters upon the big women. Sumeria became known as the city of the gods and goddesses. They were all, of perfect face and form, and their colors were of the deepest black to the lightest white."

Nimrod could see the acknowledgment in Azazel's eyes; it was the first time he glimpsed that Azazel was beginning to believe parts of the story that were distasteful to him. Nimrod plunged ahead...

"Upon the highest ground, in the center of the best land on the known earth, Onanes began to build a city of brick and bitumen, which had never before been done. The Dead Ones had shown him that bricks and mortar made superior structures over the mud huts and reed dwellings of the past. It was Onanes' intention, to build a kingdom to last forever. Onanes called the great city that he was building Ur. As the time passed and the population of the Giants grew, Onanes began to build more cities and for many miles the citi-states built by Onanes sprawled over the choicest lands of the earth. To unite the growing cities under his dominion, Onanes called the entire region, Sumeria, which in the tongue of his mother's people meant "Heaven."

As Onanes' creation of his chosen ones, and an everlasting kingdom, progressed by leaps and bounds, conditions for the people driven away by

Onanes digressed so that they forgot they were the sons and daughters of the most perfect being, of their kind, to ever walk the earth. They began to live and dwell like the beasts Onanes had magically named and cursed them to become. Onanes had planted the seeds of hatred and division among them and they could not agree to accomplish a single thing. Among the Outcasts, -- who were half the size of the wealthy, healthy Sumerians, -- blood flowed incessantly and no two men with the slightest difference in appearance, language, and customs could look at each other, without one lying dead at the other's feet. The exiled Omans became like wild animals in their existence. In Sumeria they became known as the vermin, because they lived, and devoured one another like starving Hatebits.

It was Onanes who had opened the gateway between the dimensions that held Dead Ones and the flesh and blood beings of the earth. In Sumeria, magic and sorcery became as food and drink to its people. No man was ever without his talisman, no woman without her charm, no infant born without some magical cant mumbled over it. It came to be that Sumeria became a land of illusions and shortcuts and forbidden knowledge because all that magic is, is energy and the knowledge, gathered before it's time, of how to manipulate it. Magic is future events and inventions made to happen unnaturally in the present. Because there is nothing, that will happen to WoManity, that the Saurians has not already experienced, -- by dealing with the Dead Ones, Onanes was able to accelerate the evolutionary pace of Sumeria far beyond what they could handle or what the great Will of creation, intended. And all Sumeria's progress came at the expense of the little people who were evolving much slower than intended, because Onanes had decided that what was meant for the benefit, and ascent of all creatures, would only be enjoyed by the few.

Onanes was never deceived. He knew the Dead Ones were not helping him, but only looking for a way to use him to destroy WoMankind. It was a continuation of the original struggle between the Saurians and the seed of the woman, over control of the earth. The Saurians were determined to reclaim their spot even though by universal law they had forfeited their

first place because of their incessant greed, evil, and failure to become worthy of the blessing that was given them, which was meant to lead--through them--, to the blessing of all creatures. All the Dead Ones existed for now, was their hatred and bitterness, and in Onanes they saw their best chance to stop WoManity from reaching perfection and everlasting life in the universe. The first mother, through her self sacrifice, had earned for herself and her seed, the eternal blessing that the Saurians had lost. Now, the Saurians were in a suicidal rage, fighting against all creation, to prevent WoMankind from receiving what they felt was still rightfully, theirs

Of their diabolical intents, Onanes was well aware, but it did not persuade him from his all out pursuit of power and glory. Onanes remembered always, how his sons once humiliated him. There was no price too big to pay to ensure it never happened again. He was first man and he had not learned humility and though he grew toward the stars higher than any other WoMan-being on earth, he was as the giraffe, only stretching to reach a higher leaf to fill his belly."

Nimrod stopped talking. He looked hard at his brother. For a moment, indecision narrowed his brown eyes to a piercing stare. A quick decision was made in his mind and he uttered the next words though he could already feel Azazel's rage.

" And with Sumeria, Onanes has created an abomination against the Great Will of creation, and he has doomed himself, and all who attach to him to utter destruction because he, and all that is his, are like poisonous mushrooms in the bowels of creation."

Nimrod felt such a force of violence and anger emanating from Azazel, he wondered what kept the young Sumerian from exploding into a million pieces as he sat there, trying to contain it all.

Azazel's words were slow and measured, and so filled with threat, Nimrod's remaining wives fled the room. Only Arnutha and Indianan held

their grounds and even at that dangerous moment, Nimrod barely avoided bursting into laughter when his tiny wife shifted to put herself, once again, between he and the Behemoth that was his brother. He reached down and lifted her to the side.

" Careful, Nimrod..." Azazel switched names again. "You trample heavy and reckless upon the hallowed grounds of honor and respect!"

Azazel, made no motion toward his long blade or any attempt to rise to his feet. Tense moments passed as hours, but slowly, as neither Giant moved, the tension retreated from the boiling point, hovering in the atmosphere, simmering.

Azazel's teeth were clenched so tight, Nimrod could barely understand his words. "You brother rails so against magic each time you open your traitorous mouth! But it is magic that has made Sumeria, as great as she is!"

"And the Oman's as lowly and miserable as they are." Nimrod interjected. He was tired of tiptoeing around Azazel's emotions. Let the young fool challenge again the mighty Hunter. By the beard or breasts of the unknowable One, he will not kill the whelp, but he will send him back to Ur, and Onanes, in a body cast strapped to a dog sled.

As if Nimrod had never spoken, Azazel continued, in a tone so impassioned and emotional, Nimrod searched his eyes for madness.

"All the great knowledge! All the great leaps in progress! All the miraculous inventions! All the great deeds, performed by man and woman were done with the aid of magic! All the popular lasting religions! All the great works of art! All the classic literature! Every holy book! And music! Can you imagine brother, a world without song?"

When Azazel paused Nimrod spoke: " It is impudent and foolish to gather energy against the flow of the great Will of creation. What is willed by most, will come to be, but to go to the dead ones, to carve your own will in

creation, as Onanes has done, is a path that leads only to destruction. And all who find their comfort in such false realities will perish with it. Onanes has ruined the earth, and damned the entire Sumerian race, because of all the souls that has lived and died upon the face of the earth, none has been as power mad, and selfish as our Father. "

On hearing those words of Nimrod Azazel began to wail:

"Our father is great! Our father is good! He alone is deserving of glory and worship before him there is no other! He is most high! The creator of all that is great and good and you-- *You!* Woolly-headed dog! " Azazel's high tone dropped into a growl. " Will recant!"

In one swift motion Azazel was on his feet with his long blade drawn. Even faster than he could react, Nimrod's first wife was up and back in her favorite spot,

" **Get out!**" She screamed.

Nimrod searched and found the calm, green eyes of his oldest daughter.

" Remove yourself and your mother, daughter, and keep all the others from this room."

Indianan grabbed her much shorter mother by an arm.

" **No !**" Arnutha snatched away from the girl's tentative grip on her arm.

Indianan looked imploringly at her father.

" Remove you mother." Nimrod repeated calmly.

The girl grabbed her mother and physically lifted the struggling woman from the floor. The serene eyes looked from Azazel, to Nimrod,

" Do not kill him my father." She said, and she carried her mother from the

room.

Nimrod walked up to within arm's length of Azazel and stopped. He was in a rare state. He was enraged.

" Tell our Father...Tell him it is time to go. He is an abomination and all he has built is a lie. He has aspired to be god and creator because he thinks too much of his own importance! He is naught but a destroyer. Tell him, Nimrod says it is time to go!"

A noise, unlike any sound Nimrod had ever heard, exploded from somewhere deep within Azazel's being, through his lips. Azazel lunged with his long blade swinging low to high, with all the might he possessed. Nimrod readied himself to break both arm and sword as he'd broken the necks and fangs of charging lions with a stiff right arm that did not yield. But the blow of Azazel never fell. Suddenly an invisible shield miraculously materialized between Nimrod and his brother. Both brothers felt a powerful presence and looked around at the same time.

Standing in the room, with his lips moving in a silent chant, was the great Sorcerer himself. Though the countless years had stooped his muscled shoulders ever so slightly, he still stood at an astonishing height. His skin was leathery but unlined, the color of new grass, his brows thick and lifting upward in a menacing arch, his lips full like Nimrod's. The pupils of his eyes were covered with a milky white film; his long hair fell far past the nape of his thick bovine neck. The strands at the very top of his scalp were either combed, or grew naturally upward into two horn-like peaks. His beard, which was also white, fell to the center of his chest and parted at the center. In no measure was he old and bent the way Azazel tried to portray him. Taller, and broader than even his two sons, he stood majestically, in a flowing white robe trimmed in gold. There was a golden crown with spiked peaks, topped with rubies and emeralds nestled on the top of his head, a cane of pure, gleaming gold was in his left hand, and a large gold ring centered with a great black gemstone adorned the second finger of his right hand. There he stood, every ounce as lofty and regal as the omnipotent being, he aspired to be. And even now, seeing him, after so much time has passed nearly brought tears of awe and reverence to Nimrod's eyes.

Azazel lowered his sword and the old man shifted his eyes and looked directly at Nimrod. They were frightening eyes, not because they had the white film of the unseeing blind, but because it was clear, even as they peered at you like lifeless stones, they saw everything.

Azazel, sounding more like a little boy than a man, reached out toward the old Sorcerer " **Father---**"

" **Be still.**" It was a tone, not like one man speaking to another, but like a god, speaking to calm raging waters, and its effect was like magic on Azazel. The white pupils never shifted from Nimrod's face,

" **You have defied me as none ever has. You have repeatedly ignored my summons as if I was a nagging woman and not the father of all creation.**"

All creation? Nimrod thought. There were heated words he wanted to speak but he could not lift his tongue.

"You have blasphemed and spoken against me as if you know not of my power and will to vengeance. I have endured it all for the sake of my beloved Sumeria. I needed you, but no longer."

The old sorcerer swept his right arm in an arc and a tall, man-like figure slowly began to materialize from the thin air.

"Behold, my defiant son, the one who has freed me of my need for you and the seal of your doom!"

The face of the emerging figure came into clear focus at the same instant a pain-ridden scream erupted from deep within Nimrod's chest. His body felt as if every molecule was on fire and Nimrod only managed to form one word through his unbearable anguish before collapsing in a dead heap.

"Ashur!" he rasped and then he knew no more.

It aint out of sight, out of mind

And it aint no forgetting 'til I'm out of time

It aint no weight lifting off your shoulder

It aint business as usual and it aint over

--"Dragonbythetoe" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

At the sound of Nimrod's anguished screams, Arnutha tore from her daughter's grasp and ran to her Giant husband's side. Nimrod was lying on the floor, as if dead and his wife fell on his neck mewling like a distressed mother feline. Moments later Indianan entered the room, walking as if she was in a trance. Without glancing at her father she stared directly into the opaque eyes of Onanes.

On seeing his lost son's daughter for the first time, Onanes knees buckled, the old wizard stumbled as if he had lost control of his body. It was Ashur who reached out and steadied his grandfather.

The stare of Indianan never left the great Sorcerer's face and the eyes peering at him were ancient, dark orbs that were not the girl's own.

"Mother!" Onanes cried weakly.

When Indianan spoke, it was in a voice that was not that of a girl but of a woman, fully grown. It was a voice that Onanes never thought he would ever hear again. Tears formed, and began to stream down Onanes' leathery cheeks. Ashur and Azazel stood gaping at the old wizard. Never could they have imagined Onanes as he was at that moment. The one who had always stood high above all, the one who had always been father, and Lord of all, now appeared as small and vulnerable as a child.

" Why do you crucify me, my son?" said the voice through the lips of Indianan. "You whom have delivered from my womb and received yet again therein have become a thing most abhorrent to me. Is it your hatred for me that you wreak upon the women of the world? Is it they, my son, whom you rape, brutalize, denigrate and enslave, or is it I? If I am the

cause of your twisted soul because I have made my son the Savior of WoMankind through my womb, I regret now that I did not let you and the entire race die. Desist! For it is an evil worse than that of my own fathers that you do. They have condemned themselves to eternal darkness, but they never acted willful, only foolish. If you do not desist in this competition with the great Will of creation, it will be far worse for you and all that is yours than it is for the Ones that came before. Remove your death spell from my child and take you away back to your own creation and wait your time in peace. You have done enough in this world. Your end is nigh. Do not compound your errors. Desist, my son, and remove yourself and the obstacle of your illusion from the pathway of true destiny."

Onanes reached out to Indianan. " Why, mother? Why did you leave me?" He implored her to answer, but the ancient eyes in the young girl's face were gone. Onanes' head dropped at the uncomprehending stare of a 14 year old.

Nimrod moaned and began to stir.

"He yet lives!" Ashur spat the words like a vehement curse.

" My husband!" More of her tears wet Nimrod's face as Arnutha cradled his head in her arms.

Ashur screeched at the old Wizard. " Kill him, our father, for he has blasphemed, and dared to call for the death of you and all Sumeria!"

The old Wizard, still dazed, shook his head. " I cannot. My mother has restricted me"

" Then I shall do what should have been done many seasons ago!" Ashur yanked his long blade from its sheath and before any one could react ran to stand over Nimrod, his father.

Arnutha flatten herself against her husband like a second skin.

" Remove thyself immediately vermin! My quarrel is not with thee."

Ashur stood expectantly, as if his word was the law of the universe. Arnutha held onto Nimrod even tighter. The dark-haired Sumerian, who was nearly the same age and size as his red-headed uncle, looked genuinely surprised at the woman's failure to heed his command.

The first-born son of Nimrod was several shades lighter in complexion than his half-sister Indianan, yet not as pale as Azazel. His hair was coal black and wavy, his forehead smooth and prominent, his nose was long and narrow. His lips were full and sensuous, his cheekbones well pronounced, his chin strong and defiant. His eyes were large, giving him a deceptive look of innocence, their color was the lightest green with a strange swirling of silver in the small of his pupils. He wore a form fitting, black robe, trimmed with the pure white fur of slaughtered, cold weather Runbits. His boots were made of highly expensive Snakemen skin and a twinkling, silver star dangled from a chain that pierced his left earlobe. A large, black, sapphire stone pierced his right ear and his brow was teased with the same kohl pencil that accented his thick eyelashes. One of the tallest of the giants, he was muscular and perfect of form, he was vain and cruel, and of his multitude of female conquests none had ever encountered with him and escaped unharmed. He was a great despoiler of women and it was the ways of his grandfather--Onanes that he had learned in life and not of his father, Nimrod. Women did not defy him. And a "vermin" female *most definitely* did not defy him.

Ashur reached down and snatched the wife of Nimrod loose from her husband as if she weighed nothing. With a cruel, vicious heave, the Giant Sumerian tossed the small woman against the hard stone wall of Nimrod's house.

The girl, Indianan, was paralyzed, her eyes alone, darting around at a suddenly, insanely frightening world, in disbelief. First her father, then her mother; brutally attacked and lying as if dead before her. She couldn't accept what her eyes were telling her. She stood there, frozen, dazed, mute with shock and incomprehension before finally seeing, understanding,

registering things in her brain. Then her face crumbled, her hands fluttered spastically at her side, she started moving towards her mother, glanced imploringly at Azazel. Then her brimming eyes shifted, the hate in them recording every inch of her half-brother's face and form. She would not forget this day. She made, at that moment, a silent vow to one day see her brother's neck spouting blood and his head lying crushed with heel prints, at her feet.

Standing over his father, Ashur extended his long blade as high up as he could reach. The blade made the air sing as it swooped down toward Nimrod's neck, but it was not the dull thud of metal against flesh that filled the air, but the loud clang of steel upon steel, resounding like the blow of a mighty Shaper upon a heavy block. The impact of the abrupt halt of his downward swing, sent pain shooting up Ashur's arms and his eyes widened with incomprehension as he looked sickly, into the gray-blue eyes of his uncle. With a great push, Azazel shoved his nephew away from his prone brother. Ashur stumbled backwards and fell heavily on his ass. Briefly, the eyes of Indianan and Azazel met. Ashur recovered swiftly from his pain and shock and scrambled to his feet. Upon Azazel he squared, with his blade at the ready. He was without full understanding of what Azazel was about but he knew he had been challenged and even among an overly proud and haughty people, he stood out for his swiftness to take offense and exact a price in blood.

" Is your lust for my father's head so strong Uncle, that you will have the son's too, to keep him from it." He had minutes ago watched Azazel swing blade at his father. He thought they were in agreement that Nimrod had to die.

Azazel did not respond. He hated and despised Nimrod for turning his back on their father and Sumeria but he would not see a rabid cur, slain the cowardly way Ashur attempted to kill his own father. Azazel circled Ashur.

" You are a brave Sumerian, nephew. How proud you will boast to your

friends of how you slew the mighty Hunter. But will you tell them Nimrod lay unconscious, felled by sorcery when your awesome blade struck?"

There was more than a slight hint of displeasure at Onanes in Azazel's tone and statement. It did not pass by the old wizard unnoticed.

"You will not have the glory of taking the head of the despised rebel this day. When he is conscious and well, I bade you to go at him with all speed. But if you do not back away now, I shall set up such a wailing among the females of Sumeria, it will be heard upon the farthest star in the galaxy."

