

The End of An Age (Part II)

The four had no words to explain what had occurred or what would occur. They had no idea that the battles that had fought just minutes before would be nothing compared to what they had to face. Rain the archer; Kovan the fighter, Vage the Mechanician and Cane the pike man were standing at the end of their age, the end of the time of peace and prosperity. They now stood on the threshold to the age of death and destruction.

Rain lifted the bow and was about to pull back an arrow when Cane raised his hand to her shoulder.

“Perhaps it would be wise to get out while they are occupied?”

“I’m with Cane.” Vage spoke as he eyed what looked to be the remains of a man.

Kovan gripped his weapon tight, his knuckles turned white beneath his gauntlets, he would not run. Rain didn’t want to run either, she thought of the settlement that could be in immediate danger.

“I don’t think we have much of a choice.” Rain said as she let loose an arrow that blasted into the eye of a very tall monster, he was looking at her while trying to shake the broken body of man from its massive sword. The other turned as the monster reared up and roared before it fell backward in pain. Cane yelled to the others to get back and to close the door behind them.

“I agree lets get that door closed and if we have to fight lets do it on our terms.” Vage was quick to add as they moved back up the stairs. The small group of four was powerful and smart and knew how to do battle but that against beings that they knew of. What were those things? Demons? Worse?

“Hurry up their coming!” Kovan took the steps backward watching as a few of the creatures made their way up the stairs toward him. He was a fighter, he had pride, today he had to kill the one person he had looked up to he would not fall to these monsters from hell. The others began closing the door as soon as Kovan hit the last step and as soon as he barely passed through they slammed shut.

“Ok, we need to make a plan now and quick we don’t know what they are how many.” Cane spoke the others not as a leader but as a part of the whole. Kovan hadn’t spoken a word yet and he hadn’t any plans to soon, he was looking at the door when the first crash came against it. The door creaked and snapped in some places; growls and other noises came from behind it. Kovan raised his axe meaning to strike the door and kill any monster leaning into it.

“Wait! Wait at least until they come through you’ll only help them that way.” Rain spoke but wasn’t sure if she even knew how to handle this. Kovan kept his axe high waiting for any piece of a monster to come through that door. Vage looked down the hall the way they had come and wondered if there were monsters anywhere else in ruins, they had come through without seeing any but he couldn’t be sure. He was about to speak what was on his mind when a large piece of wood in the door shattered.

“Ahhhh!” Kovan wasted little time is tearing his axe down at the blue handed fiend that reached through, the axe sliced easily and the hand fell free the scream of agony could be heard about all others. The hole was large enough though for the next monster who must have been must stronger to try because the whole nearly tripped in size as a large rock like first burst through.

To the amazement of all leading the first through was the monster that first made the hole now broken and assumed dead. Kovan struck again but his axe only chipped the massive hand of stone.

"We'd better get moving I don't think the door will hold much longer with something that size behind it." Cane grabbed Rains arm as turned and nodded to Vage. Vage reached out for Kovan but was already turning his face had a look of pure rage, his body must have been pumping with adrenaline. The four ran from the door, so far only one monster was dead but it had been killed by its own kind. They stopped when they reached that hall where Vage had left to fight Zard. Looking back down the hall although it curved slightly they could hear the noises getting louder and closer the door held broke sooner then they expected.

"Do you hear that?" Rain who was closest to the hall had taken a few steps down it; she tilted he head and was certain she heard something. She turned to the other and shook her head. The noise Rain had heard was separate from the hall they had just came form.

"Lets keep moving." Kovan spoke and the others turned abruptly to him.

"C'mon you said it yourself Vage if we have to fight let's fight on our own terms.

The others nodded and smiled glad that Kovan hadn't gone into a berserk rage that would lead him fast and swiftly to his own death.

The moved quickly down the hall toward the entrance, the noises behind increased, whatever was down the other hall must have gotten closer. As they stepped out into the sand Rain looked over and saw the dead body of Min, she had wondered if she had killed her with that shot but she had little time at that moment, she was sure now. The four moved from the entrance cautiously the sounds behind them were getting louder and they weren't even sure if any were outside.

