

A Dragoon's Story

~Chapter I~

In Rolanberry fields a young man lays beneath a tree, lazily day dreaming about being a higher ranked adventurer, as the strings of a nearby bard's harp played songs that reminded him of memories long forgotten, reminded him of the beginning of his quest, and how he got there. The Man's name was Scott, a young Bastokan adventurer, of a mere rank 5.

As the bard's song continued to play, he decided that it was best time to start heading back to Jeuno before nightfall, as to avoid any battles he might face with a weaker, yet still deadly Wight.

As he rose himself from the ground and brushed off his robes, a small blue dragon came, and landed at his side, and looked up to him. Scott smiled, and took out a piece of raw hare meat that he fed to the young dragon, and they both set on their way.

As they walked back to Jeuno other adventurers passed them by, and night soon took day, as the young man entered Jeuno, he could hear panic and fear, and see people running through the streets!

"HELP! ANY HIGH LEVEL ASSISTANCE NEEDED TO AID BASTOK!" Zauko, one of the Ducal guards was shouting on top of the Auction House, Hearing this Scott ran from the gate immediately to Zauko's side, "What's going on, what's wrong with Bastok?!" Scott asked, stumbling on his own words he was talking so fast.

"Quadav have finally done it, they've breeched Bastok's walls, and now the Mithril Musketeer's themselves are overrun with the blasted turtles! All airships have been re-routed to Bastok to carry adventurers there for aid, and airlift injured out"

"Right" said Scott as he started running towards Port Jeuno.

"The airship is free to those going to help Bastok" said the hume woman behind the counter "this airship is about to leave, please hurry!"

She barely had time to say those few words as Scott ran past her full speed, and as he ran towards the airship it started to take off.

"No" Scott thought, he knew the faster he got there, the better. He started to run as fast as he could towards the end of the dock, and jumped at the ledge, as he flew through the air, his wyvern once again joined his side, and they both landed on the airship as it left the water, and took to the skies.

~Chapter II~

The airship's main deck splintered as Scott landed on it, and everyone's attention snapped in his direction.

"If I can have your attention back, please." Michael the co-pilot said, "As of thirty minutes ago, the Quadav of all types took Bastok by storm, and have started taking hostages, and keeping them inside of Zeruhn Mines, more Quadav are being transported from Palborough mines via the mine cart, we ask at this time you either aid in the suppression of the Quadav with the Mithril Musketeers, or head to Palborough mines to stop the Quadav at the source, we're being informed that Quadav from Beadeaux are also coming through the mines on the mine cart, so be cautious, we'll now hand out emergency supplies consisting of 3 Hi-Potions, and an additional 3 High-Ethers for any mage."

As the supplies were handed out, Scott went below and looked out the pilot's giant window, and saw another airship going past in the opposite direction.

"We're getting close now" The pilot said, "We're going to have to circle around a few times as we wait for the airship currently docked to head back towards Jeuno"

As the airship started to circle around Bastok, it's passengers looked over the edge, and saw the horrible sight that lay below, Bastok was in flames, and Quadav running through the streets casting magic, and setting buildings aflame, distant screams could be heard, and as the airship started making its second pass around Bastok, it got hit from the side by a powerful fireball.

"Damn! Those Quadav are focusing their attacks, we're taking fire, evasive maneuvers!" Michael yelled down to the captain, as the airship started to twist and turn dodging all magic spells that it was able to.

"Hold on, we have to head back towards Jeuno! We'll never make it if we stay here" Said the pilot, pulling a 180 over Bastok, and starting to head back towards the north-east.

"But what about the people in Bastok?!" Scott asked Michael.

"Right now, it's them or us, and we can't lose this airship"

"Gah!" Scott said as he leapt over the edge of the airship, withdrawing his spear, and free falling towards the ground.

Firewing came down beside Scott as he fell, they were heading for the ever nearing surface with such speed now that it made Scott's eyes water.

As they neared the ground, Scott chose his target, Held his spear with both hands on the end with the tip pointed below his feet, and as he neared the ground, thrust the entire spear into a Silver Quadav with such tremendous force the Quadav's entire body separated into small parts, and flew everywhere.

Scott seemed to have surprised the three Quadav surrounding the silver that now lay... everywhere and quickly took this to his advantage, he quickly slew the two Amber Quadavs standing in the area, and started running towards the Brass one, but Firewing got to it first.

Scott sheathed his weapon on his back, and looked around to see where he was. He managed to land mere feet from the well beside the Steaming Sheep, and saw a clear path into Bastok Markets, and made his run for the Metalworks.

~Chapter III~

Scott entered Bastok Markets, and turned as he heard a second thunderous crash from the heavens.

"What in the hell?" he muttered to himself, but thought it best he reached the Mithril Musketeer's hold in the Metalworks as fast as possible.

The young dragoon quickly worked his way up the curved steps only to find a white mage trying to hold off a small group of Quadavs, at a rushed count, Scott could see 7 of them.

"Please! Help me!" the white mage cried out to him, the look of fear filled her eyes.

"HOLD ON!" Scott said, unsheathing his spear, thinking fast, he raised his arm, and threw his spear at the closest Quadav to himself, the spear thrown with such tremendous force it penetrated the hard shell of the Quadav, paralyzing it instantly.

Scott now without a weapon ran full speed towards the Quadav now carrying his spear in its back, and launched himself towards it feet first. Upon impact, the Quadav shot towards the opposite direction so fast, the spear came dislodged in its back and seemed to almost hover in the air for a few moments.

Firewing Soared into the air, and let out a low growl as he tucked in his wings, and fell head first towards an Amethyst Quadav. The Quadav looked up just in time to see what was about to hit its head so hard it would send its head into its shoulders breaking its spine instantly.

Getting back to his feet Scott picked up his lance and quickly disposed of four of the five Quadav's surrounding him.

"Damn it!" he cursed under his breath as he saw the last one running for its life towards North Gustaberg. "Aw well, what the hell can one Quadav do anyway?" he thought to himself, and turned his attention to the white mage lying at his feet.

"Are you alright" Scott asked the white mage, to which came no reply, reaching down he could still feel a pulse, the white mage was alive, but unconscious.