Ashur grinned the demonic smirk of the truly bloodthirsty. He closed the space between he and Azazel. "Is it not surely true, uncle, that your headless corpse will send up some wailing of it's own among the bitches of Sumeria? In fact, you have long been my main competition in many ways, Uncle. Were we not born less than four years apart? Are we not the same in height and size? How else then, for one of us to prove supremacy over the other than by the ringing of steel?"

With those words Ashur lunged toward Azazel and made an all out thrust for Azazel's stomach. Azazel blocked the attempt downward. His own blade came up, and Ashur had not sufficiently recovered from the hasty, unbalanced attempt to gut Azazel. His head was inches from rolling when the old wizard began to mumble. Onanes' lips silently wove a spell that left both Azazel and Ashur stupidly staring at empty hands which moments ago, held thirsty swords starving for blood.

In his mind Onanes raged and despaired. The pathetic, imbecilic fools! They would cost Sumeria her very hope of survival to engage in trivial, infantile blustery. His very eyes, he would give for the days when he needed no one, when he could descend into the vortex and return unscathed with what he wanted with only the strength of his own will and magic protecting him from the malevolence and hatred of his reluctant benefactors. Oh the hatred. The despair. The pure naked yearnings and hopelessness of those lost, tormented fools. Is their fate what awaited him? Oh, to die, to die! If only he had the blessed promise of eternal sleep offered to him, he would do as his mother says; he would desist and wait his time quietly. But he had gone too far. He had sunk too deep and reached to high. What has he done? Such torment and misery in the world and it's all his doing. His children...The Humans...The Omans, doomed, doomed, all are doomed. Oh, what has he done to the little Ones? What misery? What pain? What sorrow? His own flesh he has betrayed. He never intended it to be the way it is. He is first man, was not eternal lordship his birthright? They had no right. *No right!* Even when he fled their betrayal, vowing to return and regain his high place he never intended for the wages of his vengeance to be so steep. Insanity, surely the reason lay there...Inside his corrupted mind. It was foolish to bargain with the Dead Ones. They hated him and his seed and he had always known it was so. As an infant it was, when he first felt their desire to kill him. As a young boy, he feared them until he realized that if they could harm him they would have long ago done so.

It was the Dead Ones who had caused him to lose all reason and control. They had owned him. He thought that he could bargain with them and remain out of their control. He thought his will was stronger than their hunger to possess him. He is first man; all he wanted was his place back. He had entered an arena where he knew not the players or the rules, and for so very long he thought he was winning, but from the very moment he opened himself up to them, he was lost. He had been doing their bidding since, and he never felt the tugging of the strings. Even when he murdered his sons because they would be free, he never felt the strings. Even when

he drove his children naked out into the cold he never felt the strings. Even when he turned them, one against the other and gave birth into the world, murder and torment that never rested or slept, he never felt the strings tugging. Through it all he thought he was in control, winning, building a better world for all. Did not his sons need direction and instruction? Was not each one beginning to think and speak as if his way was better than the ways of first man? What kind of world but chaos, when every man tries to follow the dictates of his own mind? He never intended to kill them, but he is first man. The sight of them, half naked, rushing from the arms of their wives, in the middle of the day, standing before one who has lived and gathered the wisdom of the Ages; as if they knew anything more than the calling of their bellies and the dictates of their cocks. He never meant to fall so murderously upon them. They were his sons. But who would blame the daggercat for the crushed bones and splattered blood, when the Runbit stands before him and refuses to bow and run? Their arrogant, ignorance doomed them. They knew not what the simplest creature of the wild knows by instinct,--when a being of superior strength and might approaches you, you tuck and run away from it, not toward it. They brought out an animal rage in him by running up to him as if they were the guides and protectors of his seed, and not the one who had headed them since the beginning of mankind's time on earth. Seeing them, running towards him, something--it was *they*--had overtaken him, and he ripped his sons apart. It was the beginning of his total surrender to the manipulations of the dark powers. He had no control over himself that day. He turned upon the rest of his children and drove them out before him like beasts, and because of him they became beasts. But even at the very moment he sent them into cruel exile, he wanted to gather them to him like a shepherd gathers his flock and protect them as he always had. But that which had entered inside him was stronger than that which was his soul and he did not do that which was his own will.

From whence, came the idea to create a chosen people? He was the father of all. Of he who was short, of she who was tall, of they who were black, white, red, brown, yellow, smart and imbecile. It had never crossed his mind to distinguish between his children before. He had only wanted his

place back. To breed a race of kings, lords, and gods, sprung from his own loins, superior to the Outcasts in every measure was not his idea but his obsession--the crazed obsession of a captured mind.

Why, to what end, this scheme of the Dead Ones, to create a hierarchy in a world where all were equal but one? In his more repentant moments it was a question he asked in his mind, but it was an exercise of self-delusion for he knew exactly what plan. There were just moments when he didn't want to accept full blame for what he had wrought. He was terrified of the death that was not death. He knew that he lived in the flesh only as long as he kept the little ones from their true destiny. He had long ago surrendered conscience to the all out scramble to escape the looming threat of joining the living dead. The Omans must remain divided; they must not grab that ring. There were moments when he preferred the torture of the eternity he knew awaited him than to go on one second longer in this diabolical pact with the Dead Ones against his own children. What rewards for him, in seeing his children destroy themselves? He would have his handpicked, chosen ones and his city on a hill. He would avoid death until the next race of Omans comes after him and destroys him simply by reaching for their destiny--taking for themselves the promised paradise of their Maker. It will only end one way. There was no way for him to win. All there was for him was a postponement of the inevitable, and a continuation of his crimes against his own seed. But he had considered all that, and his choice has been made. He will avoid death by any means necessary. Let heaven and earth disappear in a ball of flames and everything, and everybody with it, he was going to survive as long as he could. He had no choice. Death, as it was for every living thing but him, was not an option.

The contempt in Onanes' voice sliced at the hearts of the two battling Sumerians like razor knives.

" After all the millennium, I have waited...All the couplings with stupid, brainless females, whose donkey eyes could register not even the small intelligence of Asses, but only the gluttonous lusts of mindless, sensuous beasts. All the haughty, imbeciles I have spawned who have never

mastered a single task in their lives, walking around in the intoxication of their pride at being Sumerian as if they had any part in being who they are, and are anything more than the drip of seminal fluid from the tip of a flaccid cock. All that I have risked and suffered to find two --*two* of all the empty shells of Sumeria, who could help me in my hour of direst need, and what do they do? "

Onanes paused and glanced down. His voice quivered with emotion.

" Would that my son Marduk could understand. Why has my most blessed spawn been turned against me? "

The old Wizard's white eyes lifted upward toward the sky.

" A thousand Azazels for one Marduk." he intoned. " A million Ashurs for the return of the lost son of Sumeria."

Azazel's chin dropped nearly to his chest, but the eyes of Ashur were smoldering with rage. The old wizard never trained his eyes on his son and grandson as he said,

" Blessed be my son Azazel, for he and my son Marduk, are all the evidence left that I once had a conscience, and that goodness once dwelt within this soul that is no longer my own to command. My son Ashur, you are a painful reminder to me of what I have become but in your dark, murderous heart, lays my salvation. I see in your eyes, the rage, the anger, I sense in your heart pure tyranny. I do not need the conscience of Azazel, or the love and compassion, of my son Nimrod, for in them there awaits only my death. In your dark heart only will I find life. "

For the first time the old Sorcerer turned to face his son and grandson.

" Stand aside my son." He said to Azazel. "For there is a thing that Ashur must do. It is in him."

Azazel was distressed by his father's criticism, and slow to understand. He

started moving away from his protective position between Nimrod and Ashur.

" Nooooo!" It was a long, drawn out sound from deep in the bowels of fear and Azazel, startled, looked up just in time to see Ashur pull his short knife from his waist and lunge with an animal like squeal upon the prone figure of Nimrod. The wickedly curved blade was already plunging downward and Azazel knew there was nothing he could do to stop its plunge into his brother's heart. Indianan, was on her feet but her huge brother held the 14 year old off with one hand as easily as if she was a fly buzzing around him. The razor sharp blade plunged. From his weakened position on the floor, the right arm of Nimrod raised to meet it. The blade stopped, as if Ashur had slammed down hard and met a brick wall. The eyes of Nimrod met the eyes of his son as he held Ashur's wrist in a vice like grip. Tears formed in Ashur's eyes. He slowly began to drop to his knees. Pain wracked his face. Nimrod's rock hard fingers were rubbing against Ashur's wrist bone.

" Father, stop...pl--"

Nimrod, still too hurt and disorientated to speak, formed the word with his lips, " Why?"

Hatred overcame pain and Ashur's eyes harden. His lips moved to speak but before he uttered a sound he was gone as if he had disintegrated before Nimrod's very eyes. And so too were the old Wizard and Azazel, gone, and Nimrod fell backwards and closed his eyes, and in another sense, he too was gone.

In so many words

How can I say

How can I tell you how much you mean to me

When I love you more everyday

--"Somanywordz" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

"Does she not yet awaken?"

Nimrod entered the room as quietly as it was possible for a man the weight of a baby Tonbig to move and whispered to his wife, Kayla.

A brown-haired, brown-eyed, refugee from a land and people far distanced from where she now found herself, she was the second Oman female Nimrod took for a wife. She had the almond shaped eyes, and gold tinged skin color of an Eastlander, but unlike most Eastlanders, she was taller and bigger than the average Halfhigh. She was the bounty of a skirmish between two Oman tribes and one of thousands of slaves Nimrod liberated in the Lowlands. Second only to his first wife in boldness, she was an expert in the knowledge of herbs and other healing plants. Nimrod was more thankful for her presence than he'd ever been. Her knowledge was the only thing between his beloved Arnutha, and death.

Ashur had broken nearly every bone in the little woman's body when he threw her against hard walls of the house Nimrod built. Many harrowing months had passed since that day, many weeks of pain, topped with an insatiable lust for vengeance by all in Nimrod's sphere.

The ebony Giant would have long ago returned payment to the wizards of Sumeria, if his wife weren't in such imminent danger of dying before he got back from the shining city. Ashur and Onanes will have to wait but they will never escape. He was still Sumerian. It was far beyond a breach of honor, what they have done to him and his family. They have hurt one he was sworn to protect. It will not go unanswered.

He had an abhorrence of magic and sorcery that bordered on the fanatical. Yet, for two months, his nights had been spent calling up, and honing that

which lie dormant, and scarcely utilized, within him. He could feel it awakening, becoming more lively and stronger every night. He knew his magic would not be as powerful as that of Onanes' because it was not to the Dead Ones that he turned for the strength to fight the Sorcerers of Sumeria. It was to the mother of all, that he turned for help. She had saved his life already, but she was only one entity, while Onanes was in league with, and had the help of multitudes. Even so, what she gave him was far more than what he had on his own. He needed all the strength he could get, to face Onanes and Ashur and...Azazel?

His daughter was not slow in telling him how his younger brother defended his life when he lay defenseless, felled by sorcery. The only thing he remembered of that night was Azazel swinging to take his head off with his long blade. But he did not doubt his daughter's word. Forever unpredictable, was his brother, Azazel. He was like a two-headed man with one head constantly countering the will and intentions of the other. He was mercurial and untrustworthy and at other times as honorable as the Sun.

Nimrod felt a literal pain in his heart when he thought of his son Ashur. What sort of monster was the firstborn of his own flesh? Who of the womb of the mother of all tosses a tiny female against a wall like an Ogrape trying to open a coconut against a rock? Nimrod thought of the time when he went on his first hunt. He remembered how brutal and murderous the men of Sumeria treated the Halfhighs. He recalled the rapes, the vicious murders, the loud laughter and hateful slurs as they hunted down, and slaughtered the hapless Halfhigh men...Dozens of Giants, killing and torturing an innocent group of terrified people who were less than half their size and strength. He had learned that day there were two kinds of minds in Sumeria: Those like Azazel, though haughty and vainglorious as are all Sumerians, but who only fight and slaughter for honor and defense. And those like the men on that hunt--and like his son Ashur, cowards, who attack the weak, and defenseless, who kill just for the love of the smell of blood. The former, he will spare if they do not force his hand, but the earth no longer held a place for the latter.

It had taken him three weeks to get his full strength back after his ordeal with Onanes and Ashur. He was stronger than ever now and his plans to unify the Halfhighs were going well. Already tribes, who used to fall into a murderous frenzy at the sight of one another; now intermarried and worked together to build stable communities. Most importantly, many of the different tribes were adopting the same language as it was with WoMankind, before Onanes banished them from paradise. Nothing Nimrod had tried in over twenty years did more to bring peace and unity to the Halfhighs than a common language. Nimrod's plan was to bring the one language to the entire Oman world, as it was in the beginning.

He had kept himself very busy while he waited for his wife to recuperate. Today he had been told she has finally spoken. It was a moment he had been anxiously awaiting, for two long months.

Nimrod approached the bed his first wife lay upon. She was very pale, with a deathly pallor, but for the first time since the incident, her wide, brown were open.

" She is not well enough to talk, my husband, but she needs to see you"

His second wife stood and left the room. She did not tell him that her sister/wife was not going to last very much longer.

Nimrod leaned toward the prone woman and whispered her name. Color came to her cheeks, her eyes shifted in the direction of his voice.

" My husband lives?" She rasped. Tears fell down her sunken cheeks. Nimrod stood above her, his big hands shaking, wanting to touch her but uncertain where, or how. In a low, soft tone he said. " What can kill Nimrod, the mighty hunter? Wild lions, raging Tonbigs, mighty--" Nimrod's voice broke. " Arnutha..."

From her side, her right arm rose and she began to shake and whimper. Nimrod was slow in understanding but finally he reached down and took her small hand in his. The little woman inhaled at his touch, as if she was breathing in one last whiff of his essence.

"Nimrod lives," she smiled and fell silent. Nimrod hated knowing, but he sensed she was gathering her last strength. "My husband," she seemed unable to focus her eyes, but he could see her trying hard to make a visual connection with his eyes, "Do not laugh so much." She said, and Nimrod felt the spirit go out her in the sudden limpness of her hand. Even so, hope did not leave him until he looked into her wide-open eyes and saw that her body was empty. Then, it was, that he suddenly lost his ability to breathe. His chest felt like a charging Tonbig had butted him. He wanted to scream, to yell at the top of his lungs for her to come back but he had no wind to draw upon. He wanted to run as fast as he could after her spirit before it got away but he could not move. He was as a man paralyzed from the sheer number of the things he wanted to do at once, cry, scream, run, destroy. When his voice did come back to him it was a long, drawn out roar of anguish, like a bull Mammoth, trumpeting its distress over the death of its lifelong partner.

Led by the girl Indianan, who had only that hour, left her mother's side to sleep, the whole household of Nimrod came running to his side. And it was, that all the wives of Nimrod ripped from their bodies, the garments they wore and with the warmth of their bare flesh, pressed upon him weeping and wailing and attempting to soothe his distress. Upon the girl Indianan, was the only calm in the room. In her arms was her own mother cradled like a child. In a low sweet tone, amid all the weeping and wailing, the girl rocked back and forth and hummed with dried eyes.

Nimrod finally pulled himself together. Kayla, his now number one wife, saw the fever in his eyes, she, more than most, understood the power of magic and the spirit world.

"My husband, it is not time" Nimrod shed himself of his clinging wives. He reached for his steel. Kayla handed him a cup of liquid, which he downed without thinking. The next time he more than half awakened, it was three days later and Kayla was poised naked above him. "My lord, you are not ready." She lowered herself down upon him, and even as he only partly felt her kindness through his grogginess, he knew she was

right.

I just want the best for you

pick a god that's blessing you

Martin never wore a bullet proof vest for you

--"Bless u" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

As the silence from Nimrod's house dragged on for nearly three years after the death of Arnutha, the turmoil and agitation among the little people of the Lowlands grew from a groundswell into a storm.

All the Omans had heard of the evil done to the house of Nimrod. In every crook and cranny of the Lowlands, the talk of revenge upon the cities of Sumeria grew from the oaths of a few hotheaded young men, to the conversation of nearly all of Omanity. These were no longer the cowered, subjugated exiles from paradise of the past, but as Azazel warned him not to do, Nimrod had taught them Sumerian ways and they were now united, and aware of the strength their new ways of acting and thinking has given them. Some of them even called themselves WoManbeings, as it was in the beginning. Nimrod never told them what their first mother named them, because it would have been a cosmic interference that would have diluted the totality of their power, when the little people came into their own, by their own inner intuition. He could see the time approaching fast, when they will find out who they truly are from within themselves. They were shaking off the yoke of Onanes' black magic; they were starting to see through the fog of 50,000 years of lies and illusions. They were coming back into their lost WoManity and reclaiming the destiny, the unknowable One, and their first Mother had meant for them.

They saw very little of Nimrod anymore and this inflamed them greatly. Whispers flew that the gentle Giant was broken in spirit. This angered the little people more with each day of silence from the house of Nimrod.

Nimrod has always been among them, teaching, judging, mediating, protecting and inspiring changes. The people missed him. The wind carried many heated words and oaths of war upon the high city, throughout every corner of the Lowlands. There was much talk of taking

the revenge due the house of Nimrod, if he would or could not do it for himself.