"Rain you pick off as many as you can till they get close enough for us to take them out. We have to fight here, we can't run if they follow us the new settlement will be destroyed." Kovan held his axe his above his head with his last words in turn they all did the same.

"For the glory and continued peace of Tempskron!" They yelled in unison. As they lowered their weapons the monsters became visible in the moonlight. Horrid creatures they were all were taller then them. Kovan noticed toward the back was the biggest of them all; it must have been the one whose fist came crashing through the door. The creature looked to made of rock its neck graded and sounded like stones being crushed together as it turned back and forth looking out toward the four warriors.

"I wonder if that one is the leader?" Vage said as he threw out his arms and began to glow a light blue. The others wondered themselves as the massive creature lifted it arms and gave a loud roar that sounded more like an avalanche. Rain called her falcon and took aim with her bow at the stone giant. The monsters began their approach, in front were skeletons with a few other creatures that looked something like a lizard. Vage raised his shield as a burst of yellow energy came forth to extend its cover of protection. Behind them nearly twice as tall stood ugly things, they held either a sword or an axe that looked too big to even be a weapon. Their faces twisted, on eye bulged twitching with anticipation.

"No matter what at least one of us has to get back and tell of what happened here tonight." Cane called out as the first of the creatures closed in near him.

The others nodded but grimly they didn't want to except that all of them might not walk away. The first of the skeletons came with range; Vage shattered one with a fast downward crush of his mace. Kovan sliced another in half taking the one next to down as well. Cane waited letting four came close enough before he tensed his legs and spun ripping into all of them. Rain loosed her bow but not to any of the monsters in front she never left her aim of the biggest of them all now pushing through the others to get to the warriors himself. The arrow struck but broke as she thought it would but her falcon was magical, pulling its wings in it bored into the stone giant with its beak breaking the rock and following through to burst from the other side. The giant stopped suddenly but gave no show of pain; it merely reached down and lifted a meager skeleton throwing it toward Rain. She moved to the side as it splashed into the sand snapping at the spine. Her falcon returned she lined up her next shot.

Completing his spin Cane heard a crash behind him but couldn't turn seeing two of those large lizards closing in. Turning to his side he quickly formed a plan. One lizard abruptly jumped ahead faster than the other and speeded toward Cane but he was prepared. The second lizard seeing the first move ahead also speed up, Cane made a quick change and jumped as the first lizard passed under him. The second stopped, Cane's scythe split the creature's head. Spinning quickly to catch the first, who passed and was turning and hoping to attack a defenseless back, found Cane facing it a blue hued scythe slicing it across the chest taking one arm. The creature tried to quickly extend its neck to bite Cane's shoulder but it found its movements slowed considerably. With a quick twist the scythe faced back again and Cane followed through removing the creature's head.

Kovan ducked as a new enemy moved in from the side, he recognized the blue arm from the door but turned to face something he didn't expect to see. It looked almost like a gargoyle but without wings, its face locked in an evil open mouth grin. Jumping the creature threw its hands up and rushed down wanted to tear the armor and flesh from Kovan. Three quick strikes left the creatures fall its last, its face even dead had that same evil grin. Kovan faced the skeletons again who were quickly piling up in front of him let out a loud roar that stopped them temporarily so he could take them out with a few well placed attacks that would save energy.

Vage wondered exactly how many of these things there were, he saw that the skeleton lines were thinning but that didn't calm him seeing what was behind them. He reached to his belt and pulled small blue bottle free, he looked again to see a tight formations of skeletons and threw. The bomb was small but any mechanic could make them, they were powerful and were mostly used for construction purposes but in a fight no mechanic would want to be without a few. The small bomb hit near the middle of a seven skeleton circle it exploded on impact turning all but three to dust.

A few more simple attacks from the three warriors took out the last of the skeletons and the four remaining lizards. Rain had continued to fire past them five shots hitting the stone giant the rest killing six sword wielding monster and five axe wielders all the killing blows though came from her falcon which blasted through their ugly heads.

"That was easier than I thought." Kovan said as he pulled his axe from its ribs of a lizard with a crack.

"I'm glad you had fun but are you forgetting what was behind those skeletons?" Cane remarked as he moved to Kovan side.

