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Waxxar and the Distant Riders

The villagers in the sun-tipped meadowlands had been watching the band of riders coming swiftly and harshly over the western mountain range. Even at a distance, the approach of the blurry and dusty group caused the fresh dew on the flowers to suddenly evaporate. The bee stilled its wings instinctively. In the past, the people in this region had acknowledged various strange visitors with a kind but timid heart. But this rising fury of the riders galloping on agitated horses greatly unsettled them. *What is the matter?* thought the inhabitants. *What is the intention of this wild band coming from the westerly unknown?*

As the riders crossed the great expanse between the unknown parts of the mountains of mauve and the foothills, the shimmering and sacred forest of Mareithia lifted its fine shoulders and pulled in a breath of peace and expectation. The moment had come to open a new path.

The meadowlands grew quieter in the incoming stampede and great Mareithia grew more animated and majestic. The calm, golden lake that lay in the very heart of this holy abode began to increase its light and power.

So they are finally here, thought Galliard, crouched down at the edge of the precious water admiring a small silvery insect in the tall grass. *Let us then make new friends.* He rose swiftly and quietly.

There were no weapons in the forest for gentle Mareithia forbade such things. Galliard knew this all too well and shook his head just thinking of the possibility. *No,* he reflected. *No arms are necessary, for the mind is superior to any weapon and can create wondrous things through Love, Power and Intention.*

Although Galliard was not native to Mareithia he often spent time there and was frequently called upon to speak at important councils, both in the forest and in places beyond the earth. At times he would represent other great ones who were occupied elsewhere sharing their knowledge and comforting sorrowful hearts. Galliard's true home lay inside a bright star

which sparkled between the earth and its sun and that local inhabitants could easily see at twilight. There, too, were lakes but none as magnificent as the lake within the centre of Mareithia.

And so today in this wondrous place Galliard was eager to make new friends.

The riders and their horses rattled through the villages trampling the flowers. Sliding like dark and devious shadows, they raced on to the great forest of oak and pine.

“I will destroy the place now and forever,” spitted Waxxar, the leader of the troop, eyes solid with destructive intent. “With Mareithia gone, I will dominate the land with a simple turn of my hand.”

Where there is greed, there is a strange power. Waxxar and his horsemen pushed forward towards the forest with a tremendous hunger for supremacy.

As the riders battered on, Mareithia surrounded itself with a powerful ring of golden light much like a wedding band of a bridegroom to his bride. This ring opened up to expose a glowing tunnel that joined the sacred forest to the outside world. Waxxar spotted the mouth of the tunnel and with a violent hand grabbed the opportunity. Blinded by the single idea of destruction he crashed through, his riders following tightly behind him. Thundering down into the middle of this gracious forest they stopped abruptly at the edge of the golden lake that radiated renewal and friendship.

“Men, bring out what is necessary and prepare the fire,” ordered Waxxar. Soon great flames blazed from the riders’ hand-held torches. Then, just as they bent down to touch the flames to the grass, it began to rain, a sweet, gentle and forgiving rain. Waxxar cried out in frustration. The greater his anger, the heavier the rain and through the downpour, on the other side of the water, stood Galliard, tall, handsome and very dry.

“Waxxar!”

Waxxar spun around only to discover that the voice came from inside his head! Looking across the water, he saw a stranger. This stranger had pronounced his name within his mind so gently and so powerfully that Waxxar was filled with unusual feelings of kindness and generosity. At that same moment the other five riders also heard their names being spoken

within their minds, also in the same loving and powerful manner, *“Stanior, Fynien, Walcer, Emvir, Remar!”*

Galliard’s voice continued to whisper within their minds: *“I know you come from a place where you have never been loved and because of that it will take time to feel love. But I also know that you will eventually accept this love for it will grow stronger within you every day. There will come a time when you will no longer be able to resist it.”*

The horsemen looked at each other quietly. Wet torches fell to the ground and with them feelings of hatred and revenge.

“Let’s move away from here,” murmured Waxxar.

Slowly and quietly, the riders left Mareithia and followed a new and gentle path that had just been created by the thoughtful Galliard.