In the middle of such fierce talk was a brown-skinned, green-eyed Temptress, who walked among men like a goddess; whose beauty was so stunning, men, sometimes lapsed mute and frozen as a stone at the nearness of her. She was now eighteen seasons old and fully developed as a woman. A few select lovers she has already known. These were all men of status, wealth and power in the Lowlands. From each, she had extracted a commitment of warriors, to help her avenge the house of Nimrod upon the cities of Sumeria. It was her obsession to visit, and retain the same from all the strong and powerful Chiefs and Elders of the Lowlands

Nimrod was well aware of the brewing storm. He could see the Halfhighs were about to try to claim their destiny without him. He had to catch up or get left behind. He couldn't control them, or events anymore. Still, without him, they stood no chance against Sumeria. He was not yet ready. Neither were they. Neither, were the signs.

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Red yellow brown black and white

We're all in it together for the fight of our lives

--"Towerofbabel" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Nimrod had taught the little people unity and a respect for life that they lost for their own kind when they were banished and cursed by Onanes. They considered the black Giant one of them because they no longer identified themselves by geography, appearances, or language; they now bound themselves together by mutual respect for life, justice and freedom. One of their own had been unjustly deprived, one whom, they loved and respected above all others. The little people were on a war footing. The Lowlands had changed. It was no longer a playground for bored Sadists.

Months, it has been since any Sumerian had entered the Lowlands to engage in their favorite pastime. The last time was when a group of Giants thought to indulge in their murderous pleasures only to end up as food for the vultures of the Lowlands. There were six of them. A group of armed Omans--200 of them--had set a trap and lay in wait for the unsuspecting Giants. The Giants chased the swift little female decoy straight into the middle of a barrage of flying arrows. A few of the younger Halfhighs even dared to strike at the Giants up close. One of them was the only person who died that day from the Oman side. The little people had scored a total victory. The arrows from their bows took many to fell a single Giant. But with nearly 200 people drawing string, they launched enough strikes to cut the Giants to pieces.

Nimrod knew nothing of this initiative by a group of hotheads to take revenge on his behalf. He would not have approved. It was foolish to provoke the Giants before the Lowlands were ready for the consequences of raising their fears. It was also foolish for him to continue in his grief while ignoring what was going on in the world around him. For the first time in three years, Nimrod began sleeping with his wives again.

The growing, rebellious spirit among the Omans did not go unnoticed by

the leaders of Sumeria. They all knew of Nimrod's announcement. They also knew what the skies had spoken. Nowhere was the awareness greater than in the high city. There, Onanes gathered all the most potent Sorcerers of Sumeria around him and prepared for the riskiest foray into the depths of evil he had ever conceived.

Onanes knew that a conventional war with the Omans was impossible for Sumeria to win. The Giants will win the early battles--handily. But over decades, maybe even centuries, the vermin will eventually deplete him and all the resources and manpower of Sumeria. The vermin--his dispossessed offspring--were as numerous as the desserts sands of wind blown Mu. The children of Sumeria were as nothing in numbers compared to the Omans. They could not hope to defeat the beasts in the long run. The only option left to him now, is to escape. A flight to where the vermin will not be able to follow--at least for the foreseeable future.

He had forced the Dead Ones to give him one of their most treasured secrets. It was a risky, impossibly bold move by him. Azazel and Ashur had given him the courage to try it. He long ago foresaw what was happening with the vermin. He had long known his dispossessed sons would be coming for him. He fled them once. He must flee them again because Nimrod has again unified them. They will soon become too much for him. Never will he be free of the threat of them. One day they will follow him to the stars. Then where will he run? He had to do something. Now that he had the ability to fly above the earth, he needed something much bigger to give him time to rebuild. To get that something, he had to bargain, take the biggest risk ever. Now, it was all or nothing. He will give the Dead Ones their Oman lives, but for what he will finally seek from them, he knew he had to give them more.

It is a terrible thing that he is forced to do, but he had no other choice. They were all empty shells anyway. Greedy, selfish sensualists, who no longer even tried to propagate their own Race. He had chosen them to take over the world and to rule as king and queens forever. They knew not any longer, how to even kill like gods, much less live like gods. The Omans

had lost all fear of them, and they no longer knew how to withstand opposition. In a way, he would be doing them a favor. They are not going to survive much longer anyway. They have built up too much negative energy against themselves and they no longer had the strength to hold back the reaction. He can, and will do better. Create a better world among the stars, a better race of Humans. There will be no more Marduks and Azazels among his new chosen ones. They will all be Ashurs, and they will return to earth one day. And his day of vengeance shall be long, and thorough.



They say I am with them

Or I am against them

But I'm not just against them

I'm against them and their system

--"Dey come" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

"See what the great, black traitor does?" Ashur spat with disgust at the feet of Azazel, his handsome face splotched with angry burst of burnt plum, his heavily, kohl lined eyes livid, "If you had not interfered, the woolly-headed dog would be rotting in Hades where he belongs. Now he organizes and teaches Sumerian ways and ideas to the vermin. Even before our mounted forces the maggots stand bold and refuse to yield. They stream upon our patrols, again and again, like crazed dogs until they are swamped and forced to flee behind the gates of Sumeria, gnashing their teeth with frustration but powerless to ward off their humiliation. Do you feel quite so chivalrous now, Uncle, knowing that the helpless lion you have saved from the anger of my right arm has arisen to devour all of Sumeria?"

Only the knowledge of his father's great need for Ashur, and every magic wielding soul in Sumeria, kept Azazel from leaping onto his Nephew's chest, sword first. He *will* kill Ashur one day! He would see that he suffered mightily for his constant ridicule and torment, that insipid smirk, the cursed sound of that booming voice dripping false entitlement. Oh, how Azazel hated his nephew, the degenerate son of Nimrod! How he would relish the sickly sweet sound of his double edge sword sinking deeply within the muscled flesh of the young devil's proud chest! It was only a matter of time. If it were the very last thing he did on earth, he vowed to wipe every trace of Ashur from the memory of the universe so that not even his own mother will remember he had suckled upon her breast and slept contently within the safety of her arms.

"Better Sumeria and all she holds die a thousand deaths than to have as a Hero such a cruel coward as you have proven yourself to be"

Ashur launched himself to his feet, his right hand clutching at his side.

"By...!"

"By all that is holy and unholy, if you do not cease this fool's racket and seat yourself this instant, I will put such a fire in your brain that you will scratch out your own eyeballs from sheer agony! I will not abide the drawing of steel between the Magicians of Sumeria! Sit at once, you fumbling imbecile and let not my wrath overcome my patience this day, for it would be a fatal mistake on both your parts to dare do so!" The old Wizard seemed to pulsate with a flickering glow. Azazel actually felt fear for the first time in his life when the white-mane head turned from Ashur to him. "Ashur is right. You have done us awesome disservice by allowing the lost son of Sumeria to survive that night. He has discovered the strength of his magic. He has suppressed his revulsion of it and he hones and builds the power of it with obsessive passion. Why... because he prepares himself for battle with the magicians of Sumeria even as he prepares his little minions for war with her Armies. Everyday I feel a new surge in the strength of his power and it is my own mother that protects him from the wages of my concern. This you have brought upon us all with your childish sense of honor. Real life is not about blustery and posturing and bold words, it is about survival, always survival. You see the mother Hornbat after she has given birth, if there is not enough to eat, she will consume her newborn pups as nourishment before allowing herself to starve. If there is enough to eat, you will see how only the biggest and strongest Hornbat pups survive, for always they shut out the smaller and the weaker, so that they, themselves may suck twice as much, and grow plump off their mother's nectar. It is always survival, my son, even among the lowliest beast of the field; and in the struggle for survival all is honorable and fair. It is a thing my grandson seems to know by instinct and you, by comparison, are still in your infancy." The old Wizard sighed deeply. "You have left me no choice. I cannot stand against the greater will, and now the lost son of Sumeria alone."

The old Wizard's milky eyes scanned the huge room and its twelve occupants, each one chosen to be there because of some exceptional magical potential he had sensed in them.

"I must make you all immortal to stand with me. But first I must have your minds and souls and hearts." The old wizard's voice rose. "Each of you must surrender your minds to me completely and you must commune with me as I go to depths no less than all of us could hope to descend and come back whole. This is our only hope of survival. We must risk all, to gain all. For the glory and eternal life of Sumeria, *are you with me ?*"

The old Wizard was answered with a near unanimous roar of agreement from voices both male and female. Only Azazel sat in deliberate silence. There was something his father had said that stayed with him. It was something that nagged and tugged at the conscious and resided stubbornly in the nearest corners of the mind; "*All is fair and honorable in the struggle for survival*". Honor had always meant more to Azazel than anything else. He would do all he could to ensure the survival of his people, all to ensure the survival of the land of his father; but he was not so sure he wanted to pledge himself to do a *nything*. The cost Onanes demanded was far higher than he'd ever imagined; *he was not at all certain that he wanted to sell his soul*.

Onanes shook with an internal rage. Why did the only opposition to his will have to come from the two people out of all the minions on earth he needed most? He had already lost his son Marduk. Without Azazel, he had nothing. Ashur was very important to his plan, but without Azazel, he may as well as be without any assistance at all. Ashur was making himself more powerful every day by sheer desire. Soon he will surpass Azazel, as a growing boy exceeds the height of his father. But he couldn't wait. He needed to do this now! One day he'll make Azazel pay for his constant foot dragging and soul searching. But now, everything depended on these next precious moments. He knew he could not compel Azazel to submit to him. The mind, soul, and heart must be freely given. Even so, he began to weave a subtle spell of mind confusion, to wound his words in the silken

camouflage of magically enhanced persuasion.

" Our women, our children, our beloved land, have Nimrod s worn to sweep across until there is naught left of any but sand and wind. Even now the filthy vermin prepare to enter onto the sacred grounds of the high city, itself."

Much swearing, moaning, and gnashing of teeth followed Onanes words but he spoke now for one person only, and he watched the face of his son Azazel closely as he continued, "Nimrod has proclaimed that it is the destiny and true will of creation, for Sumeria to lay in trampled ruins beneath the feet of the barbaric hordes. But I say onto you now, that if the entire rest of the universe wills such a thing for the children of Sumeria, It has no dominion over us. We are gods, strong in our own will to create! Allow me, please, to bring to you all, the blessed gift of immortality and let us continue to rule as gods and goddesses over the vermin forever, for we are *Humanity* and our lordship over all the beasts shall never pass!"

Pandemonium erupted in the gilded halls of the most opulent building in Sumeria. The roar could be heard at the farthest part in the land and loudest of all, was the booming, unbridled enthusiasm of Azazel.

Of all the roused, passionate voices filling the thin air of the council room, Onanes heard only one, and it was like the sweetest music to his ears. For a long time he stood silently, savoring the moment. The instant the noise level dropped, he was speaking again, for he would not lose his momentum.

"Let us now be silent and join hands." All the Wizards in the hall found their seats and listened to Onanes' command. " Now everyone, let us begin the scared chant of the all knowing, open your minds, and release the deepest thoughts of your inner most beings onto me...Let me bargain your souls. I will bring back to you immortality. My son, Azazel, give me your mind, give me your soul, for in you is most of my armor against those whom, I seek to bargain, but whom will rob and devour me at the slightest opportunity. " There was hesitation from his second, most powerful son.

Onanes sensed this and lowered his voice to a soft, hypnotic singsong. "
For the children, for our women, for Sumeria...Your mind, my son, give it
to me. Open up to me Azazel, for thy alone is resisting. You will doom us
all for no gain. Give it... ***Give it***"

Azazel began to chant along with the others, to release the inner consciousness and inhibitions of his mind and Onanes entered within and found there a small resistance still. It was not enough to thwart his plans but enough to annoy him. The mind of Onanes struggle to possess entirely the will and soul of Azazel but Azazel refused to yield to him it all. Onanes made a quick decision to accept what he had, before he lost everything. Into the very core of the vortex, dark, black, soundless, deep, endless, down, down, down Onanes descended-- further and further, deeper and deeper, all the other souls bound to him, holding his atoms--his energy, tight. The Dead Ones, and other loose, wandering energy pockets, tried mightily, but they could not scatter Onanes--could not weaken him. **"Give me."** Onanes demanded. The Dead Ones flickered and dimmed, dimmed and flickered, resisting, hungering for all the souls attached to Onanes, desperate for the opportunity to enter again, the realm of the living flesh, but unwilling to pay the price. But they had partaken of the possibilities now, already addicted to what lay just beyond their grasp. They devoured all the other pathetic energy forces, suicidally, trying to horn in on what all disembodied entities yearned for. Foolish men wanted to be gods, not knowing that gods, angels, spirits, divinity, all disembodied entities, wanted nothing else, but to be men--flesh and blood. Creation, and paradise was made for flesh and blood, hell, and endless boredom--nothingness-- was made for spirits and gods.

"What doth thou offer to us?"The voice spoke in Onanes' mind.

"I will give you Omans. More dead Omans than ever."

"Can thou offer up them all?"

"No"

"Then it is not enough. Give us more Fool! Quickly, before we rip thee to pieces!"

Much to the Dead Ones chagrin, Onanes remained calm in face of the threat. He was holding together, and the souls joined to him gave him a

shield that the Dead Ones could not shatter. Still, he had to give them something they wanted, to get what he wanted.

" I will give you the lordly ones--my own creation."

The Dead Ones flared with glee. ***"So be it, but thy still must escape whole fool, or we shall have thee, all who has joined to thee, and all thy has pledged."*** The Dead Ones threw their entire force at Onanes, but the shield of souls around him did not crumble. Onanes particularly felt Azazel, giving him strong atoms of protection. He was glad he had shown the patience to Azazel that he has given no other but his son Marduk.

Onanes had braced for the Dead Ones' big assault. When they failed to scatter him, Onanes grinned, knowing that he now had the upper hand. He again made demands of them; growing stronger and more insistent the longer they failed to scatter him.

The Dead Ones began to give in to him, began to fill him--and those with him-- with the atoms he came for. Atoms of the dead, mixing with the atoms of the living, giving them forever, the forever that should belong only to the dead.

Onanes rose from the forbidden depths, intact. All the other Sorcerers were asleep as if dead. But they were not dead. They were living flesh, filled with the eternal atoms of the living dead.

Onanes got his immortality, and the Azog--the most powerful of the disembodied Saurians--which had entered inside him fought a mighty internal battle not to rip into a million shreds the fool who thought he could best an intelligence that had lived for millions of years--has seen all and done all. Onanes gloated, thinking he had won, but he won nothing. Death--especially for the evil ones--is the only refuge from torment. Onanes had just denied himself refuge, and the new atoms inside him--inside all the ones joined to him--, flickered with laughter--a laughter that erupted from deep within the deepest bowels of hatred.

Eternal life? The Azog knew that some worthy species of beings was

destined to get that anyway, without selling their dusty, worn sandals, much less their souls. His race almost had it, so did the first ones born of the beast called woman. It was not gained by filling your flesh with the atoms of the dead, but by knowledge. The Dead Ones had the knowledge. Onanes' father had the knowledge. All Onanes had to do was ask for it, but his primitive mind could never have conceived that one day the miracle of everlasting life would be discovered in a plant and developed by advanced minds who were not trying to leap ahead through butchery, superstition and magic, eons before they were mentally, physically and spiritually ready for advanced science.

The Dead Ones had tricked Onanes; struggling like they didn't *want* to enter the fools, tricked him into focusing on gaining eternal hell, rather than eternal life. He could have asked for the knowledge, instead he only struggled for the hell, and thought he was winning because his primitive mind was more full of arrogance than it was of vision.

The secret to renewing cells and living forever was scientific knowledge that would be gained in the distant future. It involved a special plant that grew in abundance in the Lowlands where the black Ones dwell in great numbers. The same plant that the gloating fool got sick off all those centuries ago, which along with his father's formula that he had hoarded, explained why he has already lived so long.

The new atoms inside Onanes laughed and laughed and laughed and Onanes thought he was feeling so energized and strong because he had won. Little did he know that every sentient being has a conscience and if you live long enough, a conscience can be worse than the torments of Hades. The Azog was going to give Onanes plenty for his conscience to dwell on one day...He, and all those other fools who sold their souls with him.

you and I are not accursed

although it's in the bible verse

before the moon there was first

black love

in god and all the starry universe

black love

the mother and the father of the world

--"Blaqluv" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Onanes was filled with the adrenaline rush of pure happiness and he began to swear and make oaths like a drunken seafarer; in his victory he was neither generous, thankful, nor forgiving. He harbored great hatred for all who dared to defy him and his yearnings toward vengeance was his most powerful motivation. He'd had a penchant for making oaths and grand announcements all his life. This day he had never felt the urge stronger.

"Blessed be Azazel and Ashur who has given me my life. For all eternity, may all glory and power that is not my own rest in their hands"

Toward Nimrod, all Onanes felt was hatred and bitterness, because not only did his dark son rebel against him in each, and every, thing; he was out of the reach of his vengeance. Nimrod had a protection and love from his mother that the old wizard never stopped aching for, and this, even more than Nimrod's defiance, caused Onanes' hatred to burn against his rebellious son.

"Cursed be my son, Nimrod. May all, of his likeness live in misery for all their days and may they be for all eternity slaves and inferiors to their brothers of the likeness of Ashur and Azazel, so that I may dwell in the pleasure of my vengeance for as long as the images of Nimrod lives to remind me. May the fates, and all the gods of Sumeria, and every wind that blows and rain that falls, be against them, may even the very ground turn downward its fruit from them and may all they put their hands to end in disaster."