All except for Rain had slight cuts and bruises, nothing that would slow them though. Vage took a few steps back toward Rain and smiled at her silently thanking her for thinking ahead and taking out the monsters behind the skeletons. The stone giant had stopped behind the oddest of the creatures. The all stared fingers gripping and un-gripping their weapons waiting for just the right moment even though more than a few had already fallen to the archer, they wanted her blood staining their weapons.

"I think they're going to rush us." Kovan said as he too took a step back toward Rain.

"I think the best plan now would be to protect Rain, she can shoot at them easy enough they're tell so lets just keep them busy."

They all nodded except for Rain she wondered what they were waiting for she had killed of few of their own. A growl almost in unison broke the silence as all the monsters began to charge forward, the stone giant thought stood eerily still. They all new this wasn't going to be easy, any of those weapons could split them in-two except maybe for Kovan would had a body of steel.

Cane was the first to engage, leaping straight up for the monster ugly head the bulging eye seems to do so even more when it realized its end was near. Cane hit the sand softly his scythe dripping beside him, the head came next then the monster fell.

Vage threw another bomb to the second of two that rushed him, it exploded on its chest and it lurched backward crying in pain but didn't fall. As the first approached him Vage rolled to his right as the weapon hit the sand beside him sending some into his face. Squinting he reached out with his mace and crushed the ankle of the creature its own weight doing the rest, even as it fell Vage was up again raising for another strike that would indent he creatures face into an even uglier form.

Kovan sliced one creature's knee right out of the leg, it reached down grabbing at the gaping wound but Kovan's axe split its head before it could even try to stop the bleeding. A slight hit from a sword to his left sent him to the sand hard, his left arm throbbed, he rolled onto his back so he could better see his opponent but it was already gripping its face blood oozing from its mouth falling backward. Titling his head he saw Rain already taking another shot, she smirked and regained his footing quickly to rejoin the battle.

Cane's scythe was almost entirely blood red now, he took the axe arm from a creature to his left and kept the motion all the way around to tear into the side of another approaching him. He was stuck, the creature was in took much pain to attack but the one behind him had picked up its axe with its another arm and was now raising it for him. Thinking quickly Cane reversed his grip and tore free the scythe and as he did before he kept his momentum through the full spun to tear both legs out from under the monster. Its axe faster bringing death to it fell deep into its chest when it hit the sand. The other monster was holding its side down on one knee, Cane looked upon it with pity for only a moment before taking its head.

Rain had loosed more then two-dozen arrows at the beast made of stone, it never moved for any of the hits. Many holes now bore into the stone thing made by Rain's own falcon but still it seems to have had no affect. Her aim as the rest changed she could see more then a dozen of the arrows still sticking from the thing, some broken other whole sticking from a small hole it may have made or between the stone that's makes the beast. Rain lifted her shot to where she though the monsters eye might be if it had any.

The arrow struck and didn't fall away but the monster show no signs of pain, the falcon soon behind arced lower piercing right below the arrow though what could have been the things eye this time there was a reaction. The stone head titled back with the hit but stopped as the falcon came though the back of its head, it remained like that a moment before lifting it back up, it still show no signs of pain. Rain clenched her bow then it weakened when she realized something.

"What if that's the thing they summoned," she said to herself.

"That could be what they were trying to summon, could that thing be a god?" She shook from the thought but had to wonder.

"No, no," she said to herself, I can't think of it like that if we are to win its nothing more then a creature made of stone with no feelings. She raised her bow for another shot but stopped, raised it higher and released a rage arrow. The arrow burned red when it left her bow then as it came over its target it burst into a down arrows each with he power of the first. The stone giant made no move to look or dodge as nine of the twelve cracked against its stone body each making a nick or small crack in the stone.

Cane, Vage and Kovan each finished off the last of the monsters before them, they were staring to tire but it looked as if it was over. The only creature left was the stone beast and as they prepared themselves for it, it began to move toward them. Cane moved next to Kovan who was the closest as Vage turned to Rain.

