

The End of An Age (Part IV)

The sun set that day on many more faces than it had the night before. The new settlement Navisko was now full of people, all talking amongst themselves about the battle ahead. It wasn't always like this though, just two nights before it was only the workers building the new town and those that arrived most unexpectedly. Only six warriors were gathered that day, besides the few guards that watched over the workers. The four newcomers from the tribe of Morion arrived to the surprise and disappointment to the two survivors of the tribe of Tempskron. Not a moment later a scout was sent back to Tempskron and Ceria claiming to be the fastest ran back to Morion to spread the news and gather all available forces.

While they waited for their respected tribes to return hopefully with seriousness and everyone that could fight, they talked. Galek spoke proudly of Vage when he mentioned him during the fight and even more so when he told Rain and Cane about his sacrifice. Rain turned as she cried, she remembered that moment all too real and could hardly face the fact that he did it yet again. Cane knew that both of them died as they wanted but that didn't let him feel no sorrow for his fellow warriors. Kigam filled the others in with his theories on the portal and even spoke of new such theories before he sat and let Salene speak. It would be another full day before any sign of their word reaching the tribes was first seen.

"Your tribe approaches." Kigam said to Cane as he came up behind Cane. He nodded thanking Kigam for letting him know before he walked past to greet the newcomers. Kigam watched as he left, he knew he held grief for his fallen companions. Only a few hours later did Morion arrive in full force soon followed by the rest of the Tempskron tribe. The once barren area claimed in the name of Tempskron was now filled and even overflowed back into the sands outside the half built walls of Navisko. To the objections of the leaders, Cain, Rain, Kigam, Ceria, Salene and Galek no warrior was to help in the building process, they needed to preserve any and all stamina and strength for the march and battle ahead. One dozen scouts six from each tribe were sent back to the ruins to get an estimation of the forces that might have gathered there since their departure.

The six leaders were simple chosen for they were the only ones in all of the two tribes who had ever fought the creatures before. They each took turns giving speeches about the creatures, talking about weaknesses, exploits, and other such purposeful talk. They had experience with these monsters and anything they could tell those that had none they all felt would be better than simply nothing.

Before nightfall, before the day they were supposed to march, the scouts returned. Only eight of the twelve made it back, some looking like they finished the trip to tell of what they saw only to fall into the death they postponed for that intention. The facts varied from one scout to the other, but they all had one common detail, the monsters were marching to them. The numbers as well varied anywhere from tens of thousands to a hundred thousand, more though to the dismay of everyone aimed at a hundred thousand.

"I don't know how much time we really have." Cane said as he sat with the other leaders around a fire. A few hours had passed since the scouts returned with grimmer news than expected. The two hours that followed were mainly strategy oriented, organizing a good front line with support and getting everyone into a good fired up mood.

“I would say no longer then tomorrow as this time.” Galek said as he adjusted his leg to a more comfortable position.

“I have to agree. Its even possible that they will be here just after sun up but even though that is more unlikely I feel safer that we decided to have scouts throughout the night watching from a good distance.” Kigam spoke before taking another drink of water, he spent the most time taking, although even after the speech’s were over he continued to talk to just the mages. He even mentioned to Salene that it would be a good idea for her to talk to the priestesses as well give them some direction and good advice.

“If we want to be ready I suggest we have the workers in the morning, since they won’t be fighting, finish digging that trench so later when everyone is awake we can prepare it.” Rain was in charge of the trench and she didn’t want to leave anything to chance.

“That’s a good idea Rain, I doubt any of the warriors would want to help anyway.” She said lightly forcing a smile; they were all more then a little worried. Their numbers were just under three thousand and if the scouts were accurate they would be outnumbered about forty to one. It seemed bad enough but the leaders knew that some of those monsters don’t go down as easy as others. They already went over the layout and would tell everyone when they awoke where they needed to be. The frontline would be made up of Fighters, Pike Men, Mechanician’s and Knights. The second supporting line would be made up of only Priestesses. The third and final line would be Archers, Atalantas and Mages.