Onanes chortled gleefully over his spoken vengeance upon Nimrod, yet, he was not satisfied. Nimrod's sufferings must be far greater than punishment by proxy. He had to find a way to strike at Nimrod personally, but at the moment he could think of nothing to hurt Nimrod the way he wanted to. Nimrod was strong, and he was under the protection of his mother, still he will think of a way to strike the face of the cursed rebel, but for now he had too much to celebrate to spoil it obsessing about Nimrod. His mind was swimming with visions of grandeur. Onanes reveled in his new omnipotence as the most Supreme Being on earth. He was the Lord of Lords and he had given all the best of his chosen ones immortality, and an escape from the encroaching vermin. All his wildest dreams had been fulfilled and there was nothing, *nothing* to stand in his way. He was the most high, the Alpha and Omega, the ruler of the universe, the owner and possessor of souls. It was all the power he ever dreamed of, yet, the insatiable hunger in him was as unfulfilled as it was before. He had everything, but he still felt there was something denied him. What could fill this hole in his soul? He had all the power there was to have. What was left? There was something, something missing, something more...

Onanes felt a moment of pure desolation before a thought hit him that brought him back from the depths of despair into soaring euphoria. What was the one thing in existence every creature owed allegiance to; every creature yearned for; every creature from the praying mantis, to the lowest vermin, to even the haughtiest Sumerian, revered, respected, and held in highest esteem? The answer, of course, was the Unknowable One, the Creator, the Maker of all, the first cause, the great Will of creation. From the days since the first living thing crawled from the sea, who had heard from this...Creator? What news of this Maker of all? When had It ever revealed Itself to anyone? When has It ever superimposed Its will over he who is strongest? What is the great Will of creation, but the strongest will of all, in, and of, creation? Who's will is strongest than his own, to rule? Does that not make him the great creator of all? He, who has shaped and imposed his version of reality upon the entire earth? Onanes began to speak his thoughts aloud. " **I am the most omnipotent being known to man.**

All Sumerians know and have seen me. The vermin have heard of me and quake with fear at the mention of my name. Why shouldn't I be the one to have all glory and reverence from all living things if none can oppose me? Why should not all these souls hungering to worship have a being they can see, and hear with their own eyes and ears, to bow down to? Why should I not have their worship and awe? Who can claim to be greater than I--first man? Am I not the father of all? Was it not my seed that pierced the womb of my own mother to give birth to all that is now Mankind?"

"And would that I have left you, when a babe to the elements."

The voice startled Onanes into silence and he looked wildly about in search of its source, "Mother!"

The mother of all men stood regally before him, shining fully in all her magnificent glory. Her hair was short and thick, streaked with the pale and shimmering hues of greens and purples and blues that could only be found in the deepest regions of the deepest sea. Her eyes--, before she made a choice of configuration, for she had rushed this appearance and had not fully anchored her atoms to a chosen form-- were translucent in color, with pupils that glowed like precious silver and her complexion was constantly fading in and out, in the various tans, yellows, ivories, reds, peach, ebony, beige, pearl and bronze skin tones of every living WoManbeing upon the earth, for she was indeed, the mother of all, and all who lived upon the earth were--in there purest form-- a reflection not of Onanes' endless greed and ill-gained powers, but of her great sacrifice and love. Her body was clothed, but translucent and when she spoke, it was not in the voice of one but of many,

" What have you done here this night, you fool?"

"Join me, mother. I will give you immortality. I will make you the most revered woman in--"

"*Silence!*" The mother of all, drew back her arm and slapped the king of gods with such force, that the sound of flesh against flesh nearly woke Azazel from his slow repossession of his still depleted and weary soul.

"Think you that I, who am the mother of all, need anything from you? I, who am a giver of your life? You can give me nothing! From the will of all that is my kind, I have been already given immortality. Their minds may have forgotten and forsaken me, to follow you, and your lies, but their hearts keeps me alive forever. I am the creator of all that is WoMankind. Before you, there was me! You fool, you blind and piteous fool, how can the seed have more to give than the flower from whence it

was sprung? You have lost all sense of reality and of yourself. So you have now moved from usurping the great will of creation, to challenging all creation outright for the right to have their reality the way they collectively choose. When they discover what you have done to them, they will never forgive you, and they will blot you and all you have made from the memory of existence forever."

Onanes' voice was an old rusty gate protesting the sudden exercise of old rusty hinges --that of an old man whining like a child. " **The vermin hunger for gods. Why shouldn't it be us, the most powerful creatures on earth?**"

The mother of all stared at her son with painful regret. Her countenance collapsed in a mask of grief. "They hunger for gods only because you have forced yourself upon them. It was your responsibility as the first, to teach them to create, instead you only taught them to look to you, to create for them. You are a thief, and a liar, but your end is nigh. Your alliance with the fathers of evil has pulled you far beyond my power and influence and I am here to ask--not demand--as your mother, please, my son, remove the horrible curse you have spoken against my children."

Onanes eyebrows rose in a sinister arch and his mouth twisted into a tight angry scowl of distaste, "**It's always about him, isn't it? You never cared that much about me. You left me, remember?**"

"I left a man who was about to become progenitor of the entire WoMan race. You know that what happened between us was never supposed to last."

Tears distorted Onanes' voice, "**But I loved you.**"

"And I, you; but only with the love of a mother for her firstborn child."

Onanes suddenly lurched forward and tried to enfold the mother of all in a passionate embrace. Like empty air she melted away from him, "**Mother, please, I can make you queen of the universe. Together we will--**"

"Is there no limit to your capacity for self-delusion?" Her tone dripped open disgust, her eyes filled with an emotion that was equal parts pity and scorn. "Lift the cursed spell from my children."

"No!" Onanes shrieked with the fury of a mortally wounded beast. "If you were not shielding him, I would erase him from all memory of the earth. I will hate him, mother. He is mine to hate. From my own seed was he sprung. With every atom of my being I will hate Nimrod until the end of eternity and I will leave no stone unturned in my lust to hurt him in any and every way I can."

The mother of all folded her arms and widened her stance. "Then hear you this; you have blessed the two of your sons and cursed the one. I can unsay naught that you have spoken, but I am empowered by the great Will of creation, to speak living words of my own and neither you nor all the demons in hell can unsay what I have spoken. Blessed be my child Nimrod and all that are of his likeness. May he have the strength to survive all that the Dead Ones, the voice of evil, and the earth itself, shall bring forth against him. May he bear all his afflictions without a distortion of his true nature, for it is in him and him alone, that the true ways of WoMankind are manifested. May my child Nimrod persevere as he is, for the day will come when he will rise above the curses of Onanes, and in him all WoManity shall seek solace and a path back to their true nature. In the kind, carefree, patient, impartial and all encompassing spirit of Nimrod, will WoManity find escape from all the cruel, selfish, divisive, and hateful machinations of Onanes. By the power of the unknowable One I speak. So be it."

Onanes stood before his mother, shaking with rage. He knew in her blessings she had given Nimrod the final victory.

"Retract." He hissed. "Retract at once or I shall speak a curse upon the women of this earth, a thousand times harsher than that I have placed upon the black images of Nimrod."

"Would you, my son curse the women of the earth and your mother, as

well? Is your hatred of the one who brought you life really so strong?"

"Retract, *witch!*"

"By the atoms of the great Will of creation, I will not!"

Onanes turned from her and opened his arms wide. He raged. "Cursed be every living female creature upon the face of the earth and beyond. From this day forward may the offspring of every living female thing come forth from her with the pain of one pierced through the entrails by the lance of the mightiest Sumerian warrior."

The mother of all gasped in horror.

"May every living female thing be under the power of the male and may her yearnings for the male be more powerful than any other she possesses. In all ways and in all things, may she be dominated by the male as the gods dominates the dumb beasts and if the male should treat her kindly or cruelly, let none speak of it, or intervene for she is his property and is his to control even unto the final refuge of the grave. May heaven and earth pass before any word I have spoken fades from existence. By the will of the ancient Ones, so be it"

The mother of all, felt a malevolent energy suddenly, explode at her, and she recoiled in horror at the realization--*they were here*. The ancient enemy was inside this room--*inside her son*.

She was a scientist in her living years. She knew that what Onanes would call magic was really a manipulation of energy waves. The Dead Ones knew how to control energy. It was advanced technology from the past--her past. She could do the same thing. The device she carried was what enabled her to concentrate her atoms together for a limited time. The Dead Ones had the same device. What has Onanes done this night? The Dead Ones couldn't use the device to concentrate their atoms and enter the earth's energy field unless atoms, which were already on the other side, opened a gate for them. If Onanes did open a gate for them tonight, they could fulfill every evil word that fell from his poisonous tongue. It was

hard for her to think when all she wanted to do was offer up endless penance and lamentations for having given the world such an insatiable fool, as that which had sprung from her loins so many years ago. She knew she could not let Onanes' spoken evil against the women of the earth go forth unchecked. She could not undo his word. She could only open a gate to other atoms, to create an energy force to fulfill her words. She had to beckon her own fathers, who were no more innocent of evil than the Saurians, but they would at least serve as an opposing force to the evil her son had unleashed into the world--if for no other reason but their own purposes. She beamed back at the disembodied Saurians, the same ancient hatred that they beamed at her.

"May all the females of the earth have the strength to bear the curses of Onanes until the day of their deliverance, which will come as soon as the words of Onanes, which are the same dust, waiting to be scattered and extinguished as the ones who empower him, weaken, and the word of righteousness prevails. Until then, may there be enmity between the male and the female. May he bruise her in the heart and she bruise him in the soul. Her yearnings shall be for his physicality as spoken by the voice of evil. But his yearnings shall be for her spirit. May the day come when all realize that it is easier to live with a broken heart than an empty soul and may the male of the species discover that the female is far more capable of living without him than he is without her. And may he rise above the words of Onanes and began to see for himself what is in his own best interest. And may male and female together come to see that love, equality, and mutual respect are the highest and most satisfying form of relationship that can, or shall ever be. By the will of my Ancestors, so be it."

Onanes' response unnerved her. When she finished, she expected to have to defend her life with the language of her fathers from attack. Instead her son smiled, "Very good mother; but you do know that my word will only weaken when I weaken. Your blessings are useless as long as I remain strong and I intend to remain strong Mother, for a very long time."

"Your fate is sealed, and you may meet your destiny sooner than you expect."

Onanes laughed, "Now who's deluding herself, Mother? Yes, my fate is sealed. The vermin will eventually find me out and destroy me but do you know how long next to forever is, Mother?"

It was not to Onanes that she truly addressed her next question for she could stand the smug ignorance that spewed from the mouth of the puppet who was her insane son no longer. Something terribly frightening must have taken place in order for them to speak so confidently and her voice trembled as she asked, "What makes you think you have so much time?"

Onanes cackled like a madman with the false laughter of atoms not totally his own. "Look around you mother. Take a very good look at all these unconscious fools who lie totally depleted before you now."

"What have you did this day, you fool?" She knew he had done the unthinkable, but there was something more here, something on a scale that far surpassed the idiocy of allowing himself to be possessed by the enemy who has hated his species since the beginning of WoMankind on earth.

"The stars, Mother. I am going to the stars. Can you imagine how long it would take the vermin, who haven't even yet discovered a writing system, to follow me to the stars?"

The laughter. It came from Onanes' throat, but the hatred in the sound was an old assault, a haughty, gloating, arrogance her people had defended themselves against for 500,000 years, until finally both they, and their bitter enemy, blew themselves up. She fled her son's presence and the pain she felt over *their* victory in entering again this realm, by the means of her son, was the betrayal, she felt she had committed against an entire extinguished species--her extinguished species.



And I said father do you see it

Can you hear that sound of freedom

And can you show me the way

Can you show me which road to lead on

--"Zimbabweway" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

The fat little man was panting like a thirsty dog as he slobbered all over the twin mounds of firm, bronze flesh that all but buried his chubby face. Indianan's nipples lay flat and soft as her mind wandered to other places, thinking of other things.

He was one of the smallest one yet. Most of them could at least enter her and maul her breasts at the same time. With this one it was either one or the other. Not that it mattered. She felt nothing of even the biggest of them. She had never lain with a Sumerian. The Omans were all like little boys to her in size. There will be no pleasure in the act for her.

She had grown to be--at the age of 18--as tall as a full-blooded Sumerian woman. That meant she stood head and shoulders above all in the Lowlands but her father, Nimrod. She heard that somewhere there were others like her, but she had yet to meet any. Her kind was rare because it took an extra strong Oman female to carry the seed of a Sumerian and survive the child's birth--or one married to her father.

The little man, having tired of her breasts, was crawling down her stomach. She could feel him quivering and when he pushed at her thighs like a burrowing rodent, she opened her knees to him, felt a worm like thing pressing at the opening of her flesh and shifted downward so it could enter. She listened to his grunts, felt not his worm, but his entire body pumping furiously between her thighs. She knew he would be quivering and collapsing on her stomach in a few seconds. They were all the same. Some pumped a little longer than others, but none of them lasted long

enough to get their bargains worth of pleasure it seemed to her. They were pledging to her the lives of men under them for a few moments of thrusting between her thighs, although revenge and the restlessness of the young men were also motivations for the old leaders.

On cue, the fat little Halfhigh grunted one last time and fell on top of her as if dead. She reached down and stroked his hairy back. Heard his harsh, steady breathing. This was the part she hated most, lying there while some little hairy-back pygmy lay snoring on top of her. This one she could bear easier than most. He was the richest Oman in the Lowlands. He had promised her 5,000 sword bearing men.



There's a girl in a pretty dress

her pretty face like mine

her soul like mine

her eyes unblind

her heart lying heavy in her breast like mine

maybe she's a primitive

half naked and fine

living off the land and the fruits of the vine

--"Likemind" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

"It is good my husband." The woman half-spoke, half-moaned the words as she bounced up and down above the prone form of Nimrod. Nimrod lay on his back perfectly still and with eyes closed, savored the sensation of the velvety wet tightness sliding up and down the length of his phallus. Much of the time spent when making love to his wives was in preparing them for the entry. This night it was his newest, and last wife, Sun--nutha. He had once thought his marriage to her would never be consummated. After six months in his household, she started claiming her nights to lie with him. For weeks on end, all he did was hold her on his chest as they slept. She asked him not to uncover his rod so he slept beside her with his bottom half covered. It was not a thing that overly frustrated him because his mind and body were so busy with other matters. He had thrown himself whole heartily into the affairs of the Halfhighs again. He worked harder than ever. Many nights he welcomed her turn because he knew he would not be expected to exert himself with her. He relished the rest and the simple act of holding her all night. Her great delight was in conversation. She loved for him to talk to her about all things-- from the spiritual to the romantic.

It was after three weeks of passionless affection, that to his surprise she

asked to see his rod. He had taken off all his clothes and stood before her with all the glory and terror of his nature exposed to its fullest extent. He had not, initially, yearned to copulate with her but after she asked to see him it was *all* he yearned for. She touched him, tentatively at first and then she began to stroke him like one petting a small animal. She *petted* him and he erupted with laughter. He did not want to frighten or shame her but he could not help it. He'd never been petted on his rod before. All his other wives were experienced women. They knew how to handle a man's part.

She asked him to show her how to be a wife to him in the bedroom. He stretched her with one hand and with the other pushed at her center with his forefinger until it slipped inside. She accepted it easily. He did with his finger what was naturally done with a phallus. Afterward he explained to her how it was normally done and why he did it with his finger first. Even though he saw she had been entered before, she told him she never knew what really went on because her eyes were always closed and her mind always somewhere else. He did not copulate with her that night.

For three nights with her, he let his finger substitute for his rod.

The first night he entered her was the longest night of his life. Long before the deed was accomplished he wanted to quit. She would not allow it to be delayed another night. She wanted to be with him like all the other wives talked about. He hated every minute of the ordeal because it cost her so much. Some Halfhigh females were less made to copulate with a Giant, than others. He did not move after he entered her, had no desire to move. It was she who took him, slow and painfully at first, but then she became wetter and silkier in her woman part. She began to slide up and down his phallus with increasing ease. .

It was the beginning of a bond with her that literally gave him a new lease on life. He had lost a part of himself when Arnutha died. His shy Southlander, Sun--nutha, had given him back something as inspiring and wonderful as that which he had lost. He had loved Arnutha so much he never expected to find such a love again. Perhaps it was because his beloved Arnutha was three years gone, and so much he had shared, felt,

and experienced with her now lay forgotten; but he now felt his love for Sun--nutha was greater than any, he had ever known. She became his heart and soul, her smile, her touch, her simple presence made every day joyful enough to be his last day on earth. He had not, the fears and worries of the past; he cared not, about the future or the present. She was all in life that he needed or wanted. He tried with great effort to retain the same warmth and affectionate toward his other wives that he'd always had. He struggled mightily to uphold his obligation to the Halfhighs. The little people had risen up and were fighting for freedom from terror and injustice. It was a revolution he had begun by teaching them Sumerian ways. It was a momentum he was not yet ready to lead and a war they were not yet ready to win. He should be with them, preparing them for the great struggle that lay ahead. Instead he found it harder and harder to find passion for anything at all but her.