Lifting the white mage onto his shoulder, he entered the Metalworks, the usual sound of machinery and metal clashing together was absent, and all that could be heard was canon fire from the roof of the building.

Quickly Scott took the white mage down to the temple of Altana and left her care in the hands of the priestess Eleayne.

The elevator had been put out of service to protect those who were on top, from an ambush from behind, Scott quickly leapt up to the elevator halfway between the ground and the second floor, and jumped up to the remaining level, only to meet a blade to his neck.

"Who in the HELL are you?" Invincible Shield the Ballista Captain for Bastok asked in a low growl.

"Sheppard sir, Scott Sheppard"

"Sheppard? You're that dragoon everybody's muttering about these days? WHAT IN THE HELL TOOK YOU SO DAMN LONG! Report to President Karst,

NOW!" Sheppard gave a quick salute and headed towards the Presidents office.
As Firewing followed, he accidentally hit Invincible Shield in the face with his tail as he flew over him, and continued towards his master.

~Chapter IV~

"FIRE!" Volker shouted, the sound of two cannons firing was his reply.

"Secure the President! Get those ambassadors into his office, NOW! I want every man or woman here unarmed to report to Cid in his workshop for a gun and proper ammunition!" Volker shouted again.

As the young dragoon ran up the steps to President Karst's office, he could already hear Bastok's leader barking out orders. "I want troops stationed at the airship dock! We can't afford another Airship to go down; I want all citizens evacuated IMMEDIATELY! Iron Eater! Get over here!" Karst yelled

"Sir" the tall galka warrior named Iron Eater responded with a sharp salute. "I want you to evacuate the mines sector, I want NO galka, hume, ANYTHING left behind, UNDERSTOOD?", "Yes Sir" Iron Eater replied and ran off towards invincible shield.

"YOU!" Karst said pointing at Sheppard "Who the hell are you, and what the hell is that abomination doing in my office?!" he said motioning for Firewing to leave, as if shooing him like a bird.

"Sheppard sir, a certified Bastokan Adventurer"

"Well what the hell are you doing just standing there?! We're running out of steel to continue making bullets, gunpowder is on short supply and we have citizens that need to be evacuated, what the hell do you want from me, an invitation to start being a hero? GET UR F*CKING ASS IN MOTION!"

Sheppard quickly turned to the door, and reported to Cid, and inquired on how he could aid with the gathering of ammo.

"We have barrels full in the warehouses in port Bastok, Iron Eater just headed there, he should be able to lend a hand" The engineer replied.

A small Quadav races into Beadeaux, Sa' Bo Quascul was running as fast as his legs could carry him deep into the heart of Beadeaux, Barely making it back from Bastok, where a dragoon was careless enough to let him slip through the gates.

"Humans! Humans are re-taking Bastok!" Sa' Bo shouted as he raced to the higher level of Beadeaux. Gho Bu Gascon grabbed Sa' Bo's shoulder to stop him from moving.

"We left you in command, and now they're taking the city BACK?!" Gho Bu said, his hand starting to squeeze so hard it was cracking Sa Bo's shoulder pad. "They out-number us, and they're more powerful, we can do nothing but come and call for re-enforcements" Sa' Bo said, his voice breaking from the pain in his shoulder.

Gho Bu let out a war cry and thrust Sa' Bo to the ground with enough force to throw him unconscious. "Alright, Listen up, Bastok is being re-taken, We're going to split up into two groups, one will infiltrate from Palborough mines on the Mine cart, the other will come with me and lead a frontal assault on Bastok's leaders." Gho Bu shouted, and started out towards Pashow marshlands, Hundreds of Quadav's now following him.

~Chapter V~

"Can't this bastard go any faster??" Said Bloodycrow, a hume paladin aboard an airship bound to Bastok from San d'Oria.

"No sir" the co-pilot announced "We've had one airship go down just north of Bastok already, we can't risk another one going down"

As Bloodycrow walked to the edge of the airship to the east he could see a red sun rising. As he looked around he noticed adventurers going into Bastok were now slim, only he and a black mage were on this airship.

As the minutes passed, the smoke above Bastok came into view, and Bloodycrow's jaw couldn't help but drop at the sight.

"All right" the pilot yelled up to his co-pilot "This bird's landing, buckle up it's gonna get rough."

The airship landed a 1/4 mile from the port, giving the already docked airship room enough to take off.

As the airship hit the dock, Bloodycrow took off with such haste he could have put a mithra to shame. As he ran up the dock he noticed there were no clashing of swords, no screams, not a sound.

As he looked on, he noticed that warehouse A's door was open. Slowly he unsheathed his weapon, and crept towards the open door, As he entered he could hear footsteps coming from below, whatever it was, it was coming up the stairs beside him.

Quickly he hid beside the wall, and when the footsteps were right beside him, turned and slashed.

"WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU?!" Sheppard said dropping a box, now with a slash on his right shoulder, "You're f*cking lucky your a paladin or that one might of hurt"

"Sheppard!" Bloodycrow said sheathing his sword "What the hell are you doing here? I thought we were being over-run with Quadav".

"They've retreated for now, we're taking this opportunity to gather supplies, now if your done playing ninja can you go downstairs and get one of these boxes full of steel? Cid needs them."

"Alright, alright, hold on, I'll cure that wound and start helping".

As the lone black mage now exited the docks, they started to get to work on putting out fires with their magic. To the mages' left they could make out three figures carrying boxes, two hume and one galka, they couldn't be intruders. Slowly the black mage managed to put out the Moghouses, and started to work on some of the houses in Port Bastok, and aided citizens to reach the airship for departure to Jeuno.

As the black mage watched the airship they came on fly away with injured, the wind blew their hood down, and revealed her face for a brief moment. Quickly she looked around and made sure no-one saw, a black mage's best asset is their mysteriousness, and she put her hood up once more.

As she turned she could still see buildings on fire, and set off once again to help those in need while there was still time.

~Chapter VI~

"Make haste" Iron Eater said as he and two humes carried crates of steel to the Metal Works.

"Come on man, it's almost midnight, we've been carrying these damn things for hours" Bloodycrow said staggering to carry the weight of the box.

"Should the Quadav advance again, we're going to need to be prepared, now make haste!" replied Iron Eater, also appearing to be struggling under the weight of his crate.