"Use rage arrow as much as you can I think that would be best don't worry about hitting us." With that said he smiled, a smile that always seemed to be on his face but even now with things looking grim. Rain trusted them and her falcon to do their best, she wanted nothing more then the four of to walk away together. The stone giant was mere steps before them when it raised its massive arms, dust falling from the grinding stones. Rain's arrow burst above the monster and rained down on it as its arms swung down hard, they barely missed the dodging warriors. Kovan who had only side stepped felt the scrape of stone against his armor as he raised his axe for a strike. The monster was already pulling its arms up as Kovan's axe split into the stone holding tight. Kovan wasn't sure what to do, release or hold on.

"Kovan!" The other three yelled in unison as they saw their friends go up with the arm of rock. He pulled at the axe his legs now against the stone using his body to try to pull it free. If the giant felt any pain it did well to hide it. Rain wanted to attack but was afraid of hitting Kovan so he loosed one arrow hoping her falcon could distract it. Vage leaped forward brining has mace down too fast and hard, it rang out against the stone as it cracked it but the forced almost cause Vage's arm to go numb and drop his weapon. Cane wasn't sure, Vage had a mage, a blunt weapon, Kovan had an axe but power behind it, he had a scythe, sharp but with a point, could he pierce the giant or just break his scythe in the attempt?

The stone giant lifted its arm level to its head and looked at the futile attempt, as it brought its other arm over to crush Kovan it felt stone breaking in its foot. Stopping for a moment it looked down slighting and jerked its foot forward to kick the foolish man.

Vage took the hit hard but he absorbed most of it, landing on his back in the sand, his chest and arm sore he started to get back up. A quick glance back to Vage by Cane told him enough, he jumped up swinging his scythe at the giant's arm that held Kovan's axe. The scythe did more then expected, the tip entered a small crack after slipping slightly and it buried deep.

As Cane fell back to the ground he pulled the scythe back hard hoping to both free it and tear some stone away. It did just that, the crack widened as the scythe came free and pieces of stone fell away. The stone giant felt the stone break away but no pain, it just lifted his leg hoping to crush the one who damaged it when he landed.

“Give me the strength I need Zechram!” Kovan yelled out to a long dead fighter of legendary power hoping to inspire him in his last attempt to free his axe. Kovan grunted as he pulled with every muscle, the axe moved once then came free leaving Kovan falling backward to the ground some feet below. Cane landed softly as always but the foot of the stone giant would have made that his last had Kovan not pulled free his axe. The combined cracks from Rain’s arrows, Cane strike, and Kovan’s shattering blow and now finally the pulling free of his axe the giants right arm started to crumble. If the giant had a voice none of them could understand what it was trying to say, it lurched backward rising arm that was now falling to pieces.

“That’s it! It’s made stone but it can break and fall apart, it’s not whole!” Rain understood now that the giant was just pieces of stones and smaller rocks if they could just free enough of them the stone beast would come apart. Kovan landed hard on his back knocking the air from his lungs, his axe still in his grip. Cane watched as the stones that made up the monsters arm fell to the sand. Victory seemed close but the giant still had the rest of its body intact. Rain followed through with arrow after arrow that rained a dozen more each down onto the monster. Kovan was up now and rushed right back at the monster on its undefended right side. Vage was up on one knee he stood and threw out his arms again and the blue hue returned.

The stone giant tried to swat Kovan away but each time it missed another hit was scored to its weakening left arm. The arrows from above were cracking its head and chest, and only a few more hits would render its left arm motionless. Cane struck where he had seen Vage hit, and the stone split easily as the tip of the scythe pierced deep in-between the cracks. The monster tried to kick Cane away but its foot fell apart with the force, it nearly toppled. Vage rejoined the battle with a might blow that sent three cracks streaking around its leg that no longer had a foot.

They thought they had victory but then they heard sound from above, back at the ruins just thirty feet from where they were now. High up on top of the wall where Min had tried to kill Rain stood more than a dozen blue monsters, the gargoyle-like beast. They all looked up as the stone giant tried to keep its balance, as it fell backward the monsters on the wall crouched and leaped off. The four regrouped as the monsters hit the sand hardly affected by the long fall, strangely enough they didn’t move. They understood once they heard more noises coming from the hall where all the others had exited. It sounded as if an army was marching through that hall, but that wasn’t far from the truth.