“The lines were created as best we could there isn’t much we can do there, but I feel there is still something we can do now.” Ceria broke the silence with her opinion. The others wondered if really they could do anything more. The battle was coming one way or another; they made their plans and didn’t see anything else they could do without compromising it somehow.

“I think the best thing we can do at this moment is rest.” Kigam stood as he spoke then waved to everyone as he turned and walked from the fire. Salene followed soon after catching up with him but the others couldn’t hear about what. Galek was next to go nodding to Ceria, Cane and Rain separately before departing. Cane tapped Rain on her shoulder and when she turned he titled his head signaling that they should leave. Rain said goodbye to Ceria as they parted. She waited till the fire was nothing more the embers before she covered it with sand and too when to rest.

The next morning started early for the workers who awoke just as the sun hit their eyes, they finished digging the trench and soon after it was filled with spears, sharp jagged pieces of metal and anything else that was sharp or pointy. Not soon before the trench was nearing completion the last scouts that went out the night before returned. The unanimous word was that the monsters were no more then half a day off, but their front lines could be there as early as before the suns reaches the highest point of the sky and that was not far. The tribes were already assembling when the word came so there wasn’t any panic to get into place.

“My feelings are split about this Cane.” Galek said as they walked toward their place, the first line of defense against the marching horde.

“How so?” Cane said looking to Galek whose face showed a proud warrior more then willing to die today for the sake of either tribe.

“We have more skill but they have more number. It seems today will forever prove which is more important of the field of battle.” Galek didn’t seemed shaken but the facts but he seemed more worried for the lives of his tribesmen rather than his own.

“You have fought these things before as have I, you know as well as I do that we will win.” Cane spoke positively trying to give Galek a boost but even he was sure the Knight needed no such thing.

The lines were loud with chatter, talk of what was to come some even talking about the celebrations that would occur after and if they would gain the status of hero. They fell silent as the first line of their enemy came into sight. Galek, Ceria, Salene and Kigam recognized these creatures, the shortest of them all they stood their own height. Gray-skinned and ugly they carried wooden shields and metal cleavers, they grunted and drooled.

“Remember that we are not to charge to them, they must come to us!” Galek yelled as loud as he could it was more for moral then reminding. The monsters were followed by the second line the difference in height was considerable. The black-skinned one-eyed monsters held much smaller shields but wielded much longer blades. The goblins pace increased as the distance closed but that was to the advantage of the tribes.

The less then intelligent goblins ran right into the trench just as everyone held their breath hoping they would. The lines of goblins continued forward unaware as they pushed those in front of them to their death. The few that weren’t impaled were trapped under the bodies of those that fell on top them. The goblins alone numbered well over ten thousand, but the trench helped even the odds a bit. The bodies filled the trench to the point where the goblins that hadn’t fallen in could simply walk over their dead brethren.

Finally the first clashes of battle rang out. Scythe, sword, mace, axe, hammer and shield clashed, sliced, cut, bruised, bashed, severed and killed. The warriors on the front line tore through the weak goblins with ease; grunts and roars of pain filled the air as their numbers fell steeply yet again. The thickness of the goblins was still keeping many of them from the enemy but they pushed forward rushing to their own demise.

The one-eyed creatures behind the goblins were getting impatient; some even killed goblins that were in their way. The third line was waited for a signal that they got earlier then they expected, the line of one-eyed monsters just standing still was too tempting to let go though. Arrows, falcons, and javelins flew; the mages weren’t given their signal yet they would have to wait a bit longer. The one-eyed monsters didn’t expect a ranged attack and many died before the other realized and either ran back or charged forward kill any goblin that was in its way. These two factors combined ripped the number of goblins from well over ten thousand to under a few hundred. They now met the front lines, they didn’t fall as fast nor as easily as they goblins but in the tribes favor they hadn’t lost anyone yet.