As the three stepped onto the elevator to deliver the last of the crates to Cid, a scout came running in. As the three looked on at the scout below them as they rose, they noticed he was out of breath, and missing part of his left arm.

"BARACADE THE ENTRANCE" The man shouted frantically "THEY'RE COMING BACK, HUNDREDS OF THEM, IN GUSTABERG!"

The three looked on in horror as the man passed out, by the look of blood on his armor; he appeared to have lost a fair amount of it. As a white mage quickly ran from the temple of goddess, she cured him as best she could, but the man still remained unconscious, but alive.

"Get that man up here! NOW!" Invincible Shield yelled pointing to the fallen scout. The white mage lifted the man onto her shoulder and stepped onto the elevator platform.

As the elevator carrying the white mage and the scout arrived at the top floor Invincible Shield lifted the man off her shoulders with ease, and ran into the president's office.

As Iron Eater, Bloodycrow and Sheppard loaded the remaining three crates into Cid's workshop, they could hear him in the back on a linkshell, but could only make out parts of his conversation.

"Jeuno?...tac..Calling..favor...initiate airs....lan B" was all they could make out before Naji came and told them the president wanted to see them.

As the three entered the office they could see the scout lying on a bed with ambassadors standing around him, and Cornelia tending to his wounds.

"Gentlemen, we have a problem" Said Karst, his voice quite serious "According to this scout, the beastmen are coming from Beadeaux, and are now in Gustaberg, being led by Gho Bu' Gascon, and De Vu Headhunter."

"How can this be?!" Sheppard asked "Bloody and I killed them both, how are they leading the Quadav?"

"Leave it to Bastok to not even know about its OWN beastmen." A voice came from behind. As they turned around, the Windurstian Ambassador was standing in the doorway.

"And I suppose you know more about them then?" Said Karst glaring.

"As a matter of fact, I do" Said the Ambassador.

"Please" said Karst, still glaring "Inform us then"

"Gho Bu Gascon, and De Vu Headhunter aren't names given out at birth, they're ranks, much like a general in your army, what would seem to have happened, is that after those two adventurers killed the last two, two more

powerful ones took the positions." The Ambassador said, fixing his glasses.

The room became quiet, everyone in the room's face now serious. As the door opened everybody turned to look at the man standing in its archway, it was Cid.

"We've got a surprise coming for those Quadav's" Said Cid, a half smile on his face, "It should buy us some time to prepare, I'll start repairing cannons immediately"

Quadav camp in North Gustaberg just past midnight. Gho bu' Gascon, Sa Bo' Quascul, and De Vu'Headhunter sit around a campfire, devouring a form of raw meat, in the background hundreds of Quadav's could be seen sitting around campfires'

"What's that noise?" Sa Bo said, looking around into the night sky. "SHUT UP" De Vu shouted, "We wouldn't have to BE here if you were competent enough to lead a squadron" He said taking large bite of meat.

Warship #107 Flying above Konschtat highlands, An airship with Four guns, two on each side, flies alone towards Gustaberg

"Captain, target coming into view" John, Co-Pilot of the Silent fury (A.K.A. warship #107), putting down his binoculars and awaiting his next order.

"Good" Said the captain, "Put all men on battle stations, we only have 4 rounds, so we have one shot at this before we turn back, I want everything checked, re-checked and checked again." said the captain.

"Sir" John replied, he gave a sharp salute, and ran off to the main deck. "Alright men, battle stations, I want every man to stand his position, the slightest miscalculation could result in a catastrophe"

~Chapter VII~

As the quiet sound of propellers echoed through Konschtat Highlands, a crew on board the Silent Fury makes haste to prepare the ships 4 mounted cannons.

"Cannon one, status!" John barked out

"Armed and ready sir!" The cannonier replied

"Cannon two"

"Ready sir"

"Three and four"

"Loaded and ready for fire sir" the two cannoniers said in unison.

"Now.." Said John trailing off "Lets show these bastards why you don't attack one of our regions"

Hundreds of campfires fill North Gustaberg, as three Quadav leaders Sa Bo Quascul, Gho Bu Ghascon and De vu Headhunter sit around the southern most camp.

"I know I hear something" Said Sa Bo, rising to his feet and squinting into the night sky. "I thought I told you to SHUT UP" shouted De Vu also rising to his feet and drawing his sword. As he started to thrust full force at Sa Bo he paused in mid swing, and also peered into the night sky.

"AMBUSH!" De Vu shouted "RUN FOR COVER, GET UNDER THE MOUNTAINS!"

"Light fuse!" Shouted John on the deck of the silent fury, He looked down in satisfaction to see hundreds of Quadav's scrambling in every direction. "FIRE" he shouted. As he gazed down upon the Quadav, he stayed as still and calm as a statue as four different thunderous *BANGS* went off beside him, as he continued to watch he could see where the four shots landed.

"Ha!" De Vu laughed as he saw all four shots miss Quadav and go into the mountains surrounding them. "Ready your magic!" he shouted, looking onto his troops.

As Quadav got groups and started casting, another thunderous explosion came from the walls, bringing them down instantly and crushing any Quadav within fifty feet of the wall.

"Hahaha! BASTARDS" John screamed as the silent fury turned for the North West, and started back towards the Duchy.

"WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED" Gho Bu screamed at a Brass Quadav.

"They didn't fire normal ammunition sir; they must have been explosives they shot, a bomb of sorts".

"rrrrRRAAAAHHHHHHHH" De Vu screamed at the top of his lungs, drawing his sword and thrusting it through the torso of the Brass Quadav. As he slowly drew back his blade blood flowed down its shell, and the Brass Quadav screamed in pain, fell to its knee's, and finally collapsed.

"How many troops are left?" De Vu said through gritted teeth, "About 70, Sir" said a Silver Quadav coming up towards the campsite, but came to an immediate halt as he felt a liquid at his feet, and looked onto see what creature was the cause of it. Shocked at the sight of his murdered companion the Silver Quadav slowly backed away, and returned to his own campsite.

"We attack in one hour" De Vu said in a low growl, "Bastok will not live to see another sunset."