She was above him. Her feet were planted on both sides of his hips, her knees bent, her pelvis thrusting down upon him, her body receiving him with a grunt before a frenzy slide upward led to another smooth downward thrust. Nimrod could feel all of her. Her breasts were plump and heavy, their presence, round and warm in his hands, the hard, pointy nipples digging in his palms. Her hips were moving with the rhythmic, frenzied motion of flesh that has divorced itself from mind, and the moans of Nimrod began to mix with the shrieks of Sun-nutha as they become one, he into her, she into him--, mentally, physically and spiritually.

When they finally became two again she lay beside him flat on her back, catching her breath. Nimrod reached out to her , she turned, with whelp-like squirms, she snuggled tightly against him.

" My husband, speak to me of love."

Nimrod's low baritone was barely audible but Sun--nutha could feel his words, could feel him as clearly as she heard him. She could feel his love flowing through her veins like her own life's blood.

"There is no love but the love of a woman for a man. A man does not

know love. A child does not know love. What they mistake for love is really want, desire and self interest. Animals do not know love. Gods do not know love. Only a woman knows love. A woman in love, alone, gives of herself without hope of receiving anything of like, in return. A woman in love, alone, bears naked her soul and invites entry into the deepest core of her being. No other living thing possesses that kind of love that is naked and vulnerable, pure and honest. The love she holds for a man is not the love she has for her children, nor the love she has for her mother or father, brother, or gods. All these loves are just as strong, but the love a woman holds for man is a different love, a love she fights for, a love she suffers for; it is the love of creation. And when she gives a man that love, only he, and he alone, can kill it." Nimrod paused and turned to his wife. "And you, my wife, are the most perfect of women. And I, as the man who you have chosen to love, am the most blessed of all in creation."

Silent tears rolled softly down Nimrod's broad chest. "Is it because you wish to kill me that you speak such beauty to me, my husband? Already I burst with love and passion for you. Please say no more, for truly one more word would cause my heart to explode with all that I feel for you."

And upon the phallus of Nimrod Sun--nutha . And for the first time Nimrod needed do no preparations to make love to one of his wives.

It's for freedom

it's for light

We're 'bout to meet 'em

in the darkest night

If we make it out alive, I'll see you at the tower of babel

--"Tower of babel" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

The beautiful, bronze-skinned woman sat taller in the stirrups than any of the thousands of men she was leading except the man on her right and two others. Her hair blew freely in the strong wind as she halted her mount and surveyed all that lay before her now. She and her forces were within two miles of the shining city. Not one Giant had emerged from behind the high walls to confront her and the closer she got to the home of the Giants, the more worried she grew. Surely the Giants would not allow her to stroll upon the gates of Sumeria so easily.

The man who rode on the right side of her was a Southlander, a man of skin that glowed with a blue ebony sheen, tightly curled hair, and narrowed eyes of darkest brown. He was not the tallest man of the Lowlands but he was not too far from it. He was one of the rare seed of the Giants who were born of an Oman mother that was able to carry him to term and pass him safely into the world. His Sumerian father's rape of his Oman mother was not the usual brutality that left Oman females dead or torn up inside. He never met the Giant who fathered him, but his mother had raised him in unusual luxury and abundance. The rumors of the source of her fortune he had heard all his life.

He had come from one of the far distant, wild clans. He had sought out the daughter of Nimrod because of the tales of her great beauty and because of her mission. He too, wished to avenge the house of Nimrod, and at the same time, mayhap, win the heart of the renowned, beautiful ice queen. His name was Samson.

Two thousand of those gathered that day to ride with Indianan were his men. He had become their leader not through the traditional way that most Oman leaders became ruler of their clans. He did not ascend through family line but by crushing the royalty of his tribe and forcefully placing himself as their supreme leader. He had acted like a tyrant in the matter, but he was quickly accepted by his people because he was a great, yet merciful warrior and a humble, just leader, unlike those he had displaced.

He was one of those Indianan had never bested in sword play. She had given him a place at her right side because she had never bested him in thinking either. He had assured her that the Giants would engage them long before they reached Sumeria. She had agreed and together they had devised a cunning plan. Just in front of them lay the city of the Giants and no one has ridden forth to meet them. They needed a new plan.

"What say you, Samson?" Indianan lifted a slender hand in an attempt to shield her eyes from the merciless sun and wind blown dust.

"It is a trap." Samson scanned the horizon ahead and was disappointed to find that still none were riding forth to meet them. "Perhaps, it would be wise to wait a while before advancing further. Perhaps, we should give Nimrod a chance to--"

"Perhaps, you should answer the questions I ask you, and save your opinion about *waiting*, for Father and fat, old chiefs."

Samson, who had grown used to Indianan's quick temper and razor sharp tongue, remained unfazed by her insulting response, "We should send ahead two spies. Find out how they await us. Then we should split our forces. Attack the gates with a first wave. If we get in, then we bring up the second charge. If we do not breach the walls with our first attack, we fall back, lay siege. Nimrod commands more than 10 times the men we have here. The second option," Samson turned his muscular frame in his mount to look Indianan in the eyes, "is that you go ahead alone to find your half brother and die like a fool by yourself."

"And if I did, dear Samson, would you not mourn?"

Before he could answer, she yanked the reins of her stallion and trotted back towards the main body of warriors. She called for two volunteers and sent them forward into Sumeria to spy on the Giants.

Ashur threw his head back and laughed so long, the men who at first began laughing with him stopped and stared, their faces a mask of confusion and concern.

"Ten thousand pig men...Led by a woman...At the gates of Sumeria?"

Ashur moderated the hysteria and wheezed out the words in an incredulous tone. And just when the men with him sighed with relief that their leader hadn't been bit by a rabid bat, he launched into another round of maniacal laughter.

"Shall we open the Gates for them, Asar?" One of the men chuckled nervously.

Ashur, red faced, and still unable to speak for the great peals of laughter that shook through his mountainous frame, gave a dismissive wave of his hand, and then, just as the men were turning to carry out his order, managed to choke,

"And see that the red carpet is laid out for their arrival!"

night comes like a blanket of sky

and there's nowhere to run and nowhere to hide

--"Benduoova" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

It took Nimrod six weeks to get his army equipped and ready to move after he learned that Indianan had already led ten thousand Halfhighs out of the Lowlands to launch an attack on Sumeria. He needed six years. He had been informed of most of his daughter's endeavors in the Lowlands, if not of everything. He knew from the day she sat there humming, holding her Mother in her arms, that he wasn't going to be able to stop her from going after Ashur. But he never thought she would be so reckless as to go forward without him. Ashur will kill her. His Sumerian son was not only a superior swordsman, he was also one of the most powerful Sorcerers in the world. His daughter had also inherited the power. He could tell that, but she had no teacher and as far as he knew she never even tried, too seriously, to become a serious Sorceress. He had to catch up to her before she met up with Ashur.

He estimated that it would take her three months to reach the shining City. He hoped, and figured she would be traveling a normal pace. His force was ten times bigger than that which she commanded, but if they moved at fast a pace as possible, they might arrive soon enough to reinforce Indianan and her men .

He was rushing his collection of farmers, carpenters, stonemasons, shepherds, fishermen and hunters into a war they were nowhere near prepared for. Indianan had taken most of the born warriors of the Lowlands with her on a suicidal quest to help her avenge her Mother's death. The one bright spot was that the signs in the sky were finally aligned. They declared that the Age of the Halfhighs' deliverance from Onanes' illusion, had began. Whether that would happen in this coming battle, or a future battle, he didn't know. All he knew for certain is that he had to get to Sumeria to help his daughter.

He had failed the little people with his three years of mourning and six

months of selfishness. And now his daughter has deprived him of any time to try to make up those lost years. Her foolish move will unite the Giants for all out war. But then again, she was only doing what the stars decreed. The Halfhighs will never really be ready to fight the Giants. Most of them will never be more warrior than they are now. Who knows how much longer he would have dawdled due to his fear. Fear of leading these people who trusted him with everything, into a war with Sorcerers and men twice their size, and ten times more effectively armed.

His daughter had forced his hand. There was nothing left for him to do now but try to ride the wind of her momentum. For the little people, there was no turning back. The Giants were always terrified of the Lowlands. Nimrod was well aware that those fears inside the Giants will never leave the Halfhighs alone now. If Indianan, initiated official war on the gods of the earth, the little people will be left with only two choices--fight to defend themselves, or be wiped from the face of the earth.

I saw a light

I heard a sound of freedom

--"Zimbabweway" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

The two spies that Indianan sent forth to spy on Sumeria returned later that night. One was a Westlander, with a red tinged complexion, his long, black hair was worn in a single braid that fell straightly down the center of his back. The other was an Eastlander, small and compact, with the deep-set, focused brown eyes of a daggercat and skin the same color as Nimrod's wife Kayla. Both were young, and it was the sturdier of the two - the one with the light, predatory eyes - who did the talking, "We saw nothing. No Giants outside the gates, none on the walls, the towers left unoccupied. It as if they are totally unaware that we are riding upon them."

Indianan listened intently, her brows knitted in thought. If there was one thing she was certain of, it was that the Giants knew they were coming. Her father had told her many things about his people, things that most Omans did not know. The Giants had much more of what her father called "technology," than just lights that shone like little stars in a bottle. They also had magic windows, like crystal balls, which they used to see everything that went on in their lands. It was strange to her that the Giants had this magical "technology" which made them like gods in some ways, yet in most ways they were no more advanced than the Omans. They still fought with spears and swords.

They knew she was coming, she was sure, but she just could not see a strategic reason for why they had allowed her to get so close to the gates without interference, why, even now, they were not gathered to meet her. Samson was right of course. The Sumerians had no doubt set some great and elaborate trap for them, but what? If she and her army reached the gates of Sumeria untouched, they will be able to do more damage to the Giants, to her Father's benefit, than they could if they reached the gates only with partial strength.. She never had any grand illusions of victory against the Giants of the shining city. She wanted only to get close to her

half brother. The Giants were making that goal a whole lot easier for her than she ever expected, even if their plan is to trap her and her men inside the city. If she had to step on the backs of ten thousand dead men to get to Ashur, then so be it. Her father will avenge their deaths and take care of the rest of the Giants. All she wanted was her moment with the monster who murdered her mother.

The leaders--Indianan, Samson, and two other Oman chiefs- - were seated on the ground, in a circle, listening to the two spies. Indianan raised to her feet and stood perfectly still for so long, the others were shooting perplexed glances at one another. Finally she stirred-- her voice, when she spoke was void of emotion, as were her eyes and the finely chiseled face that was always beautiful but would not smile or register pain or discomfort, joy or fear. She was as one made of ice or stone, remote and removed, and had been so since the moment of her mother's death.

"Tomorrow we meet the slayers of defenseless men, women and children."

Indianan felt, as she yelled above the howling wind, a force glowing brightly within her. It was strong, stirring up her atoms, energizing her with a source of strength she had never felt before. She felt so strong, she was sure that if she was to cross swords with any of those men she had never bested, at that moment--even Samson--, she would crush them like bugs. The power inside her usually radiated strongest when she was angry, excited or wanted something very badly. She wanted her half brother's head so desperately, it was like a toothache in her soul. She was so close to satiating her bloody thirst she could taste it. She had no name for the force, knew only that it had been with her always and gave her many abilities, such as endurance far beyond normal and power to entrance people - men in particular. It had gotten her many things she desired in life, and as it continued to grow within her, she became increasingly certain that it would not be long before she held the heart of Ashur, warm and still, on the palms of her eager hands. If she could just get close to the swine, the force inside her will give her strength, to rip off his head.

"For the house of Nimrod!" She yelled and paused as all those who were

with her roared mightily in return. "For all the raped and the tortured, the slaughtered and the demeaned! For all the people of the Lowlands - our people, who will soon emerge victorious and rise to their rightful seat as the true inheritors of the earth!"

The men raised their weapons and thrust them towards the sky.

"For freedom!" Indianan bellowed

She stood with head held high as the Omans stomped their feet, pounded their spears against the ground and chanted back at her:

"Freedom! Freedom! Freedom!"

Samson watched her and smiled to himself. She was bat-bit, selfish, cold and manipulative; but most of all she was beautiful...And fearless. She knew they were all going to die, herself included. Still he loved her more than life itself. Without her there would be nothing for him to live for, and tomorrow, he decided, would be as good a day to die as any other.

Come here baby

I've got a message for you

Come a little closer

I gotta whisper to you you

what I wanna do

--"Benduova" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Her movements were quick, with a hint of desperation in them. Samson had hungered for her but he had never felt that she desired to lie with him, or anyone else, for that matter. Indianan, he knew, was a skilled and powerful sexual hunter, one who used the act of love for her own gain and then set all that remained of her prey aside, forgotten the moment the true object of her desire is gained, whether it be vengeance, or the swords of 2,000 men willing to follow her into the jaws of Hades. Men wanted her, he knew that, and not just in the way a man wanted anything with wet lips and a willing smile to help warm his bed at night, but in a way that made men want to trade time and a long life just for one night between her thighs. So her tugging at him, his clothes, was more than unexpected, it left him with a feeling that maybe this was man's last chance, he was the chosen one, the last instrument of *her* last desperate effort to try to feel something more than the empty emotions of loathing and rage.

He had been yearning for fire from her from the first time he'd seen her. At a moment, when he should have been the most grateful and selfish, he was the least. He didn't want to plunge into her, even though she was now tugging his underwear down past his knees. He put his hands over hers. "Wait. Take your clothes off first. I want to see you." He had been naked with her before but he had never seen her--just the Manipulator, bargaining her flesh to bind men's souls.

Her eyes registered deep annoyance and he was terrified that he had lost all, by trying to grasp too much-more than she had it in her to give. But then something happened. Her fierce glare softened, registering a look that

he'd no more thought he'd ever see from her, than he'd see compassion in the eyes of a HuRex. It was a look of need, vulnerability, and suddenly she wasn't the breathtakingly beautiful witch, leading an army of half wild men who had never before so much as let a female lead them in walking, much less war--she was a young woman, so young appearing, he felt like a spell had been lifted off him, felt like a god-cursed fool to follow her like an inferior into another room, much less to the land of the Giants.

She obeyed him, stepped back and started undressing herself in front of him. It was like he saw her for the first time. He watched speechless as she exposed first her breasts. He had entered her twice before, but never in the light of mutual desire and respect, only in the darkness of selfish lust and cold-blooded manipulation. Her face, which was more beautiful than words could describe, was only the gateway to paradise. Her breasts were perfectly round, copper brown, as smooth and unblemished as polished marble. The aureoles were much darker than the mounds and the nipples were short and fat. He was in frozen awe of her breasts. Then she shed the rest of her garments, stood naked before him in all her glory and he felt like dropping to his knees and praying to her thighs. No Oman had ever dreamed of doing such a thing-- Kneeling before a woman. *He* had never fathomed doing such a shameful, unmanly thing. But the urge to bow his head was irresistible. At first she didn't know what he was doing. She was preparing to lay on her back, but he was feverish, his prayers the whimpering, moaning supplications on the lips of a fanatic.

The next morning he rode beside her as he had done everyday since they began the journey to make war on the Giants. The only difference being he wasn't just beside her this day, he was beside her, behind her, in front of her, and above her. His eyes never stopped roving and the closer they got to the city of the Giants, the more he wanted to snatch her off her mount and throw her across his shoulders. He wanted desperately to protect her, to save her from the blinding bright madness of her own self-destructive path, to carry her back to the Lowlands and the safety of his hold. Instead, he subconsciously tightened the grip on the handle of his sword until his fingers grew numb. He had seen a softer side of her, but he never doubted

for a moment that the main part of her would cut him down without the slightest hesitation if he got between her and the object of her obsession.

all this injustice

got me hating on these bustas

got me waking up to faces

thinking late on these buzzards

--"Rhyme2weep" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Nimrod had pushed his makeshift forces as hard as he dared. He soon realized he wasn't going to catch up to Indianan but if she was traveling a normal unhurried pace, he would be right behind her. If Indianan and Samson could hold out for one day, he and his forces could join the battle and reinforce them. He pushed his men double time with the purpose of trying to kill three birds with one stone: Get to Indianan, toughen up his army, and weed out those who had no business picking up a sword.

Two months out, the grumbling and complaints about the pace had ceased entirely. The physical endurance of his charges was no longer a concern. Most of them were never meant to be warriors and he had no intention of throwing them into the fight. He had brought every willing Lowlander along with him only to determine who the born warriors were. He was surprised at the small number of the makeshift soldiers, who had failed the endurance test. He had some soft men with him when he started out, and even a few women, and the fast pace was meant to force the unlikely warriors to drop out. Disappointedly, less than a thousand gave up and turned back. He assuredly expected to lose at least half of them when the scent of Sumeria entered their nostrils. But through it all--the fast pace, foul weather, freak accidents, and growing clarity of what they were getting into, he had lost less than twenty thousand of his charges. When the walls of Sumeria loomed in sight, only five thousand more turned their mounts which left him with 75,000 determined, dedicated fighters.

He gave one last speech, making it clear to them all, that there was no shame in listening to your spirit. They were not cowards. If so, they wouldn't have lasted this far, or even set out in the first place. What they were, is what all men and women should be--lovers of life.

A born warrior was a different breed. They will fight for good--or evil. Too often, it made no difference to them one way or the other. This was why Nimrod did not have the moral dilemma leading them into battle as he did the average WoManbeing.