At first they saw gold hued monsters holding huge cleavers, they’re eyes red with rage but they’re face held no expression. The body of these creatures looked to be pure muscle but it didn’t move as it walked. Behind them somewhat taller were one-eyed black skinned humanoids. Their frame was pure muscle as well but theirs rippled with each hard step against the stone, they held a large sword and small shield. Altogether they were about two-dozen, but what followed as they stepped from the hall and stood waiting for signal was nothing they had seen so far from in any of the beasts, armor.

The armor was red, blood red, it looked almost like a knight but too tall, in its armored grip it held a scythe. The blue creatures off to the side jumped in place anxiously as the red knight turned his head toward them as nodded. They jumped or just ran toward the four companions at full speed. One fell dead its neck horrible exploded by an arrow then the falcon. Another went down with a twist of a scythe cutting it in half. The rush slowed then, two dead another soon to be as Kovan swung his axe around severing the arm of one too close who was looking back at its halved ally, the axe continued deep into the blue monster as it fell to the sand. Vage bashed one with his shield then tore another's face from it.

The red knight wasn't pleased; his armored index fingers tapped on his scythe, with a slight nod the golden hued monsters to his left lurched forward. The cyclops weren't pleased either, they wanted to have at the four troublesome things, they could only hope they would last.

"We might get surrounded, triangle formation, don't let them get to Rain!" Cane yelled and the three quickly moved around Rain. Rain wasn't defenseless nor was she weak but her bow was long-range and she had no shield any melee combat could mean her end. The blue mixed with gold and the monsters surrounded them, as Cane had feared. Rain had clear shots between her friends but she loosed higher with rage arrow to further prevent any accidents.

The blue monsters were falling fast less than five were alive but all the golden ones remained. Vage stepped forward having nothing in front of him except the tall gold creature that stood a few feet away. He raised his shield in defense as the cleaver nearly as tall as he came crashing down against him. The force nearly dislocated his shoulder, his arm was thrown violently to his side and it felt as his other had when he struck the stone giant. He was sure that if it weren't for the extra defense he had enacted on himself he surely wouldn't be standing.

Kovan killed the last blue monster to his right as he felt a swift strong wind behind him, as he turned he saw that the cleaver of the monster had missed his back by less than a foot. Reacting fast before the monster could bring its arm it he clashed his sword against the wrist, it almost felt like the giant but weaker, less like stone. The axe did though cut a deep wound but the gold monster pulled its arm up and out came across the second cleaver, which was narrowly dodged by Kovan. Kovan spun and rammed his axe into the side of the monster, its raised arm the one that he had cut held high. Before it could counter Kovan pulled his axe free and jumped back letting the monster's cleaver fall into the sand.

Rain's arrows exploded and rained death onto the few that weren't crowded around them. She saw one gold monster fall, crumbling apart then another beside it soon after. She was worried more about what was coming next than what she was facing now there still at least a dozen of those cyclops and then that red knight. She tried not to think about that, only about the battle at hand as another arrow exploded raining down a dozen in its wake.

Cane's scythe did better than he expected against the seemingly stone monsters, he took arms away from them when he could and heads when they were weaponless. He could hear battle all around him but only the cries and roars of monsters, the others to his knowledge were ok. He iced two monsters before him to give his attention to the one at his side who had avoided just about every attack he had for it.

Jumping past the descending cleavers he spun and sliced the head clean off, even before he landed the body had crumbled. The other two were still slowed by the cold but their attacks were out wide leaving their midsections open. With a grin Cane rushed over and finished the two off.

Vage was worried, even though these monsters were tough it was still a bit too easy. He had to think though that they were the best, they were the best their tribe had to offer, he smiled at the thought but it only lasted a few seconds, as he had to dodge another cleaver. He was taking on one gold monster the rest were dead but he didn't want to let up his guard, ducking under a swipe he bashed the monsters leg with his mace. He stood and side stepped twice and the monster predictably cut down where he was. The monster was stupid but strong that made him wonder about the cyclops, they looked just as strong but that also looked to have some intelligence in them. As the thought ended his broke through one of the monsters arms and moved to avoid a predicted attack as he struck again against the chest breaking the monster.