~Chapter VIII~

"Speed up the repairs, this is taking too long!" Cid said from cannon room
1. As Cid knelt inspecting the cannon, a sound came from his pants pocket

"C.d.....Ci...do...ou.co.y?"

Standing quickly he withdrew a yellow bead from the pocket and held the item in front of his face "This is Cid, go ahead Duchy"

"Target hit, we can't make another run but we got one helluva lot of them" came a voice from the linkshell

"How many could you estimate left?" Cid asked now pacing the room

"Maybe 100 sir, more Quadavs were spotted heading into the higher levels of north Gustaberg, those are estimated at about 70"

"Palborough Mines.." Cid said lowering the pearl from his face "What could they want in there..."

"Cid, we can still evacuate, just let us know if you need us again"

"Roger, See ya' john, thanks again."

"Anytime sir."

As Sheppard and Bloodycrow sat sharpening their weapons in the Blacksmiths Guild, they could hear Invincible Shield still barking out orders to Iron Musketeer's for preparations.

"Think we're gonna make it?" Sheppard asked, his gaze focused upon his lance.

"It doesn't matter if we do" Bloodycrow replied "Cuz' even if we don't, we'll give them one hell of a battle to get our home." He said cracking a smile to try and ease his nerves, but could not suppress the feeling.

As Sheppard rose, he spun his lance around in his fingers, and placed it in its place on his back. As a loud bang came from Port Bastok they both turned their heads in that direction. "Well, that's one gate sealed" Said Bloodycrow "But what if the Quadav find a different way, blowing up our entrances won't help much, and they can always dig through the mountains"

"Well" Said Sheppard "That's a chance we'll have to take."

As the two rose, two more bangs rang out into the empty Bastok, as the Iron Musketeers blew up the remaining two tunnels into Bastok. As Sheppard stepped out into the night, he could hear the sound of propellers coming closer to the city. Quickly he ran to the district to see an airship land in the docks. As he ran towards the docks, he could see 40 or 50 people exiting the airship in military fashion. He stopped for a second and his eyes widened at this sight of who was leading the troops. As the feeling of awe passed he ran to the exit door and stood shocked at who he saw in front of him. As the tall elf looked down on him, he gave a half smile, and said "Bastok's technology will help the battle, but wont be enough. We offer our assistance to suppress the forces of the invading beastmen, now please take me to your command center." nodding, Sheppard turned and replied "Right away Prince Trion."

~Chapter IX~

A dragoon leads a tall elvaan male dressed in San d'Orian royalty armor towards the president's office in the dead of night

"We've got the entrances sealed, that should at least slow them down" said Karst leaning over a map of both Gustaberg regions

"They say that they've also seen some entering the mines, and a few more entering the forsaken mines.." Said Cid, also looking at the map "What could they be doing in those mines?" as Karst stood up and started pacing the room, the door started to open, revealing a tall elvaan male in its arches.

"The kingdom of San d'Oria offers its allegiance to aid you in suppressing the forces of beastmen in this region" Trion said as he entered the office. Hearing this, Karst pulled Cid into the hallway behind his office "San d'Orians, if they help us we'll never hear the end of how Bastok needed their help, I won't accept it!" Said Karst with an intense hatred "Karst! Without their help it won't matter, because there won't be any Bastok for them to talk about anyways, we're short on ammo, our few soldiers are exhausted and all we have are a dragoon, paladin, and two mages in the ways of adventurers to aid us" Cid said calmly. Letting out a long sigh, president Karst went back into his office "I....accept this aid" Said Karst, finding himself unable to make contact with Trion, who responded by giving a half smile "Good" said Trion "We'll start garrisoning troops through the city immediately".

A small militia of Quadav led by three in the front head towards the Bastok Markets entrance

"WHAT is THIS!" De Vu shouted pointing at the caved in entrance.

"I don't know sir" Said a small young Quadav in the front "last time I was here the entrance was still opened; it must have been done within the hour." Saying this, De Vu looked solely at the young Quadav and others around him started to back away, leaving him standing alone

"Congratulations" De Vu said quietly "Instead of scout, you get to be the official messenger of our return now".

As the sun rose, the Quadav had now almost dug through the rubble of the entrance, and waited for further orders.

"We're almost through sir, and we've found what you wanted, but lost some troops in the process" said a Silver Quadav holding an item in a bag "Good" replied De Vu turning to the Silver, "Place that by the remaining bit of rock in the entrance, and tell mages to be ready to cast fire on it when I give the word...oh, and tell Gho Bu its time for our messenger" "Right away sir" the Silver replied and made off to the gate. The Quadav told as many mages as he could find to cast fire on the bag on De Vu's orders, and made towards Gho Bu "De Vu says that its time to send in the messenger"

Inside the city, a few Royal Knights stand outside Brunhilde's armory, and watch the gate

"Go tell the commander that there's some activity at gate 1" Said a tall red haired elvaan.

"Right away sir" another replied, and headed towards the Metalworks. As the red haired Elvaan turned back towards the gate, an object came flying down from the sky and landed a few feet in front of him "What the hell..?" he muttered under his breath as he looked at the object in front of him "It's a Quadav head..". He said to the three other troops around him.

Outside three groups of the remaining Quadav's stand from lowest ranking to highest outside of the gate

"Alright scum, as soon as the gate is breeched we'll send you in platoons in order to make sure they don't have anything planned to wipe us all out at once" Sa Bo shouted to the three platoons. "It will be lowest ranks in first, so line up, mages at the ready!"

An elvaan scout had informed his superiors, and turns towards the gate he was assigned to and walks down the stairs just in time to see the gate blown up, and his comrades hit by debris, and instantly killed

"THEY'VE BROKEN THROUGH THE GATE, THEY'RE THROUGH THE GATE, WE NEED RE-ENFORCEMENTS AT GATE 1!" He shouted as he turned and ran back towards the Metalworks only to see a wyvern fly past him. As he once again turned to the gate he saw a dragoon running towards the Quadav, lance drawn. At the sight of this, he drew his own sword, and ran towards the mob of Quadavs at the gate.

~Chapter X~

"THEY'VE BREECHED THE GATE, GET TO THE NORTH WALL!" Volker shouted as elvaan and hume's ran carrying bows and guns.

"Fire at will!" he shouted once again, as everyone chose a target and opened fire, as they looked down they could see a dragoon and a red mage running towards the breach.