“Yes it’s going as well as it can at the moment. I must use the power of these mages well cause it can change the tide of battle very quickly I hope Salene believes the same.” Kigam said to himself as he watched the monsters blood spill onto the sand, already it was getting very red and wet out there, they might even have to pull back just to clear the footing for the frontline.

The next few lines of monsters was clearly visible now, the third was filled with large green and golden hued monsters wielding large cleavers. The fourth were those tall

ugly creatures that carried extremely long swords and axes. The fifth, which were harder to see past the taller ones, seemed to be those long, fast yellow beasts.

The slower third line was approaching but not before the goblins were entirely killed and the one-eyed creatures which were again over ten thousand strong started to diminish. Salene let her priestesses heal anyone who called for it or seemed they needed help but she forbid any of them to heal more than twice at that moment. She knew they would need their strength when the monsters began to press harder.

The one-eyed monsters were limited with their larger weapons but the warriors were not. Mechanician's bashed knee's, pike men jumped severing heads or slicing open bellies, knights stabbed and slashed, fighters crushed and tore. The one-eyed monsters were scoring more hits than the goblins did but still no one had fallen and the wounds were minor. The larger reinforcements were not far off now, just reaching the trench.

Arrows flicked against their hard stone-like skin before falcons burst through. Javelins jammed into them cracking the stone. Out of many arrows and javelins one in a few would be red. The red arrows would explode over a group and rain down six more each as powerful onto the monsters. Many fell before they conflicted with the warriors on the front.

Galek stood his ground and barked tips to everyone that could hear when a new monster faced their ranks. His armor and sword were covered in blood and sand, but he didn't have the time to wipe them clean nor at that moment did he care. The newest creature to face him he had never seen before but that didn't matter. He jabbed out hitting the hard skin, 'another one made of stone' he thought to himself as he turned his blade over in his hand thrust it down. The monster's leg cracked and another blow from a Mech shattered it but it didn't stop there the whole monster crumbled to pieces before him.

The next two lines of monsters having much more speed reached the slower larger ones in half the time. The warriors now were pressed to deal death at a much faster pace otherwise they could be overrun. The Archers and Atalantas continued to rain death to the farthest monsters. The taller monsters were the main targets for now catching arrows and javelins as they moved forward sometimes falling onto other monsters pinning them.

Salene wasn't going to give the signal yet she knew that either way Kigam would be the one to go first having his mages shower fireballs then put up tornados to confuse and break the lines. Cane landed as the head of the stone monsters did and its body fell apart. The line was thinning but was giving way to the tougher monsters, moving ahead he took a sword-wielding monster by surprise slicing its leg clean off. It cried out as it looked down falling, it saw a scythe heading straight for its head.

Turning he quickly avoided a cleaver that might have left him one arm short. Overturning his scythe he jammed it into the ground causing a ripped of ice to erupt forth. The five monsters that were close enough to be touched by it suddenly became very cold and slow to move. Moving fast Cane spun; his scythe cutting cleaning threw three of the slowed monsters he jumped again tearing the chest of a taller creature half open as it turned.

The farthest anyone could see was a high dune where all the monsters descended into the valley where the tribes had gathered. That high dune though started to look ablaze, and soon it was much brighter than before. Those that noticed and could look saw monsters made of fire running down the dune toward them.

Kigam was one of the first to notice these strange monsters but he knew immediately that they could cause more trouble than the rest.

He quickly told the mages closest to him that then passed it along that when the signal is given cast tornado instead of fireball at the creatures made of fire. Kigam's only hope was that these monsters made of fire were weak against wind and water like the fire he knew.

The monsters were not entangled with each other all of them trying to get close to the warriors for a kill, others fighting trying not to be pushed into the enemy ranks. Chaos certainly was on the side of Tempskron and Morion. The blood and bodies were getting to the point where soon if something wasn't done it would become a burden on the warriors in the front.