The high city was now in clear view, and Nimrod was not happy that he still had 75,000 of his original 100,000 strong force with him. He was confused about how he could have been so wrong. Nothing explained the determination of these people but hatred--a deep seeded loathing for the Giants...At least that's what he concluded at the time, because he had seen the steel of hatred in the eyes of his son when the boy overcame the pain of his bones being crushed. In the persistence and focus of his WoMan army, he was certain it was hatred that steeled them, and he realized that for all his magic and sorceries, Onanes had nothing for the enmity he had instilled in the little people. Such deep-seated resentment was the most powerful sorcery there be. It was a force of energy that empowered beyond any other state in nature or the universe. That the Giants had raised such a momentum against themselves spoke more clearly about their future than anything else. If not this day, if not tomorrow, one day, just as sure as the sun will rise--the Giants will meet their creation. And for every cruelty they have committed in the universe, it was coming back at them, a thousand fold. Nimrod had seen the crimes of the men of Sumeria. Their iniquities has piled up high enough to draw notice from the very apex of creation.

Soon he knew, he will mourn greatly for them all.



It's been a long time

I shouldn't have left you

Sweet child of mine

I didn't neglect you

I know a long time

they're trying to wreck you

but hold on child

I'm coming to get you

--"Comn2getya" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Onanes watched the army of Omans approaching Sumeria--watched them approaching *him*. The hatred and anger inside him was a blinding headache. He had been through this before, his children rebelling against him, seeking to dethrone him from his high place and destroy all that he had built. He had long known it would happen again, that one day they would come for him.

There was a time he would have stood his ground and fought, but there was no fighting them now. The army he watched was not Indianan's puny 10,000 man force. They will just be fodder for his small vengeance as he flee before his sons once again. No, it was Nimrod's force, 75,000 strong that has defeated him. But they will pay too. For generation after generation they will suffer for this day. They will bear his wrath and the wages of his vengeance forever.

The ship was ready, but he had to leave most of his chosen seed behind.

He had bargained their lives. Most of them, who were not warriors, were already dead. They died easily. He owed them that much. There was only room on the ship for the Sorcerers--the guild of 13. They with their wives, concubines and slaves are all, of the Giants who will escape to the stars with him. With them, he will build again, a new world, a new Humanity. One day they will reclaim the earth and punish the vermin forever for deigning to make war on the gods of Sumeria.

"Open the Gates!" A Giant's deep, booming voice thundered.

The sounds of horses galloping hard, and men shouting at the top of their lungs filled the air.

Samson watched the shining city opening up wide before him and he wanted to halt everything, grab Indianan's horse's reins and make her stop. But it was too late. The men behind them saw the hated city looming before them. Indianan yelled a great war cry and as if her voice carried a spell that had bewitched them, the Omans spurred ahead thirstily, possessed by a craving to meet and administer death. In front of them, she spurred her own mount into a full speed gallop. Like a part of her tailwind, the men behind her followed her lead with a tornado of dust and yells. Samson gave his beast a great kick. If he was to so much as slow down now, he would be trampled.

They followed her and she led them into Hades. The gates behind them slammed shut. Indianan and her men lost precious moments looking around in wide-eyed, breathless awe. The city of the Giants was no city, but a small world, as different from the world as the Omans knew it, as the earth was different from Mars. Where the gates ended could not be seen. It was as if they were still in open field except beneath their horses hooves was ground paved with bricks for as far as the eye could see and great houses, near and distant, and in the center of it all was Onanes' sprawling castle, which sat on a hill on top of a hill. It was impossible for a Lowlander not to lose himself--at least momentarily--in the taking in of the splendor of it all.

And suddenly Giants appeared from everywhere. The Omans were surrounded. The Giants had bows, spears and swords as proportionate to their size as the Oman's weapons were to their comparably small size. The Giants unleashed arrows as thick as an Oman child's arm. What did not pierce, killed just as effectively just by hitting it's target. Half of the Omans fell in that first attack by the Giants. Then the Giants did something stupid, or maybe it was just the lust to kill up close. They waded into the midst of the sons and daughters of woman.

Samson leapt off his horse and dragged Indianan down with him. The Giants were now in a mix with the Omans, their long blades, flashing and slashing, beheading Omans with a single stroke. They were in ecstasy, laughing and shouting. Still, the Omans carried on, striking blows of their own, sending their own small swords singing through the air to meet with Sumerian flesh. This was not a battle where men gave time to think. There was no impotence, born of fear this day.

Samson, himself, was somewhat of a Giant--being the son of a Sumerian. He was a head shorter than the average full-blooded Sumerian male, but he was not one of the Omans striking at the Giant's knees and Achilles, his blade was flashing and slicing everywhere around Indianan, wiping the grins off one leering face after another. Some of the Giants seemed to be making a beeline for her, but she was not to be captured or killed so easily, who he didn't stop, she was defending herself against just as effectively, all the while her head was up, eyes searching, with every thrust of her blade, she was screaming for him.

"Ashur!"

She was calling for him, as she slashed and fought her way through the madness. It became apparent to Samson that the Omans actually had an advantage in the close fighting. The Giant's lust for blood was so great that they were willing to disregard their strengths in an attempt to make the fight as personal as they possibly could. It was easy for the Omans to duck and dodge the wide swings and ponderous footwork. The Giants were actually striking more of their own fellows, than they were the Omans.

The Omans were fighting on the instinct of pure physical, unthinking animals, they were ducking and slashing, moving and cutting the Giants to pieces wherever they could reach.

"**Cowardly killer of defenseless women!**" Indianan's voice rose over the steadily worsening chaos, "**Come, and throw this woman against a stone wall!**"

Ashur heard her.

He had not joined the fight but it was not because he feared the little pig men or his bat-bit sister. It was because the supreme One wanted the Giants to be killed off this day--wanted the vermin and Giants to kill off one another. Ashur never thought the vermin would be able to do it; not without Nimrod. But the supreme One said they would, and to his surprise, it looked like the vermin were going to fight his people to a standstill. Pathetic. They deserved to be left behind in a heap. He will enjoy the fight until there's only a few of any of them left standing. And if she's still calling him out, she will be the first one he mops up.

Azazel watched the battle with mixed emotions. He wanted to enter the fray and fight for his people but the supreme One said it was over for Sumeria. At first he had a hard time accepting that--couldn't accept it. Then he saw Nimrod's army riding hard. Saw that Nimrod wasn't even going to be needed. Nimrod once said that Sumeria's projection of strength was more illusion than real. He was right.

There was only one ship.

It was an honorable battle. The little men were fighting well, and if they win...It was an honorable fight. He had never sympathized the least with a superiorly equipped man who lost in an honorable fight. True, the supreme One had ordered the Sumerian warriors to fight a foolish strategy. But they were still superior in size and weapons and if their arrogance kept them from thinking clear enough to save their own lives...It was an honorable fight.

Most of the civilians, women and children of Sumeria, were going to be left behind. The supreme One said that Nimrod wasn't going to harm them and Azazel knew it was true, even if Onanes really didn't. Azazel knew at least that much about his brother but he didn't know so much about his father--didn't know Onanes had already murdered the civilians of Sumeria--both the giants and the slaves. He could have never imaged himself going along with his Father's scheme to sacrifice the warriors, if Nimrod hadn't already broken down some of his delusions about Sumeria. When the supreme One conceded to him that Nimrod was right, he was far more susceptible to actions and words that felt wrong to him, than he ever would have been before.

It was over for Sumeria in this place and time. If Nimrod hadn't betrayed them, they would have lasted longer--maybe even centuries longer, but eventually it all would have ended the same way.

But Humanity will live on. And the godly race will be back bigger and stronger than ever! The supreme One has vowed it.

The more he watched the Giants losing the fight to the little men, the more contempt he felt towards them. If they could do no better than that, they deserved to die. There was once a time when one Sumerian warrior could crush a thousand vermin by himself. His people has become shells. The supreme One says the time has come to start over again with new blood. He told himself the supreme One was right. But he wasn't sure if it stemmed from what he truly believed or from his need to justify betraying his people to their deaths.

when the moon don't rise

the sun don't set you

know that I'm

coming to get you

--"Comn2getya" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Samson was too busy watching her back to defend his own, so he never saw the bloodied, crazed Giant run up upon him until it was too late-- too late to do anything but turn and deflect the thrust aimed his heart --to the right side of his chest. The Giant drove his great sword all the way through Samson's front and out his back. While pulling out his blade from Samson's chest, the laughing Sumerian lost his head to Indianan's enraged swing but the damage to Samson was done. The big Oman sunk to his knees, fell on his face and was still.

Indianan had only a second to glance at her fallen lover before she was suddenly engaged in an all out battle for her own life. He was upon her so quick, she had no chance to think--no chance to do anything but give in to instinct and emotion. She never tapped the power. The one landing heavy, powerful blows on her purely defensive moves, was one who laughed in the face of a hundred sword bearing Omans and whom no Giant in Sumeria but Azazel had ever survived his second swing. And she was fighting him on pure rage and natural ability, the natural ability of an eighteen year old girl.

"How's your mother, pretty beast?" Ashur swung at Indianan so hard; her block drove her to her knees. Another Giant rushed forward and tried to horn in on Ashur's impending victory. Ashur spared Indianan the killing blow by pivoting and delivering it to the interloper instead. He swung a mighty, mid-level blow that cut his Kinsman in half. He then turned back to Indianan, eyes bright with fiendish delight. She was back on her feet, lips drawn, eyes blazing with fury as she circled him. Ashur laughed. Indianan lunged. Ashur flipped a wrist without moving his arm and

knocked her sword aside. She fell into him. He grabbed her by the hair, pulled her face into his and kissed her, long and hard, before violently pulling her head back by her hair, and tossing her, headfirst, into the hard stones that made up the walls of Sumeria.

Indianan slid down the wall to the ground, unconscious.

"Such a pretty, pretty beast. Just like your mother." Ashur took his time approaching her.

There were only two Giants left standing now, horribly wounded souls who were still on their feet long after they were beaten and had nothing left to be beat more for. They were young Giants, and it was easy to see in their wide, innocent eyes that the stink of Sumeria's cesspool hadn't seeped into their bones yet. That didn't stop a half dozen bleeding Omans--just as young-- from trying to put a bitter end to them.

Ashur stood over Indianan. "*You dare...Dare come to my house looking for me?*" His face reddened with rage. He lifted the sword high and brought it down with enough force to split a boulder in half.

Azazel watched Ashur and Indianan. A week ago, or maybe even yesterday, he would have intervened; not because he cared very much for an enemy, who had shed the blood of Sumerians, but because she was his brother's daughter and because she was so cursed pleasing to look at, truly the most magnificent creature in all of creation! But this was a day of infamy, this was a day of change, a day of a new dawning, a day of cleansing, where all that was meant to die will be washed away.

That's what one side of his brain was trying to convince him to accept, another side was screaming at him to rescue her, but both sides knew he would never be able to reach her in time. He turned away as Ashur's blade sung. A part of him laughed with pure delight, another part of him erupted with rage. He stood up and grimly began to descend down the long stairway to settle finally with Ashur.

Azazel didn't see Ashur suddenly lurch sideways, falling down screeching

in agony. The mighty blow he swung at Indianan widely missed its mark, something--someone, had all but completely separated Ashur's right leg from the rest of his body. It was laid open through the bone, attached by mere skin and tendons, and the reason it wasn't cut off completely was because the blow that felled Ashur was delivered with the last desperate will and strength of a dead man.

"Nimrod cometh!" A horn blared

Onanes' head jerked up.

The other Sorcerers, who were enjoying the battle from their ivory seats, high up in Onanes' ivory tower, bolted to their feet.

The horn blared again. Aroooooooooo!

"Nimrod cometh!" A Giant bellowed.

"Nimrod cometh!" Aroooooooooo!

The Sumerian Elite scrambled.

Azazel sprinted the rest of the way down the steps. Without an ounce of shame or hesitation, he approached Ashur, who was sitting up looking at him, shaking his head and babbling spittle from his lips. Azazel relished the fear in the coward's predatory eyes as he slowly, deliberately formed a two-handed grip on his broad sword and reared it far behind his neck only to bring it back again with the force of a windstorm that uprooted trees. It was an unmanly act he would have, a week ago, died before committing. He slew his nephew, as he had vowed, but Onanes never told him about the consequences of beheading an immortal. Ashur's atoms streamed into Azazel's blood and such was the strength of Ashur's essence, enhanced by a lifetime of incalculable evil, Azazel soon discovered that he paid a great price to exact his vengeance on the son of Nimrod. He had never killed Ashur at all. It was Ashur, in fact, who killed him. Azazel became more of Ashur than he was of himself, but his start down the path of becoming abject evil began before he murdered Ashur, it began when he allowed Onanes to sell his soul to the Dead Ones.

Azazel stared at Indianan. He wanted to bend down and lift her into his arms, carry her away with him, with vision of rape and torture, flashing in his mind, right alongside visions of deep love and tenderness. A loud shattering of wood at the entrance gate, broke him from his fantastical preoccupation with the daughter of Nimrod. He wiped both sides of his

blade against Ashur's robe and ran off after the other fleeing Sumerian elites.

Onanes watched his son behead his grandson and smiled. He had performed powerful sorcery to bring about this outcome, though Azazel's own hatred for Ashur was what made it possible. Yes, let Ashur dwell in the tent of Azazel, and then see how his defiant son and his minions do on the earth. With one last look at Ashur, Onanes called out, and started leading the ones who were chosen to escape with him, into the long, vast tunnel that ran beneath the shining city. The tunnel was a mile long and led to a wide open field that was surrounded by high walls.

Nimrod was at the gate. The wizards of Sumeria shuddered as they fled. Seemed like all of Sumeria shook as Nimrod swung his double ax again and again against the heavy gates that barred his entrance into the city of his birth.

There were seventy-eight persons that exited the tunnel which led to the secret enclosure that housed the ship, thirteen Sorcerers, their wives, husbands and concubines, twenty-six Oman slaves and nineteen Sumerian children. They all boarded the space vehicle,

The spacecraft itself was one of the great secrets Onanes worked so hard to get from the Dead Ones. Many Omans were slaughtered and tortured to gain from the Dead Ones, the information that led him to the huge craft which was still in as good a condition as it was the day it was built. Onanes knew about the possibility of spaceships being on earth from his knowledge of his parents and their ancient civilization. The craft was buried 30 feet beneath the sands of Ancient Mu, where the Saurians and the first race of men fought the war that ended the flesh and blood existence of both sides.

One hundred Giants and 2000 Oman slaves died pushing and pulling the huge craft to where it now situated. It took them two years to cover the distance. The ship had been pushed, tugged and pulled on wobbly, constantly failing wheels the whole way because Onanes didn't want to

risk flying it and giving certainty to his secret.

Onanes sat at the controls of the craft. He programmed it for lift off.

Finally the gates of Sumeria came crashing down and Nimrod entered again for the first time in twenty-four seasons, the city he had turned his back on so long ago. What he expected was what he saw; the most revolting carnage imaginable, breathtaking destruction of Halfhigh and Sumerian lives. What was shocking to him was that there were more little men still standing than Giants. He had hoped that the Halfhighs would last long enough for him to arrive to help them; he never thought for a minute that they would defeat the Giants. They paid a terrible price to do it, only six out of ten thousand still stood, but the little men won. Only two Giants were still on their feet and they just barely. The six Omans were steadily cutting them to pieces as if they were toying with the Giants--tormenting them. Nimrod sent twenty of his men over to put a stop to the pointless fight. It was clear the bloodied little group were in a world of their own, oblivious to all but their silent tango of death.

Nimrod walked through the compound, looking for Onanes. He climbed the steps to the towers, some of his Oman army streamed behind him. He went to Onanes quarters. His father was not there, but huddled in one huge room, which was twice as big as his entire house in the Lowlands, were Sumerian women and children; about three thousand women and a third as many children. He did not check any of the other rooms, or allow his men to wander into any part of Sumeria. The Omans didn't know that some of their kind still lived as slaves behind the high walls of Sumeria.

Nimrod knew; upon seeing the Sumerian women and children abandoned, with no protection, that wherever the Halfhigh slaves were, the last thing he could have happen, if he wanted these Giant women and children to be safe, was for his army to find their people in Sumeria. The Giant Elite and their pampered henchmen were insanely sadistic in war and recreation, and when they had time, to take their time, killing, the mere taking away of breath was never near enough.

"Marduk!"

A familiar voice called out his name and Nimrod turned his head towards

it. Sun--Inanna, his third Sumerian wife, pushed her way through the crowd of women who were now alive with hopeful animation, a low and excited chatter rising among them. Most of them knew him. They knew there was nothing to fear even though the fierce looking Halfhighs in the room were glaring at them with open hatred. But these were disciplined men, tamed of their wildness even before they followed Nimrod on a 1600 mile trek that had tested and honed every bit of self-will they possessed. They made no move without first being given the order by their Giant leader. Nimrod watched his third Sumerian wife approach him.

"Are you happy now *Nimrod*," She spat, using his rebel name.

"Where's Onanes?"

"Oh, *Marduk*!" Her angry expression collapsed and she fell into Nimrod's arms. Nimrod let her release against his shoulder until he heard her loud sobs diminish into sniffles.