The four were breathing harder now, they were sweating but not tired. Rain was more worried about her friends then herself; she didn't exert herself as much as they had in this battle and it wasn't over yet. They all turned and moved back into the formation they had before forming a line before Rain. Only twelve cyclopes remained that was about three each, but they had little choice in the matter. The red knight was still standing as it was, it hadn't moved like the stone giant did but it was more menacing. It didn't have size or a powerful look, it just had that armor and that scythe and the aura of power, even though all its allies were dying with no casualties on the other side, it showed no signs of fear. The knight lifted its head as a cyclops looked toward it at first it didn't respond but then it roared and lifted its sword into the air.

The four readied their weapons; this would be it, after them would they face the knight or would it just simply leave?

"We might not have time so listen quickly. We don't know what is going to happen in the next few moments so once there is a lull in the battle I want Rain and someone else to run back to the settlement." Kovan spoke with a half tilted head back toward the others.

"We're not going to abandon anyone!" Cane said defiantly, even though no one was clearing the leader Kovan had no right to suggest such a thing.

"I understand but I also understand that if the tribe knows nothing of what happened here today they are all as good as dead. Rain should have the most energy she can run back in less then a few hours and I'd like one of you to go as well she might run into trouble." Kovan lowered his head as he finished but quickly looked up again at the cyclops who now started to march forward toward them. No one said anything, they knew he spoke the truth but who, who would go with Rain?

The cyclops spread out evenly parallel from the four, if there was any doubt they were intelligent it was gone now. The red knight behind just watched, his index fingers tapping since he had started. Rain knew they could be overwhelmed if they came in force and used their bulk so she took the first move and loosed an arrow right into the eye of one of the beats, it wouldn't have died only been blinded if not for the falcon that blew out its skull. Before its dead body even hit the ground the rest were moving, swords forward shields out.

Cane had the longest weapon and he used that to his advantage he tried to stab one cyclops in the knee but found that it was fast and blocked it with its shield. It did however slow the beast to a stop giving Cane time to recover and smack away an attack from his side that was too close to for him to ignore. As he thought about his next move the other cyclops was beside the first each waving their sword back and forth trying to confuse Cane as to where their next attack would come. He didn't have to know already guessing they would attack together and when they did just jumped missing each sword by less then a foot. As he reached peak he swung but got nothing, the cyclops had ducked and was no rushing its shield toward him.

Vage went shield to shield with one cyclops in an attempt to get it off its guard long enough to strike but the monster was powerful and was pushing Vage back almost effortlessly. He realized that he had one more bomb left; he put his mace quickly to his back and grabbed the bomb. Giving one last hard push he moved away from the cyclops and threw the bomb into its face. Its dropped its sword as it reached up giving Vage the opening he needed but as he brought his mace forward to crush the knee of the cyclops another's sword came across and deflected his attack.

Kovan was using more brute force and even though he had already downed one cyclops three more were near him and ready to split his head. He had taken a minor hit to his shoulder when he killed the first but it was nothing he couldn't handle. He wanted to be done with his fast so that he could give Rain an opening. As the cyclops moved forward and swung his sword Kovan ducked but could still feel the power of the swing as it passed close overhead. He gave the leg of the cyclops three fast hits and as the blood poured from the wound the cyclops couldn't help but fall to that knee giving Kovan just the right target.

Rain blasted another cyclops into death when she realized that she could only see seven, she had counted nine last time and had just dropped another. Turning around quickly she saw the one who had gone uncounted, it was sneaking around past Vage who was busy with two of his own. She didn't have time to line up a perfect shot so she used a skill that she hadn't in a long time and not since this battle had started. Avalanche arrow, she could fire a multitude of arrows in a short time but she wouldn't be able to move until she was done, it was risky but she wanted to do it. The cyclops was getting closer she didn't have time to change it now; she placed her feet and loosed again and again. Arrow after arrow flew in a blur the cyclops could only block the first with his shield while the rest found his eye, arm, leg, chest, neck. He fell dead as the last arrow struck his falling body.