Rain shot another rage arrow that exploded over some of the yellow beasts, the resulting attacks dropped three of them, the others were wounded. She glanced over at the mages and wondered when exactly they were going to attack. When she looked back she noticed the burning wall that was heading for them.

Ceria had seen the fire monsters when they peaked but she didn't let it distract her from her current purpose. The Atalanta's had a harder time reaching the monsters than the archers did but that didn't prevent them from doing their part. Without the help from the third line the first might have been overrun by now. Numbers dwindling the monsters started to get agitated, very few fled most just attacked even less rationally some even rushing forward trying to kill just one of the foe.

One of the creatures swinging his long axe killed another of his kind when his wide swing came back around. Another witnessing the attack turned perhaps to argue or attack itself but its life ended when a hammer broke its spine. The fighter landed and quickly turned hearing an approach from behind. One of the last remaining stone monsters lurched forward swinging its cleavers at the man. Jumping back then thrusting forward he avoided the attack and even managed to counter before the monster could raise its weapons. The hammer crashed against the monster's body at first not showing any signs of damage but once the monster began to move it fell into pieces.

The tall monsters with bulging eyes were still in large number proving a hard adversary with their long reach preventing close combat. A few brave warriors rushed in when an attack flew past or over them. A few of the Mechanician's threw bombs at the monster's faces using the blindness as the diversion to get an attack.

Galek noticing the trouble of the blood mixing with sand and the bodies getting in the way called out to everyone to move back. The line slowly moved back as word spread, the second and third lines noticed the move and did so as well. Cane was pleased that the lines were moving but he decided to stay where he was for the moment. He crouched behind a pile of large rock pieces that used to be a few monsters, as he waited for the monsters to move he heard a hiss behind him. Turning he found three yellow beasts staring at him, one tilted its head; the other raised their heads and stood on two legs. Standing he caused one of them to attack, its head fell free from its body as Cane's scythe swiftly cut. The other two jumped forward lunging for flesh, they found only air and their innards spilling out onto the hot sand.

With more room to fight and no blood on the sand the monsters currently facing the warriors fell faster than before. A priestess healed a fighter that was knocked back by a sword, his armor protected him but he was still wounded. Salene was close but didn't

object, it had been going a lot better then she expected but still those new monsters weren't that far off at all.

The creatures made of fire were less then half way to the front line when a loud roar was heard. Most of the warriors stopped some of the monsters did as well, most notable the ones made of fire all of them were now motion less. The warriors that hadn't stopped or who had now dismissed it promptly killed those monsters that were distracted. On the high dune again a line appeared, four legged monsters, carrying swords, lances and hammers. They were the same as the ones that appeared through the portal. The line on the high dune stampeded down toward the fire creatures as the battle raged by Navisko.

Galek cut the hand from one its weapon falling to the sand; in the pain it forgot about its attacker. Galek thrust his sword up behind the ribs of the monster puncturing many organs. A claw streaked across his armor at his back, spinning he just missed the yellow appendage as it jerked away. The yellow beast pounced and knocked Galek down onto his back, the creature landing above him one leg on his chest. Its head arced down close to his, its breath almost causing him to be sick; his sword arm though was free. As the creature opened its mouth and moved toward his neck his sword sliced its side. Rearing up but not moving its weight from Galek it shrieked. Galek moved his sword lower so he could force it forward stabbing the beast, it shriek again this time jumping back. Galek stood but the beast was already on the ground twitching trying to stand again, he stabbed it again, it didn't move.

The four-legged monsters having reached the fire creatures began to move together fast closing the distant between them. The two of the groups combined were just under twenty thousand. Kigam waited, he wanted the right moment to give the signal but he knew already that the mages were mapping out where they would cast their attacks. The dune shifted, sand moved and slid, huge stone giants appeared. They were slow moving so it didn't inflict much panic in anyone that saw cause it would be awhile before they were there. Those that had faced them though knew that they would be the hardest of the fight yet.