As the two ran towards the wall, the red mage shouted "My name's Artea" over the gunfire "Care to fight together on this one?"

"Doesn't look like we have much of a choice" Sheppard shouted back, as he pierced his Lance through a Young Quadav's skull, and struggled to get it back out. As the Quadav surrounded him he noticed they were all in groups of three, and nothing was higher than level 10. As he and Artea slaughtered most of the remaining Quadav, Sheppard felt a sharp pain in his left arm and found himself unable to move it.

As he looked back at his shoulder, he saw that one of the archers had missed, and hit him in the shoulder, piercing his Brigandine armor. Finding that he can no longer properly hold his lance, he sheathed it with his right arm, and started running towards one of the last Quadav, and when he got within distance lunged at it from 20 feet away, and hit it square in the chest with his right shoulder, breaking the Quadav's ribs and causing it to fall.

As the battle soon ended, Sheppard found himself growing tired, and unable to stand, and quickly fell to the ground. The last thing he saw before he blacked out was Iron Eater and Bloodycrow bringing a stretcher for him.

~Chapter XI~

Slowly as Sheppard began to regain consciousness, he looked around, and saw a small group of people standing along the edge of the bed he was in. Quickly he realized he didn't remember what had happened after he had fallen, and tried to get up, but let out a cry of pain and fell back down on the bed when he tried to put his weight on his left arm.

"Where am I?" he asked now holding his shoulder.

"Oh, does that still hurt? here, let me look at it" said one of the women around his bed. As a white light surrounded Sheppard's shoulder, he felt the pain start to withdraw, and started to sit up again, just slowly this time.

As he looked around, he could see Iron Eater, Bloodycrow, Artea, a black mage he had not seen yet, and..."You..." he said pointing at the last member.

She smiled at him and said "I was told you were the one who helped to save me, so I thought I'd stay and help return the favor" She said, "My name is Belldandy."

As Sheppard rose to his feet, and noticed that his Drachen Brais, Greaves and Gauntlets were still on, but his brigandine was missing. He turned to Iron Eater and said "Where's my Brigandine? That was crafted for me."

"We're sorry, but your Brigandine was wrecked, you ripped the material beyond repair with your last jump at the enemy" Iron Eater said.

"What am I supposed to do now? I can't wear musketeer gear, and if I don't have any gear; I can't fight."

"That's where we come in" Said Artea "In honor of your bravery for saving a Royal Knight, San d'Oria gives you this armor, From the last known dragoon" As the door opened, and two elvaans came in carrying a chest, Sheppard's eyes widened.

As he opened the chest, it revealed a shining Drachen Mail, as Sheppard slowly lifted it out of the box; the two elvaans helped him to equip it. "It's stronger than any armor you've ever wore, and light enough that you can still jump in it" said prince Trion walking into the room, "Hmm, a little big, but that can be fixed."

Sheppard stood in place, shocked and unable to speak, looking down at the new armor that had been placed upon him.

As he picked up his lance, and sheathed it on his back. "There's more of them, I saw another squadron of them when I was on the ground, Except these ones aren't pushovers, these actually looked stronger"

"We know, Artea saw them too, we're re-sealing the gate already" Said Iron Eater, "Now, should you feel up to it, we've got preparations to make, on the double!"

~Chapter XII~

As the group went outside, Sheppard noticed that night had fallen, and headed toward the north wall, as he looked over the edge and saw the re-sealed gate. Turning back to his group members he saw something was not right. A tall cloaked figure now stood behind his new party members and approached.

"So, you're the dragoon aid to lead Bastok's defense?" The cloaked figure said, now standing three feet in front of Sheppard. "Yeah, but I have no power over the others, they're not under my command, I'm just an adventurer." replied Sheppard.

"Well" Said the cloaked figure drawing a lance, "I challenge you then." And lunged at Sheppard, who quickly rolled to the right and drew his own lance.

The cloaked figure not stopping at the miss quickly started towards Sheppard again, and attempted to pierce Sheppard's chest, but Sheppard moved again, and quickly lunged at the cloaked figure, but was parried. In the short time that the two paused weapon to weapon Sheppard asked "Why are you doing this?" but got no response, and jumped back a few feet away from his opponent.

"Charge!" Shouted Bloodycrow, and the small group of people coming toward him actually made the hood on the cloaked man turn away from Sheppard, and stared directly at them.

"No" Sheppard shouted at them, "This is just between us" Not knowing why he had just called his friends off of his enemy, there was something about him...that he just couldn't put his finger on.

The group stopped in their tracks, glared at the figure, and sheathed their weapons. And once again, Sheppard and the cloaked man started to dual.

The battle raged on, and to Sheppard's amazement as he tried to jump on his opponent, he also jumped, but landed on top of a building.

As the hooded man once again jumped into the air, Sheppard called his wyvern, never dropping his lance and keeping an eye on his opponent.

The man landed a rough 10 feet away from Sheppard, stopped, and looked at the wyvern for a minute, and finally sheathed his lance. "I've seen what I needed to" Said the man, finally taking off his hood, and exposing a purple winged helmet on an elvaan's head.

Realizing who this was, Sheppard quickly dropped to his knee without even sheathing his lance. As the man walked toward him, he said "A wyvern born from the holy crest, you truly are a dragoon. I no longer have a wyvern, or I would aid you in this battle. But the one thing I can aid you with, is being able to control troops at your own discretion." The man stopping just short of the kneeling Sheppard, removed his helmet and placed it on Sheppard's head, revealing his face. "With this helmet, the troops of san d'Oria will recognize you as a general, use their help wisely."

The man put his hood back on, and ran towards the south wall on top of the Metalworks. Sheppard, still in awe that not only did he see the last dragoon, but now dawned his armet, stood up and chased after him "Wait" he called after Erplacion as he ran after him, and as Erplacion reached the wall, he turned, looked at Sheppard one more time, and jumped over.

Finally reaching the wall, just as Erplacion jumped over, Sheppard looked down, and saw nothing, nobody was there.

Walking behind him, Bloodycrow looked over the wall too, and said "Who was that?"