Cane was able to get his scythe in-between him and the shield but the force still threw him back. He rolled mid-air and landed on his feet, as he had trained to do many years ago. With a quick retaliation and a new tactic he rushed back at the cyclops. Faking an attack to the right the cyclops moved his sword that way as he had though quickly he plunged this scythe downward. Even though the cyclops raised his shield the piercing tip of the scythe ripped into his forearm. Cane could see the other cyclops coming forward and he knew what he could do next, not moving till the last second he jumped back pulling his weapon free and the attack meant for him took the other cyclops's arm off. Cane watched as the now one armed cyclops stood and stabbed the one who had cut him, moving around Cane lined up and drove his scythe into the spine of the creature.

Vage's bomb had blinding the cyclops but the other was not harmed at all, realized that it might be easier to take a hit to give a hit he raised his shield and waited for the attack. The sword crashed down hard but Vage absorbed it and used the pain to power his next attack that placed his mace into the chest of the beast cracking ribs. The cyclops cried in pain and moved a hand over its broken chest but Vage struck again breaking the knee bringing the beast down to face his mace one last time as it flashed toward its eye. The blind cyclops had been swinging wildly and Vage had little trouble getting around to its back to take the legs from under it.

Kovan pulled his axe free from the skull of the cyclops and the final two approached him. Before he could make a plan the second one farthest from him fell, its head exploded behind it. Kovan didn't have to turn to know it was Rain. Charging ahead axe before him he ran right under the cyclops slightly ducking, at first it wondered what had happened then it realized as the pain become too much and it grabbed at its crotch as it fell first to its knee's then to its side. Kovan's axe ended the pain when it severed the head from its body.

"Rain go now please!" Kovan yelled at once when he turned to the red knight figuring that it might attack now. The other turned to face her to find that she had not a look of fear but a look of sadness; she didn't want to leave any of them behind. Before anyone could object though the red knight stopped tapping its index fingers and took a step forward.

"GO! Please Rain, Go!" Kovan yelled as he ran to get in-between the red knight and the others. The knight had stopped with that one step but now took another. Vage rushed up beside Kovan and as he turned he merely smiled and nodded.

"Go you two, go back to the settlement and tell of what has happened here, they need to know. Do not worry we will cover your back, nothing will follow you as long as we draw breath." Vage didn't turn; he couldn't face them, not now.

Cane jogged over to Rain and grabbed her arm, when she looked at him tears were running down her checks, he could only nod and turn her away. After a moment they ran off. The red knight tilted its head to look past Kovan and Vage at the two departing figures.

"We're the ones you want, fight us!" Kovan yelled to bring the attention of the red knight back to them.

Rain ran ahead as Cane instructed telling her never to stop no matter what she heard. Cane was jogging when he stopped the sand before him was moving, growing. He raised his weapon and looking on jaw open as the sand slowly formed something that looked like an old man its face drooping. Cane didn't need an explanation he knew it was evil; his scythe cut across the things chest but there was no blood only sand poured from the wound. The creature moved forward then its movement slow and paced, another attack took its arm, sand poured from that wound as well.

Kovan looked to Vage, he didn't know what to say.

"Its ok, you don't have to say anything, I staying because I'll only slow them down. Plus you'll need me and my shield." He said with a laugh and he shared one last smile with his dear friend Kovan.

"Give me strength Zechram!" Kovan yelled and the two friends rushed the red knight, it didn't move until the last second.

Cane noticed that the sand that was pouring from the wound actually was lessening the creature. One last quick slice removed its head and the sand returned to its lifeless state. As Cane walked around the pile not knowing what tricks could be about it he saw three more piles of sand in front of him start to grow and form. He didn't have time and he knew almost as a reminder he heard Kovan roar for strength to the legendary fighter Zechram. Gripping his scythe he ran passed the three forms only taking the time to cut the one closest to him in half.

Cane ran hard and fast and he soon caught up to Rain who was walking now.

"I thought..." Cane started.

"I know, but I wanted to wait for you. C'mon lets hurry we need to tell the others." She spoke softly the tears on her face were gone now she didn't feel sad anymore for her friends that could be dead. If they were they died like all warriors could hope too, on the field of battle doing what they do best and love. A few hours later Cane and Rain walked into the settlement and delivered the grim news. Rain waited all day and night at the edge of the settlement for her two friends to return, they never did.