Pieces of stone, mangled yellow bodies and huge weapons littered the battlefield. Cane killed the last of the tall monster is sword hitting the sand sticking out up toward the sky. He turned in time to see the four-legged monsters run through and past the ones made of fire. Running back to the front line he rejoined the warriors. Kigam suddenly realized that his fear was true. The monsters that were made of fire were ranged attackers. The four-legged creatures continued to run toward the front lines but the monsters of fire had slowed and now began to stop. Picking a spot for the signal Kigam channeled and conjured a tornado.

A monster made of fire was caught directly in the middle of that tornado; it was slowly torn apart before it disappeared completely. Seeing the tornado the others mages released their own. The monsters understanding they were under attack started to launch their own. Each of the fire creatures hurled a single fireball over the coming stampede toward the front line. No one was prepared for it, he balls of fire rained down and into the warriors. Some were burned, others blasted off their feet and some even had their weapons get so hot they could bear to hold them.

Salene healed one fighter that fell backward his face blackened, she quickly called out that it was now ok to heal at will.

The warriors that were burned were grateful when the healing entered them taking the pain away. The four-legged monsters reached the front line; the first casualty of the day was a pike man who was impaled on a lance as the monsters plowed into him. It raised its lance and jumped back onto two legs crying out a victory. Not a moment after it landed on all fours was it sliced, stabbed and killed. The other warriors rushed forward closing the small space between them.

Galek only heard the cry he didn't see the dead pike hanging from the lance still alive as he was waved in the air dying slowly. He thrust forward stabbing a leg of one monster, it fell forward nearly crushing Galek as he slit its neck. Moving to its side helping it fall over with a push he moved past it onto the next.

Cane's scythe severed both an arm and a head of one as he sliced across in the air. The fireballs still came flying over him, it seemed to him that the monsters didn't care if it hit their own. One of the monsters was backing up away from a fighter with an axe; Cane removed its back legs letting the fighter plant his axe in its chest.

Galek pulled his sword free taking a moment to wipe some blood from his forehead. The battle was intense, bodies everywhere, weapons flashing in every direction taking limbs and lives. He saw a monster bash its hammer against the shield of a Mech as he fell trying to protect himself. Galek ran to his aid as the monster again crashed against his shield. He slashed upward cutting the arm of the monster lacerating its muscle; he stabbed in behind its front leg as the Mech stood gashing its chest with his claw.

Cane narrowly avoided a lance that nicked his armor as he went to attack another four-legged creature. Waiting for the next attack he jumped but the monsters moved forward not allowing him to chop off its head, rather he came down besides its back letting his scythe pierce down. He landed but his scythe was still embedding in the back of the angry monsters, pulling he tried to either kill the beast or free his weapon. The monster danced around trying to get to Cane who was still pulling his weapon free. Finally Cane jumped again landing on the back of the monster pulling his scythe free he detached the head of the creature.

The tornados did much to help the warriors but the hail of fire didn't stop. The fire monsters were too far off for the priestesses to use any attacks so the mages were on their own for now. All of that against them the stone giants were still forthcoming slow but steady.

Any arrows that found their way into the bodies of those monsters made of fire simply disappeared; they either burst into flames or fell through the other side. The only hope was that the damage was being done; the falcons did however get a reaction. Every time a falcon burst through its flames were moved opening a wound that closed once the falcon passed through but the monsters were not of unlimited flame, each attack weakened them.

The Atalantas were not able to easily reach the fireball throwing monsters of flame so they targeted the four-legged creatures instead. Ceria wanted to help the archers but she knew that it was easier for an archer to get that distance. The mages too were doing their part; she didn't let it bother you because sooner or later everyone was going to get a chance to show their worth.

Sand and blood was mixing again as it had before but this time to the advantage of the tribes.