"..The last dragoon" Sheppard said, a look of confusion came across Bloodycrow's face, but he decided not to ask questions, and the two of them turned, and headed back to the group.

~Chapter XIII~

As the dawn breaks into a new day, the Quadav standing in south Gustaberg have shifted, and all but a small garrison of Quadav have started moving north.

"C'mon, MOVE, the timing on this has to be perfect!" Said a Gold Quadav kicking a Garnet sitting down in the back of its shell.

"Yes sir!" Said the Garnet quickly rising to its feet and moving towards the Bastok mines entrance, with another five Garnet Quadavs hurrying to join its side.

As the small group reached the caved in entrance to the mines district, the gold Quadav shouted again "Get digging maggots"

And quickly the small group of Quadav began to remove the rocks and rubble that was blocking their path.

As the large group of Quadavs heads to North Gustaberg, a Silver one runs up to the three that are leading the way

"They're digging sir" Said the silver quad to De Vu, who turned to it and responded "Good, go form rank" and kept walking.

As they entered North Gustaberg, another small garrison, led by Gho Bu Ghascon now headed towards the port. As the small group departed, the main army of Quadavs still pursued northward towards Palborough mines.

As the group walked, Sa Bo held up his hand, and all the Quadavs following to Palborough stopped in their tracks.

Quickly he drew his sword and thrust behind him. For a moment the image of a man cloaked in black appeared on the tip of his sword, and then flickered away.

"We're being followed" Sa Bo said to De Vu, Thrusting his sword again and the shadow of the man re-appeared on the tip of his sword and flickered away. "How can you see this?" De Vu asked Sa Bo, "I've been blessed with the gift of true-sight" said Sa Bo in a dignified tone, "WILL YOU JUST KILL HIM ALREADY?" De Vu shouted as once again Sa Bo made a thrust at the air, and pierced through another image. "No need" Said Sa Bo sheathing his sword again "They ran off."

"Lets keep moving, we need to be precise with this attack" Shouted De Vu, now glaring at Sa Bo for being unable to kill one weak human.

As they neared the entrance to Palborough mines De Vu shouted "We're sending all Old, Copper, Great, and Veteran in, you are to follow Sa Bo Quascul through the mines and into the city" he quieted down and looked directly at Sa Bo and said "If you fail, do not come back, because death awaits you this time." Glaring at De Vu, Sa Bo turned to his troops and led the way into the mines.

Back on top of the Metalworks, a hume dressed in black with his lower face covered by a black scarf hurries towards the presidents office, on his way by he passes a small group of adventurers, but merely ignores them.

As the ninja busted into the office, he quickly gave a salute to the startled president and said "Sir, they're heading to Palborough Mines, but I was found out before I could hear the details of their plan. One of their leaders must have true sight"

"I see" said Karst regaining his composure, and turning his back to the

ninja

"What could they want there?" he thought aloud

"The mine cart" said Cid "They're going to try and enter on the mine cart"

"Of course" Said Karst turning towards cid "Well we'll have a surprise waiting for them once they arrive, Trion station some troops in the mines district, and Buckthorn..." Said Karst turning to the ninja "Go tell those adventurers to go there too"

"Yes sir" said the ninja giving a salute and heading out of the office.

As the ninja approached the six adventurers he turned to Iron Eater and said "You're asked to go to the mines district and aid in the suppression of Quadav coming through Palborough mines"

"Alright, not a problem" responded Sheppard, but as they all turned to go, Iron Eater said "I'm sorry, but I do not belong with you, my place as a Mythril Musketeer is here, protecting the president, You, ninja, will you go in my stead?"

The ninja stared at Iron Eater for a few moments, and gave a quick nod and turned to the other five and said "My name is buckthorn"

"I'm Sheppard, and this is Bloodycrow, Belldandy, Artea, and..." he stopped, quickly realizing that "I don't know you're name" He said to the black mage "It's Trissa" she responded quietly, "Well, I guess we had better head out" Said Sheppard, and the small group turned towards the elevators.

~Chapter XIV~

As the small group moved for the elevators, Sheppard stopped, and turned back toward the office. "What's wrong?" Belldandy asked moving beside him, "I don't know, there's something wrong" he said, "Proly nothing though, lets keep going" and he once again turned his back to the presidents office.

As the group headed for the mines district, it was more quiet then it had ever been. As he looked around, the place was in ruins, houses, shops, the auction house all were badly damaged. Some houses didn't have roofs anymore, and some were completely annihilated.

"Wait a second" said Belldandy stopping, "I need to go to my moghouse" "What?" said Sheppard turning to face her "I need to go to my moghouse, I was on my way there when you found me, my cloak is in there."

Sheppard thought for a moment looking at Belldandy, she was in Healers boots, pants and gloves, but she was wearing Hume F body gear, "Fine, I'll accompany you to your moghouse"

"I'll go too" Bloodycrow said moving to stand behind Sheppard

"The rest of the group keep going and meet up with the troops in the mines district" Sheppard said, and the two groups split up.

"It's in the Port" Belldandy said turning towards the Port, and running off, and Sheppard and Bloodycrow followed.

As they neared the residential section in Port Bastok, Belldandy turned to them and said "Wait here, I'll only be gone a second" and ran off.

Minutes passed as the two stood outside, and as the two stood there, a loud noise came from the now sealed off exit into north Gustaberg. Both men shot each other a confused look and started walking towards the pile of rubble that used to be the entrance.

As they crossed over the bridge they could hear footsteps come from behind them "Hey, you couldn't wait for me to grab a cloak?" She said angrily at the pair "Shush!" Said Sheppard, keeping his gaze fixed on the gate.

"What?" Said Belldandy, noticing the look of seriousness on both Bloodycrow, and Sheppard's face.

"Look" Said Sheppard pointing towards the gate.

As she turned to look at the gate, she noticed one of the boulders was moving "What's going on?" she asked, not moving her gaze, "I don't know" said Sheppard "But its been going on for a few minutes now"

Still not moving his gaze Sheppard reached into his pocket and pulled out a pearl "Cid, there's a bit of a problem" He said into it,

"What?" the pearl replied.

"Something trying to get though the rubble of the Port district's gate" Sheppard said into the pearl again.

For a minute there was silence, and the voice came back saying "It is here too" Sheppard could recognize this voice as Artea's.