Again he asked. "Where is Onanes? Where is Our father?"

"The all-father is gone, *Marduk*. The supreme One has flown and taken all the great Sorcerers of the land along with him. You are too late to defeat him. Your father has escaped and left us all here to die. "

And now the voices of the other women could be clearly heard, some fearful and angry, some filled with hopeful desperation, none were the voices of the two whom Nimrod's ears strained to hear. One woman yelled "We didn't drink it, *Marduk*!"

"What?" Nimrod turned back to Sun--Inanna. "What do you mean by saying that Onanes has left you all to die? Where has he gone?"

"*Nimrod! Nimrod!*" An excited Oman raced breathlessly up the great marble stairway leading to the high tower. "*Come quickly!*"

Nimrod separated himself from Sun--Inanna's smothering grasp, glanced over the Sumerian women and children in the room and said, "*Do not worry. You all will be safe.*" He turned to the man who had ridden on his

left side. "Take care of them." The wheat-headed Oman nodded without expression on his face..

Nimrod turned and hurried down the steps, careful not to overrun the little man in front of him. The Oman who rode on his right side during the journey did his best to stay with him.

Nimrod entered the great courtyard and saw that all stood with faces tilted toward the sky, eyes bright with awe.

"Look!"

"Glorious!"

"Miraculous!"

"Never before has there been such a thing on all the earth."

"What is it?"

"Tell us."

"Yes, tell us, Nimrod. What is it?"

Nimrod did not know what the large, circular craft with its continuous vibrations and bright, blinding lights was. He did not understand its constant humming or the pale opalescent ring of shimmering dust that made a protective shield all around it but he instantly knew where Onanes was. Onanes was escaping to the stars. Nimrod could hardly believe his eyes even though Azazel had already told him about the great flying eagle. He never doubted his brother, but believing that Onanes had a chariot that could fly through the clouds and seeing it was entirely two different things. Onanes had escaped his fate, and as he did the first time, Nimrod knew he would be back stronger than ever and that his will to vengeance would be a terrible force to face. Yet, he could not allow himself to think of this now. There was much he had to do. He had to bury his dead, both the Giants and the Halfhighs. He had to fulfill the decree of the stars, but first, he had to find his daughter.

Not all those who lay unconscious and bleeding in the courtyard were dead, though all but two, did die, not much later. One of the survivors was his daughter Indianan, who was only knocked out from her crash with the wall. The other was the one who saved her life, the one who had kept riding with her for only that reason, --her half-breed, kindred and lover, Samson; a man who by all rights should be dead. The broad sword that pierced him, which was four times the size and weight of an Oman sword, had passed through his front and out his back, leaving him with an ugly gash in his chest and only a cur's hair away from permanent heart failure. But a sliver of a chance at survival was all the Giant Oman needed. By the time the group was prepared for the journey back to the Lowlands, Samson was back on his feet. Nimrod would have thought it impossible for the big Oman to survive his wound, but his daughter had spent three whole days and nights administering to Samson. There were a lot of things that whirled around his daughter which were hard to explain. But then again, the mother of all, had once entered the child. That could explain a lot.

Before they left the Highlands, Nimrod had Sumeria burned to the ground. He would not allow his soldiers to enter inside any homes before setting them on fire. The people of Sumeria gave no life signals to his senses and he knew some of them had died in ways no man or woman could see, and ever be whole in the spirit again. He also now knew, what the woman meant when she yelled "We didn't drink it."

After burning what could be incinerated, he had the stones and other masonry overturned and crushed--the ashes and debris raked and scattered. It took his 75,000 troops three weeks of hard work, to accomplish it all but they never tired of the task. An extraordinarily fierce wind blew every evening, dispersing ashes and dust alike throughout the far corners of the earth. When the work was completed Nimrod stood and bowed his head.

For the Giants.

For the Halfhighs.

For all the victims of karma, unrepentant evil, and the blind sword of justice.

Black love

Brown-eyed girl let me give you my black love

Black love

Let me make you feel you don't lack love

--"Blaqluv" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

With the women and children along--especially, the Giant, pampered women-- Nimrod figured the journey back to the Lowlands would take more than twice as long as the trip up to Sumeria.

Three quarters of the 100,000 men who left the Lowlands with him entered inside the gates of Sumeria. Most of the Halfhighs, who turned back at the last minute stayed with him until the towers of the high city came into view. For staying with him that long, they deserved as much gratitude from the people of the Lowlands as the ones who went all the way. They were not warriors. They might even have stayed to the end if he hadn't kept encouraging people to turn back. He knew the true warriors, and those that destiny had chosen to fight would stay no matter what he said or did. These were the only ones he wanted to enter with him into the gates of Sumeria.

Miraculously, his army never got the chance to fight the giants. It was true, Indianan had taken born warriors with her when she left to attack Sumeria, but it was inconceivable that they, only 10,000 strong, would enter the gates of the shining city and destroy the Giants. Something happened this day that he hadn't yet figured out. But who could decipher the mind of Onanes? Could the old wizard have betrayed and sacrificed the Giants of Sumeria?

And Indianan...He knew she was born with the power but she was so young and as far as he knew, has never really honed her magical skills. How strong a sorceress could his daughter be? Was her power so great that it enabled her to enhance the valor and strength of the men who fought beside her? Not even he could have performed such magic, and he

knew of no sorcery that could. Only love or hate could make people fight that far beyond themselves. Hate wasn't enough to give ten thousand Halfhighs victory over Sumeria. Could his daughter possibly have gained that much love from all those men in such a short time?

There was never more than a total of 25,000 Giants in the first place. Still more than the earth or WoManity could afford to toil under, but most of their strength was an illusion. Always had been. From living among them, he knew that. That's why Onanes needed a wall of lies and deception and eternal strife and division among the Halfhighs to hold on to his kingdom. The moment the little people united, Onanes illusion began to crumble. Even so, sorcery and the right arms of the Giants should have crushed Indianan's small army easily. Onanes never used sorcery to defend Sumeria, Why? From what he could tell from the evidence of the battle scene, the Giants fought the worse strategic battle in the annals of time. Why?

"Don't you want to know?"

The party of 75,000 Omans and 4000 Sumerians had traveled for only three miles of the 1600 mile trek back to the Lowlands before Nimrod had to call for a stop. The Giant women were whining and complaining so much, the Omans were grumbling about leaving them behind. The Sumerian children were hardly taxed. To them, it was all a big, fun filled adventure.

Nimrod staked out his spot and was deep in his thoughts when Sun--Inanna found him. He felt his neck grow tense, his back rigid as she lowered her statuesque frame onto the soft moss next to his.

"Know what?" He queried, bewilderedly, thinking crazily, that she had read his mind.

She clawed up a fist full of dirt and tossed it irritably in his general direction.

"Have you not given thought, to us even once in all these passing years!"

He looked at her and nearly laughed aloud despite his state of mourning. She hadn't changed a bit. She had seen only 45 seasons, so he didn't expect her to have changed physically, but one might have hoped for a little more mastery of the trembling bottom lip after all this time. He knew what she was asking and the truth was he *hadn't* thought of them much. Not since he married Arnutha, anyway.

"Where *is* Timber and Asa?" He asked this more out of a desire to placate her rather than any real need to be told. He could easily guess what became of his absent wives. They were royals, even before they married into the house of Onanes.

"Oh! How very kind of you to ask. They were only your wives, after all."

"Sarcasm is only anger repressed." He teased " It was you who sought me out, true? Now what news do you wish to give of Timber and Asa, who

were my wives? That is the word you used, isn't it - *were*?"

"Well, what did you expect them to do? What did you expect any of us to do? Did you think that we would all lay about until we grew dried up and far too old to enjoy the more intimate pleasures of life any longer?"

"I *cared not*." The response was blunt and assaulting, betraying the fact that even after all these years he, or his ego, was still hurt by their ability to go on, so easily, with life without him.

"Who did Timber marry?" He quickly added, sensing that his words had hurt her, and now speaking out of kindness.

"Hadad."

"*The bloodthirsty*?" Now he *was* surprised. Not only that, but shocked and disappointed. Hadad was a Sorcerer, a member of the Guild, one of the richest men in the world, but most of all, he was a rapist and sadist, more famous for his "hunting" expeditions in the Lowlands than even his great wealth.

"I advised her not to do it. She was lonely and no decent man wanted to be with a woman who was married to the great rebel."

Her tone was a clear accusation and even as he responded defensively, it didn't entirely miss its mark. Even so, he didn't fully believe her. His Sumerian wives were extraordinary beauties, and tall, sexy Timber had few equals of her type. No Sumerian man would have passed her over because of him or anything else. Most likely his wife had social climbed, if marrying a monster for nothing but the gain of wealth and status could be considered moving up in life.

"I asked her to come with me into the Lowlands. I asked you all..." He paused. "What of Asa, who did she marry...Erra, the bat-bit?" After a long moment of no response he looked tentatively toward her, "You can't be serious."

She looked back at him, her stony expression struggling to hold its

rigidity. Finally she gave in to the demon of inappropriate mirth. Burst out laughing. Nimrod saw nothing funny. Erra, the bat bit. Poor little Asa. How lonely and desperate she must have been. Erra was even more murderous than Hadad. He was also a Sorcerer and member of the Guild. He had more power than money, but that was because he was stupid and so addicted to, and careless with his vile habits, not even men with the same vices wanted to be near him.

He watched Sun--Inanna struggling to control her laughter. She never liked Asa, but he could tell the attempt was genuine. Asa is a small Sumerian, in more ways than the obvious, but she didn't deserve Erra, the bat bit.

"And what of you?" he asked her. That did the trick. She wasn't laughing now.

"I waited." Her voice was hardly audible and the words she spoke, along with the sudden desperation in her large doe's eyes, knocked him temporarily off balance.

She waited...for twenty- four years, *waited*? She had seen only twenty-one seasons, when he left Sumeria. The woman was young and beautiful-- in the prime of her life. She didn't have to accept a Hadad, or Erra. There were plenty of men in Sumeria for her--wife of the great rebel or not. She was so womanly perfect in face and body; it was like a horny teen-aged boy had sculpted her. Besides, she always had a place in the Lowlands with him. He would never understand that kind of prejudice. She'd rather spend the rest of her life alone, with all that desirable beauty to share, than try to learn to accept the Halfhighs as equal, valued beings. Still, she had waited for him, and he didn't *really* know why she hadn't joined him in the Lowlands. He was assuming.

"I'm sorry."

"Don't be milord. I care nothing of the past, not even yesterday. I care only for you, for us, here, together, now. Now is all that matters. Now is all that

will ever matter to me again when I'm with you. Take me in your arms
Marduk, now, and find how new and different all about me is."

He saw her and didn't see her. She was there, beautiful, vulnerable and available. But this soft, needy Sun--Inanna wasn't the Sun--Inanna he remembered. Even when they were together, she always preferred arguing to making love. True, she had surprised him when he told her of his plans to leave Sumeria. He never knew she cared that much about him to carry on the way she did. She had cried big tears, had even latched on to his neck, hugged him so tight he had to pry her off to leave. He had never even known her long, slender neck could bend. Still, in the end he walked, and she stayed behind.

During the entire year he was married to her, she was never soft, never humble. The proudest among the proudest. All that time, judging by the fact that she waited for him twenty-four years, she had loved him in a way few people can ever love another, but if he had never left--had stayed with her a million years, they both would have died of old age without her ever letting him know how she really felt because she never wanted to be vulnerable, she never wanted to risk extending herself. And what was that kind of love worth, even if it waited for him a thousand years?

He didn't know what to feel or do. He had loved her once. No energy ever dies and a spark of love will forever glow warmly. Even If he didn't still love her, he would want to give her what she asked for, just because he owed her. She waited. But all he could think about was Sun-nutha, and then his other wives. Making love to his Sumerian wife wouldn't be just a simple act of mutual passion; it would be marrying her all over again, it would be adding another female to his household. Something he swore he would never do.

She dropped down beside him, deprived him of the chance to make his own decision, crawled on top of him. How could he push her off--away? She pressed the length of her body into his, and kissed him hard, desperately. He thought of turning his head, but she was begging, humbling herself. Her whole body was in a spasm of need--a most

humiliating situation for the Sun--Inanna he remembered and the last thing he had the heart to do when she shamelessly groped for his manhood, was to remove her hand.

That night she became his wife again after twenty-four long years.

chasin' rainbows trying to find

something in the rumors and the signs of the times

that i already had for mine

searching far and wide when i had by my side

everything i ever thought i had to have to fly

--"Chasin'rainbows" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

The night that came brought with it the inevitable sounds of men and women taking pleasure in one another's bodies. Nimrod didn't like it because it meant he had to isolate the children farther from the main camp than he wanted to. But who was he to deny them? He was making love to his own woman.

That's why he wasn't up, until he heard the second child scream. The first scream, he half confused with Sun--Inanna's love noises. But at the second scream, he was on his feet, his pants up as quick as the rest of him. Then he was running. He wasn't far from the children. He knew his Sumerian wife. Knew, she could make love quietly.

The Rex was big as a Tonbig, and like Tonbigs, whom they were related to, they rarely came out of the deepest, thickest woods. He might have expected a HuRex, but a full bloodied Rex--in open land? Unheard of. Yet there the monster was, as tall as an ancient redwood, teeth like long knives, huge head swinging back and forth in the direction of every movement and scream the children made. Indecision and greed were what saved the children. The Rex was so busy trying to decide how to get them all; he wasted too much time before making any grab. When he finally did make his decision, Nimrod was in front of him, his long, heavy sword in a powerful swing that severed the front of the Rex's long snout from his face. The Rex screamed in agony, a high pitched sound that hurt like a needle thrust in the eardrum, children burst out crying harder from the pain in their ears than from fear. Then, the men of the Lowlands came rushing from their nocturnal activities. Most of them hung back while the

bravest among them dashed to Nimrod's side. The Rex turned with unexpected speed, sweeping Nimrod and the men beside him away with a lash of its gigantic tail. Nimrod hit the ground, hard, fifty yards away but he was instantly back on his feet and running. He knew he had mortally wounded the Rex. He wanted to catch the beast and put it out of its misery. None of the Omans who were swatted with him stirred, though later they all revived with no serious injuries. By the time Nimrod got to him the Rex was already down. The little people looked like ants swarming over the great Saurian remnant. They had swords and spears and long knives and they were all being put to use on the steadily weakening monster.

Watching them, Nimrod saw a highly disturbing glimpse of the future. It was WoManity's time now. The days of monsters, Giants, and Saurians remnants, ruling the earth was over. The days of WoMankind being the terrified, forever-hunted prey of every strong predator was past. The little Man was now the hunter, the predator. Nimrod saw in that a good thing, but he didn't know yet, how good. There were always two sides to every coin, a dark side to every new day. If he could instill in the Halfhigs a natural affinity towards justice, freedom, unity, progress and respect for all life; the Age of WoMankind could be a wonderful thing indeed. But if he fails...

The frenzied stabbing of the Rex was still going on even though the monster had ceased moving and had clearly drawn its last staggering breath. The Rex was the most feared predator on earth. It had been, since the beginning of time, yet it lay there, crushed into a pulp by tiny creatures who before this day had always fled from it in mindless terror. They had not flown from it, this day, but to it, and they had fearlessly torn it to pieces. It dawned on him that the world now had a new monster, a new terror which crushed the old one as if they had never known of its fearsome power. He had to recreate the Omans, teach them to become WoManbeings again. To do that he needed a beacon, a light, a tower, a point to focus and direct the energy needed to unite all the WoMans, to create a new world reality in their minds, just as Onanes created the old

world reality. If he failed in this, he could already see oceans of blood and misery on his hands.



i say to Nimrod

i love you Nimrod

--"RollwithNimrod" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

The next morning Nimrod gave a speech, declaring that any couple, who couldn't wait until they got home to uncover each other's nakedness had to take the risk of moving away from the main camp. Much to Sun--Inanna's, disappointment, he kept his own mandate. He would hold her, but he would not undress or enter her.

By the second week, the group was easily covering the nine miles a day pace Nimrod wanted to maintain. They had encountered no danger since the incident with the Rex.

Nimrod was bringing up the rear in the mid part of another eventless day when for the first time since they left Sumeria, Indianan, dropped back to face him.

"Father, I'm sorry." She did not meet his eyes.

Nimrod nodded in Samson's direction. He knew the answer before he asked the question. His daughter was half Lowlander, but in some ways, she was more Sumerian than Azazel.

"Have you told him that...Or the six other survivors who followed you?"

"No, I--"

Nimrod raised a palm and looked away from her, even though inside, he was hurting for her and ached to do what she had yet to allow him to do. He never held her after Arnutha died. She needed a shoulder to cry on but she was afraid, terrified of loving too deeply again. He sensed that she didn't want to be close to him like she used to be, or like she was with her mother. His daughter was a remarkable young woman, special, unique,

even great, but she didn't know it, couldn't feel or recognize her magnificence even though she had liberated an entire world. The little people owed her much, but because she exuded no atoms of need, want, or expectation to be recognized and appreciated for her heroic actions, they gave her none.

He will see that changed. One day, they, and she, will recognize what she is due, but first his daughter needed to shed some of the hatred, pain and anger. She needed to learn to love again in order to be loved.