"What do you mean?" asked Cid.

"The boulders are moving at the gate, they're trying to come through the entrance"

Once again, a long silence befell the pearl, and then Cid's voice came back saying "We're dispatching militia to all gates, both of you hold your posi-" But the voice in the pearl was drowned out by a loud explosion.

As the three looked up, they noticed that there were no boulders anymore, the entrance was unblocked, and Quadav were pouring through it.

"They're through" Said Sheppard into the pearl.

"Here too" Said Artea.

"They're coming through the markets gate too, it's an ambush" Said Cid, "Focus the rest of your troops to the markets gate, we can handle the port"

"And we can handle the mines for now" said Artea.

Quickly depositing the pearl back into his pocket, and drew his lance. He could hear Belldandy saying something behind him, and watched, as a blue barrier formed around himself, Bloodycrow, and Belldandy.

Lance drawn, he looked over at Bloodycrow, who now drew his own sword. The two of them shouted a loud war cry, and started to charge at their new foes.

~Chapter XV~

As numerous Quadav poured through the entrance to Zeruhn mines and the exit to south Gustaberg in the mines district, three adventurers, a red mage, a ninja, and a black mage, attempt to hold off the small army.

"There's too many of them" Said Artea as he thrust his sword into the hard stomach of a Quadav and withdrew, swinging at another "I can hold out a bit longer here" Said buckthorn as he cast a spell, and four replicas of himself now stood beside him.

Quickly as the Quadav kept pouring into the town, the sky turned as black as night, as dark clouds brewed overhead.

As Artea made a quick slice at a Quadav's head, he turned around to look at the black mage. Her arms were in front of her chest, hands split into a circle in front of her heart, and he could hear her as he continued to hold off as many Quadavs as he could.

As the mage bowed her head, she spoke the words "Kut uv drihtan rumah, knyhd sa dro bufan du cseda so ahaseac, yht vunajan crymm"

As Artea parried the sword of the Quadav he was engaged in combat with, he could feel a sharp pain. Another Quadav had crept behind him, and stabbed him in the back. Now, unable to stand from his wound, he dropped down onto one knee, and looked up at the Quadav in front of him.

With a cackle, it raised its sword into the air, and began to make a vertical chop.

As the black mage continued to speak her words, the sky grew darker still, and finally, she said "e rumt oui knydavimm, knyhd sa dra dria bufan uv mekrdhehk ~Thundaga VI~" And threw her arms out beside her.

As quickly as the words came out of her mouth, streaks of lightning flew down from the sky, The Quadav in front of Artea got hit on the tip of its sword, and was electrocuted. As Artea looked around, he could see a similar effect happen to each Quadav.

After they were struck, they instantly dropped down to their knees, and finally collapsed onto their stomachs.

"What the hell just happened?" Sheppard asked as he struggled to withdraw his lance from the chest of a Quadav, it had penetrated so deeply that it went through to the other side.

"I'm not sure" said Belldandy looking up to the sky. As the seconds passed, the clouds quickly withdrew, and the sun shined down once more.

"Are they still alive?" Bloodycrow asked, still poised to strike if one tried to get up.

"No, I don't think so" Sheppard said, now sheathing his lance.

"Come on, let's go find the others and make sure they're alright."

As the three ran towards the mines district, they noticed that San d'Orian soldiers were stunned, swords still drawn, standing over their now dead foes.

As the three reached the mines district, they could see Artea and Buckthorn standing over a body "Oh no..." Said Belldandy, racing up to them, "What happened? Is she ok?" said Belldandy out of breath.

"I got hit from behind, and was about to be killed, but then she finished a spell, sounded like Thundaga VI, but she was speaking in a language I've never heard before. Then, every Quadav here got hit by lightning, and she passed out"

"She's still breathing" Said Belldandy, casting a spell on Trissa, "Come on, help me get her back to the presidents office"

~Chapter XVI~

"She's still breathing" said Belldandy, casting a spell on Trissa, "Come on, help me get her back to the president's office"

Quickly, Sheppard lifted Trissa onto his shoulder, and the five members hurried towards the president's office.

As they entered they saw everyone in the room in the same state of shock as the soldiers outside. "What happened out there?" Said Karst, turning towards Sheppard

"I'll explain in a minute sir, I need to use your bedroom"

Looking over to Sheppard, and noticing the girl over his shoulder, he headed behind his office, and opened his bedroom doors. As Sheppard lay Trissa down on the bed, her hood slipped down, and he could see that she had black hair in a ponytail.

"I'll stay here with her" Said Belldandy

"Me too" Said Artea moving beside the bed.

As Sheppard left the bedroom, and entered the main office, Karst looked at him again and said "Now, mind explaining what happened?"

"Well sir, we got separated, Bloodycrow, Belldandy and I were in the Port, and Quadav started coming through the entrance"

"They came through the entrance to the Zeruhn Mines, and the entrance to South Gustaberg too in the Mines district" Said Buckthorn.

"Yes, yes, I got all that, what the hell happened to the Quadav?" Said Karst, "The black mage cast some form of spell, and took all of them down, then passed out" said Buckthorn.

"I see.." said Karst putting a hand on his chin.

A few moments of silence passed, but were interrupted when Cid came through the door with his linkpearl in his hand. "My pearl dropped, and broke" said Cid.

"So?" said Karst

"If any pearl holder drops out of contact, the Duchy sends a search party after them, they're on their way here" Said Cid.

A few hours passed, and sure enough, the Silent Fury appeared on the horizon.

"Come with me to the Port district, if you don't mind" Said Cid, turning to Sheppard, who gave a quick nod, and followed Cid toward the port.

As they neared the airship dock, a man dressed in Duchy military gear stood waiting for them. "Hello John" Said Cid as he and Sheppard neared the man, "Nothing special, my pearl just broke."

As John turned towards the two, he had a grim face "That's the least of our problems right now Cid" he said moving closer to the two,

"On our way here, we could see them, hundreds of them, in the Highlands" Said John in a low whisper "They'll be here by morning, you won't be able to hold off another wave with a few troops, and a handful of adventures. It's the crystal wars all over again Cid, they'll wipe you out like the Orcs did Tavnazia"

Cid's face now looked old, and as grim as Johns. "What are we going to do?" he asked, "Evacuate?"

"I don't see another option Cid" Said John.

"Come, let's discuss this further with Karst"

And the three men set off towards the Metalworks. As they entered the office, John and Cid explained everything to Karst and Trion, Who also donned the same grim look as Cid and John.

"We cant hold that many off, not even with our allies" Said Karst, "That's another full wave of them"

After a moments pause, a San d'Orian soldier came into the office, "Sir" he said giving a sharp salute, "Survivors are coming out of the Zeruhn mines, there seems to still be about half the town here" Said the Soldier.

"Dismissed" said Trion, and the soldier left.

"We'll never get half a town evacuated by morning" Said Karst in a low voice, "That mage! If she could cast that spell once, maybe she can do it again!" said Karst, Belldandy having heard this came into the office, "She cant cast anything, that spell almost killed her" She said.

"I'll do it" Said Sheppard, looking around the room.

"What?" Said Karst turning his attention to Sheppard.

"Well, I don't know if it'll work or not, but maybe I can jump off of an airship, and cause an earthquake if I get enough speed on the way down."

"That's preposterous" Said Karst.

"No, its not" said cid "If he's able to jump high enough, it is possible" he said turning toward Sheppard "But I don't think you'd make the fall lad"

"I know" Said Sheppard, "But if it works, then the remaining towns people would be safe right?"

The room was silent for a few moments; nobody seemed to want to say anything. As Sheppard exited the room, Belldandy and Bloodycrow went out with him. "You're joking right?" Said Bloodycrow, moving beside Sheppard, "You can't be serious about this"

"There's no alternative, we can't hold back another regiment of Quadavs, and we can't evacuate half the town before they'll get here" He said, and turned towards the elevators.

As he waited for the elevator to come up, he could hear someone coming up behind him, "You're sure you want to do this?" Said John, putting his hand on Sheppard shoulder. "Yea, I'm sure" He said, and the two of them headed towards the airship docks.

~Final Chapter, XVII~

As the two men neared the airship dock, news of the plan had spread, and townspeople were standing around, watching them as they passed.

As the two of them paused by the door to the airship docks, Sheppard could hear a small noise behind him, and instantly remembered, Firewing was still with him.

Slowly he turned, and saw his faithful wyvern still flying behind him. John turned, but saw Sheppard with his wyvern, and said "I'll be on the ship", and left the two alone.

"You can't come with me on this one Firewing" he said taking a couple steps closer to his wyvern, "Stay with Bloodycrow, he'll take care of you" He said, giving his wyvern a hug, and quickly dismissing him.

Sheppard turned to look at Bastok one more time, the once industrious city was now in ruin, houses half burned, or totally destroyed, merchandise from shops lay scattered on the streets. And then through the townspeople broke four adventurers.

The two groups stood looking at each other for a moment, and then all four adventurers gave Sheppard a salute, and did not move, until the airship had taken flight.

As he walked up the stairs, the airship turned back towards the south, and passed over the town, heading for Konschtat Highlands.

"Sir, Quadav spotted just up ahead in north Gustaberg" said a crewman.

"tell your captain to go as high as he can" Said Sheppard, looking down at the one big, black mass that were the Quadav.

"Aye" said John, and he turned and ran below deck.

Within moments, Sheppard could feel the ship ascending, and starting to turn clockwise around the Quadav below. "We're at maximum altitude sir" said John, coming back on deck.

Nodding, Sheppard climbed up onto the railing of the airship, and drew his lance. "Sir" said a voice behind him, and he turned to see the ships crew standing and saluting him. "Godspeed sir" Said John, and with that, Sheppard quickly jumped off the edge, as high as he could go.

Down on the ground, the remainder of the people in town were watching the airship in the sky carefully, and almost everyone let out a gasp when they saw a black speck leap from the ship, so high that it was almost out of sight.

As a few moments passed, Sheppard came back within view, and was traveling so fast towards the ground that it was near impossible to see him. And within seconds of seeing Sheppard, a thunderous crash was heard.

The ground began to shake so violently that some of the houses that remained standing began to crumble, and when it was all over, the four adventurers burst out of the city, and ran towards North Gustaberg.

As they got closer to North Gustaberg, they could see the land was disfigured, boulders shot up from the ground, huge cracks spread across it, and hundreds of Quadav bodies now lay where they stood moments ago.

"He actually did it" Said Bloodycrow, and he ran off towards the Quadav.

After a few minutes of searching, Buckthorn yelled to the other two that he had found Sheppard.

As the four adventurers gathered around where Buckthorn was, they looked down to see Sheppard's broken and lifeless body. And none of them were able to help themselves from crying.

"Amazing...one man would give his own life, to save a nation" Said a female voice from behind them. Startled, the four adventurers turned around to see a cloaked figure.

"Oh my goodness..." said Belldandy, realizing who she was looking at "You're Altana!"

Everybody stared at Belldandy, and back at the woman for a few seconds, and realized, she was right. "One man would sacrifice himself, to protect the world that I created..." Altana said, as she walked toward Sheppard.

For a few moments, she looked down at the body, and then with a flash of light, she was gone. "Whoa..." Said Bloodycrow looking around him, the land was now repaired, and every body but Sheppard's had now disappeared. The four adventurers turned to look at Sheppard again, but he still lay there, motionless.

As the minutes passed, the four adventurers finally turned, and started to head back towards Bastok. As they walked into South Gustaberg, they could see something coming towards them in the distance, and Bloodycrow's eyes widened as he began to see it in detail.

Swiftly, it flew past the adventurers, and headed towards where Sheppard lay. "Firewing!" Said Bloodycrow running after the wyvern, surprised at the name, the other three followed suit.

As they once again entered North Gustaberg, they could see Firewing lying beside Sheppard, who was now sitting with his back against the mountain.

"SHEPPARD!" Belldandy shouted as the four adventurers started running towards him, slowly he looked up from his wyvern, and said "I feel like hell" Cracking a smile, Bloodycrow helped him to his feet, and the five adventurers started back towards the horizon.

Through generations the story would pass, of how a nation may fall victim to an attack, yet its spirit, much like a dragoons, can never be broken.

And that,
is a dragoon's
story.