It hurt Indianan when Nimrod turned his face from her and she finally raised her eyes to spiritually demand that her father see her. Nimrod sensed her stare and turned again to look into familiar pools of green that were brimming with the hurt that he had never seen her release in that way. He made a move to reach out to her--his baby girl, but she gave him what she wanted him to see and had already turned, spurred her mount and was returning to Samson's side. Nimrod saw her lean over and say something to Samson, and even from where he was, he could clearly see the over-sized Lowlander's face crumble. Later that day he saw her speaking to the six little men and could not hide his pleasure. It was a start. To see that she was willing to at least try meant she had cleared her greatest hurdle.

The next morning, as the large party set out for another day's travel, Nimrod noticed that the six wounded Halfhigh warriors, who seemed to go out of their way to distance themselves from his daughter since leaving Sumeria, was now by her side, three on the left and three on the right.

It was a cool morning. The sun was high and assaulting but the wind blew steadily. They were entering more fruitful terrain now, and the monotony of color that was the barren plains, has given way to the red, green, orange and yellows, of plentiful grass, trees, bushes and flowers. They were moving along, mostly in silence and heightened alert, when suddenly, a flash of shimmering green dashed in the midst of the group. Its wild eyes were locked on one of the children. The creature was fast, so fast, Nimrod had barely leaped off his mount before the creature--a HuRex-- was

dragging one of the small children away towards the trees it had sprung from. It was half-pulling, half-carrying the child, and in the frantic contortions of its long neck, it seemed to be more in a panic than anything else. It was Samson who reached it first. The HuRex tossed the child behind it and stood there, snapping its saurian jaws at Samson each time Samson moved towards it. Then with lightening speed it would turn and clash its jaws at the other men who had surrounded it. Except for its reptilian head, this HuRex was in the form of a man. It had two legs and two arms. Its feet and hands were more webbed than a man's and the fingernails-- unlike a man's-- were hard, dark brown and sharp, like twig-sized thorns.

Nimrod hung back from the scene. The men had the HuRex trapped inside a circle, and he knew they were going to make the monster regret it ever lost its good sense to its lust. He turned, and never did see one of the men duck under the HuRex and tackle it to the ground. It never got back up, but Nimrod didn't need to see to know that.

It seemed like something was riding on the wind. Maybe it was because the Giants were no longer roaming the lands terrifying and killing everything in sight. Most likely it was because they were leaving open fields and entering into more sheltering terrain. On the entire trip up, they were not accosted more than twice and even those were more accidental encounters, than aggressive attacks. But now, just an hour after the Halfhighs killed the HuRex, a pride of Massive Ograpes came storming out of the hills, loping towards Nimrod's group as if they intended to do some serious damage.

The creatures resembled Apes but they were twice the size of Gorillas and three times uglier than Ogres. There were about thirty of them. Normally an Ogrape would not bother a single man, or any creature that didn't look threatening to them. But they always confronted other large groups of anything--especially during mating season. Nimrod didn't want to harm the Ograpes, but there was no way to make his group of 80,000 people look unthreatening to no more than 30 Ograpes unless...Nimrod called out

to his Charges.

"Everybody turn your backs and stand still. " No one seemed to have heard. The Omans were almost gleeful as they stood, weapons at the ready, waiting for the Ograpes.

The Ograpes were whooping and screeching, pounding hard towards their deaths.

"Now!" Nimrod thundered. The anger in his voice caused nearly 80,000 heads to move in sync.

Nimrod started walking towards the Ograpes. Each one of them was bigger than he, with more teeth--yellow, sharp teeth; still he dropped his sword and held his hands, palms up, in front of him. The hairy creatures had some of the meanest faces nature gave any animal, but Nimrod knew that they were inherently far more gentle than they looked. They have been known to take in lone or weak creatures--even men and women--and protect them as one of their own.

The closer Nimrod approached, the slower the Ograpes thundered and the less noisy and animated were their movements and chatter. By the time Nimrod met them halfway, the Ograpes had stopped their excited animations and were making a slow and wondering circle, around the strange new creature that stood within their midst. Every now and again, one of the Ograpes would feint at Nimrod as if initiating attack, but he did not flinch, and each time all the other Ograpes would chatter at the aggressive ones as if rebuking them for their foolery. Finally the Ograpes grew bored with the unresponsive Nimrod and started loping back toward the hills from whence they'd come. One female, whose ponderous, uncovered breasts, were very woman-like, lingered to give Nimrod one last series of sniffs, as if she had to be absolutely sure of something. Finally she wrinkled her nose for the last time and loped off behind the others.

Nimrod turned back towards his own pride only to see them rolling on the

ground like log worms, even the children. They had their backs turned like he told them, they stood still like he told them, but they surely had eyes in the back of their heads because they didn't miss a thing.

"I was sooo jealous, Sun--Inanna teased when he walked back amidst them.

"She was a looker, anyway. No one can say you don't know how to pick 'em!" One of the men yelled between guffaws. Samson, who was already rolling on the ground, started clawing at the dirt. One of the children ran up to Nimrod, grabbed him by a leg, looked up at him with big angel eyes and said, "I like you too."

That did it. Nimrod never saw such carrying on. They looked like the Ograpes hopping around, and whooping. And they were laughing at *him*.

Since Arnutha's death, jocularly came a lot harder to him than it used to, but he couldn't resist their infectious hilarity, his booming laughter thundered, and at the sound of it, the intensity of the joyful ruckus exploded to new heights.



and if i can't find my way back home

it just wouldn't be fair

--"War(somuch2live4)" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

It took a month longer than planned for them to make it back home, long enough for winter to give way to spring, and for dragons to wake up out of hibernation.

Seven months they had been traveling. They didn't lose a single one of their number--not even the severely wounded Giants. Three days from home they were, when it appeared. Like a single dark cloud, gathered, just to ruin a long planned picnic, the mammoth thing flew over them, turning day into night as it flew closer and closer, and when it hovered above the people below it, it opened its jagged jaws and roared for no reason, spitting fire that left one hundred and twenty Omans burned into a pile of ashes. It then flew on for a great distance, as if satisfied that it had done enough damage. Then suddenly it turned, and started flying back.

The same Omans who had stood steadfast in the face of Giants, Rexes, HuRexes and Ograpes started scattering in a panic. Even Nimrod's right and left hand men dashed. Nimrod knew even then, that, if those two had, had a moment to think, or could do that day over again, they would have died a thousand deaths rather than run like they did. And they were not the only ones. In a wild scramble for life and sanity, they all flew, trampling two children in their wake and leaving dozens seriously injured.

Nimrod was off his mount, a spear was in his hand--not one of those little twigs that the Oman's carried but one of the metal-tipped, small trees that the Giants went into battle with. He stood, waiting; teeth clinched so hard his jaws locked. His pupils were tiny, radiating, like sunbeams locked on the dragon. On his left were Sun--Inanna and the two Giants. On his right were Indianan, Samson and the six Oman survivors. He told

them all to flee with the others, but they each had weapons and intent of their own. Steadfast beside him, they watched the Tonbig sized bird gliding back towards them. They each widened their stances, bracing themselves in face of the strong wind the dragon pushed out in front of itself. They watched the sky flashing from light to dark with each flap of the monster's massive wings as the enormous appendages rhythmically blocked and unblocked the light of the sun. And when the dragon was above them again, all those waiting launched their weapons skyward. Most of the heaves fell short. The heftier tosses hit their target but bounced off the dragon's steel hide like pebbles thrown at a boulder. That's when the dragon opened its mouth to laugh, to taunt, and to gloat of its invincibility. And that's when Nimrod let go with a mighty heave that sent the sharp, metal tipped spear so straight, forceful and true, it went in the dragon's laughing mouth and out the other end of its stiff tail. The dragon was already dropping like a stone before the spear started falling back down to the earth. The dragon fell faster. Nimrod and the others scrambled out of the way of its thunderous descent. The monster hit the ground flatter than the dirt except for its head. Samson ran back to stand over the flattened dragon, staring trancelike at the amazingly well preserved head--the same head that had for no reason spat fire and cremated one-hundred and twenty of his fellows, and caused two of the youngest ones to be trampled to death. Somebody's blade was lying on the ground next to that awful maw. Samson picked the blade up. Somebody's sword sent the dragon's head unnecessarily into the wind.

take it back

take it back

--"oleskool" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Nimrod's party of nearly 75,000 Omans were all welcomed home with great joy and excitement. The people were so happy; the Giants among their heroes hardly caused a stir.

People who didn't sojourn sixteen hundred miles to battle Giants wanted to celebrate. People who hadn't faced HuRexes, Rexes, Ograpes, and dragons--one after the other-- only to lose one hundred and twenty-two of their fellows twenty miles from the safety of home, wanted to sing and dance. But for Nimrod and those who returned to the Lowlands with him, there was nothing to celebrate. After fifteen hundred and eighty miles of everything to celebrate--, in their minds--, twenty miles had stripped them of all the honor and glory that they had rightfully earned, and left them unable to feel anything but sorrow and shame. Nothing could convince them of their greatness, their courage and their worthiness of all the honors the people of the Lowlands desperately wanted to bestow upon them. They had forgotten all their heroic accomplishments and could remember nothing but their flight, the panicky dash that left two of their numbers stomped into the dirt. The self-abasing emotions had no truth to them, no validity, but Nimrod just couldn't convince a group of people who made it through hell together, that losing even one of their number at the finish line didn't mean everything. And when you lose them because of your own perceived act of cowardice it meant more than everything. Nimrod felt bad that they were so strongly down on themselves for doing what a year ago, they would have done as a matter of course, and not cared how many children or people they trampled, but in the situation he also could glimpse something good in the future for all on the earth. These Omans--his wonderful army-- had changed, they were reverting to their original nature, they were becoming womanbeings again, loving, caring, sympathetic, able to identify with, and feel for others. They were casting off Onanes' curse. For more than that, Nimrod felt he could never ask, or

hope.

Nimrod ima pimp hard

'til the whole world's bumping my music

and calling him god

--"Bless u" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

Nimrod had watched many generations Of WoMans come, and go since that time of WoMankind's liberation. The little people rarely lived as long as a hundred seasons. But he lived on and on, with no signs of a natural death in sight, and he had yet to figure out exactly why. He knew his long life had something to do with his Saurian Ancestry, but that wasn't all of it. All living creatures were related to the Saurians somewhere down the line. His longevity could be due to the potion that Onanes' father invented and Onanes had hoarded. That would explain why the Giants, who had never diluted Onanes' blood like the Halfhighs did, lived so much longer than the little people. But he and his wife Sun--Inanna lived even longer than other Giants. Somehow, the factor determining their longevity seemed to not fit any rational explanation. Could it be the mother of all WoManbeings was still intervening in his life, could the mother of all, be somehow helping him, and what he needed for happiness, to stay alive?

All his little wives were dead, each dying a natural death and each taking a little part of his soul with them. If not for Sun--Inanna, he didn't know how he would have borne such heartache, one after the other. His wives, his children, his beloved army of Halfhighs, the funerals never abated, and it was a terrible period in his life. But it was now a distant period and time truly does heal all wounds. He never took another Halfhigh for wife--or Sumerian for that matter.

Throughout the Ages, he had watched many WoMan civilizations emerge and pass, the old always giving way to the new. "WoManity" is what the little people universally called themselves now. The Mother of all, had finally regained her place, attained the honor due her--not that he thought she had ever coveted it after she had gave birth to a wife for Onanes. Still, her perceived image was everywhere, in every shape and form, on every kind of material. Her children, the formerly divided, but now united,

Southlanders, Eastlanders, Northlanders, and Westlanders, had no way of knowing what she really looked like. But they had come up with an image that they worshiped more zealously than the sun. They had her small, black, with flat, beautiful symmetrical features. Nimrod knew what she really looked like. They had captured her image flawlessly.

For a long time it had truly been the little people's world. Even the descendants of the Giants emerged smaller with each new generation.

Onanes had yet to return to cause strife among the peaceful, unified WoMan race, but he knew the mad Sorcerer was still out there. The old wizard was coming to exact his revenge and try to rule again over the earth. But he was watching, waiting. The light atop the beacon the people built burned day and night, the tower, built brick by brick, each one representing a part of the people, an atom, an essence, a thought, their reality and it was eternal.

Many things he had forgotten over the millennium. But he will never forget those 75,000 little people, who had followed him into the unknown to save others from the masters of an evil world they had no hand in making. Nor will he ever forget those who rode with his daughter. The difference was, his men followed him for no gain but the certain promise of death and the slight promise of freedom from terror for them and their people. Those who followed Indianan also fought for freedom, but they were born warriors, and they mostly fought for their blood--their own internal needs. The 75,000... Nothing will ever explain why they rode with him into the realms of their nightmares or, why they endured so many hardships to get there. They never got a chance to actually fight the Giants and nothing can take away from the brave WoMans who did, but it was his 75,000 carpenters, farmers and other everyday men and women who really caused the Sorcerers to flee because they were just the first wave of what Onanes knew he could never defeat--men and women who fought for the deliverance of their fellow beings from the inanities of evil and injustice. Once aroused to extreme action, WoManbeings like that never gave up, and they never stopped coming.

One of the happiest days of his life was the day he gave his daughter over to Samson in matrimony. They had a long, joyous life together despite the many temptations that was thrown at his son--in--law, and the enduring sadness inside his daughter that never released its grip even though she had learned to love and laugh again. The saddest day of his life was the day he buried his baby girl. Samson had died three years earlier. She never smiled after that, but she often cried on his shoulder, and he knew during those times Arnutha was smiling because she knew how much both her beloved needed those moments. He also took comfort in knowing that Arnutha was waiting for their daughter when she passed.

None of the six Halfhigh, survivors of the great deliverance war, ever married. Though their bodies healed completely, they all remained joyless, as if wounded in the soul despite the great reverence and honor they were given throughout their lives. Indianan loved them fiercely and they loved her just as much. Because she was half Sumerian, and so lived a much longer life, she had lived through each of their funerals. She never talked about it with him, but he knew that karma took great price from his most famous child. It was only because Samson and those six who survived her folly, loved her so much, as men often do leaders who lead them through great trauma, -- whether foolishly or not---that she found any solace at all. She lived a long time to dwell on what she'd done even though she had only been an instrument of destiny. As one last token of their love for her, her little warriors each left Indianan everything they owned upon their deaths.

Like the six little war survivors, the two wounded Giants, both fully recovered. And like the Sumerian women and children, they were accepted completely by the people of the Lowlands. Both married numerous wives. For some reason they developed a fierce loyalty to him. There had been many, many other adventures since the destruction of Sumeria. Particularly, in ridding the world of monsters, which refused to live without killing among the woMan race. Whenever he went to face down a threat to the little people, those two were always with him like shadows. He witnessed changes in his two Sumerian Kinsmen that he

never thought was possible. Half of their series of wives were little women. Love brother, he had once told his younger brother, Azazel. Love, is what you see here in the health of my children and the robust spirits of my tiny wives.

When Sun--Inanna joined his household his little wives accepted her from the beginning. More blessedly, she unreservedly embraced each of them. He had been wrong about her. He still didn't know why she waited twenty-four years instead of joining him in the Lowlands, but it clearly wasn't any deep-seated hatred of the Halfhighs. Maybe it was pride. Or maybe it was faith--faith that one day he would return, and then she could finally tell him in the most dramatic way how she really felt. She was the only one, left alive in the flesh, of the many women he had loved in his life. Throughout the years she has fulfilled his needs in every way. Beside her, he had never taken another wife and he never will. She is his soul mate. He called her Isis.

The Giant women all found mates. Most of them became brides to the little Halfhigh men. They were monogamous, changing a long-standing, universal male/female tradition. And the little men dared not argue. The majority of them had a series of different husbands because they lived such long lives compared to the Halfhighs. Some of them never remarried after their first husbands died. They became, known as the weeping widows.

The Giant children became renowned as the heroes and heroines throughout time. Sadly, some of the older ones were too indoctrinated in Sumerian ways to thrive in a changed world. They grew up to be as murderous as Rexes. They were mighty outlaws who terrorized the people for decades before he hunted the last one of them down. Others, of the Sumerian children, adapted well to their new world. They became great Architects and builders. They, more than anything else, were responsible for helping him design and build great structures throughout the ages.

The group of 75,000 remained loved by the people throughout their lifetimes and beyond. But not one of them ever attended a parade.

Except for Sun--Inanna, he was alone now, and all but unknown to the latest generation of WoMans. The world had long ago ceased needing him. All was peaceful and good, and he had neither the desire nor energy to walk among the people anymore. He will come when they cosmically need him,--when Onanes return. Until then, he will be watching over the little people of the earth.

we, the woman race was once united

we were striving to build a future for us all on earth and beyond

we weren't picking and choosing and plotting to leave others behind

this was not man's plan

mankind's plan was all for one and one for all

--"Intro" from the rhyme2weep album by akamardukson

"Marduk. Marduk. Wake up. Wake up!"

"Huh...wha-?"

"Wake up!"

He sat up and tried to rub his eyes open only to find they had been bandaged.

"Where am I?"

" Atlantis, don't you remember anything?"

Atlantis. Atlantis. Suddenly it all came flooding back to his mind, and he remembered something else.

He bolted upright to a sitting position and tore the bandages from his eyes. He still could not see, but that was not what brought the sting of salt to his damaged orbs or the sobs of anguish from his trembling lips.

To be continued....

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