The four-legged creatures were getting stuck in the sand having a much harder time maneuvering. The death toll for the tribes was rising, three had died all in the latest battle but compared to the enemy they had lost the least amount. The flaming monsters were also losing number but they still had more than enough to give the front line trouble. Kigam wondered about using other tactics but he still felt it would be best to wait until the very end because he had a bad feeling about a few things. That day when he felt something come through the portal, it stuck with him. He didn't feel anything like that before, even the hordes that he saw now; he never felt exit the portal. He feared that what had come through still hadn't show its face.

Galek brought down another monster with the help of a fighter who nodded to him before giving a battle cry and running off toward another.

"They are much like us," he thought to himself as he too ran toward his next kill. The stone giants were closing in and the battle would soon get rough so everyone was trying their best to kill the rest of the four-legged creatures that were scattered.

Cane spun cleanly taking the front six legs from the three monsters that surrounded him. They fell to their stumps still trying to kill their grim reaper as he jumped spinning again ending their time. As he landed he fell to one knee, he was winded.

"I must be getting older if I'm tired already," he mumbled to himself knowing no one else would hear it. Smiling he stood up with a slight grunt, maybe the jumping would have to take a break for now. The last two-dozen monsters fell within the next few seconds, everyone feeling the strains of such a long battle. Only four had died till that point so morale was still very high but the coming giants of stone put a dampen on that morale.

Galek tried to herd those who were around him backward trying to get them closer to the priestesses, he knew that without their help this part would be much worse than it could be. Cane knew as well for it was discussed during the strategizing and planning. Slowly the line moved back closer to the priestesses where the fighters began chanting.

"Zechram, Zechram, Zechram!" They chanted some raising their weapons or shields, other banging them together. Galek as did many of the Morion tribe wonder who Zechram was. The monsters of fire started to move forward being pushed by the wall of stone behind them. The tornados didn't stop though some even hitting the giants of stone but they didn't falter like the fire monsters. The number monsters of fire had declined from about ten thousand to now under five hundred. Kigam gave his signal to halt the tornado assault and let the archers and atalantas finish the rest of them off.

The monsters of fire closing in let the atalantas hurl their javelins at them finally joining the archers. The fire monsters for a while weren't attacking as much as they had earlier but fireballs still exploded on the frontline. Some of the monsters stopped only to be crushed by huge stone feet. Finally the last of the monsters made of fire rose into the air and dissipated into nothing letting the priestesses heal those that were burned and rest until they were needed again. Salene told them that none were to heal until after they had each called down lightning when the signal was given.

As the stone giants approached something no one expected happened. Between, in front and even behind the giants appeared red armored monsters. Cane recognized it from before; the others knew it from the fallen armor.

Their numbers now combined totaled ten thousand, the battle with the giants of stone was thought to be hard enough but with the added threat of the red armored knights this looked much worse.

Salene knew that this was the time to use the lighting but she would also have to be careful about how she used it because a lot of warriors might need healing very soon. Kigam gave the signal to unleash fireballs; it was safe to do so at the moment while they weren't close to the frontline. The resulting launch of fire seemed like a return of what the fire monsters had thrown at them. The giants of stone hardly stopped or showed any sign and pain as fireballs exploded against them, some of the red knights jerked back or stopped momentarily but it wasn't until the sixth onslaught that some of them died. Kigam gave two signals one after the other, first to stop the fireballs, the second to commence the tornados.

All the while arrows, javelins and falcons flew into the coming monsters. The stone giants cracked and split even had pieces of themselves break off but they marched on forward. The red knights that were hit showed no reaction, they had no body that anyone could see nor injure though their armor was pierced and dented.

Galek knew it would be rough for him and everyone fighting, the knights would keep anyone occupied and the stone giants could just crush you from above. Taking the fight to them Galek rushed forward clashing with a red knight. To his surprise it defended his attack with its weapon, a scythe. Pushing Galek back it quickly sliced across trying to tear him open. Pulling back as the scythe passed by his abdomen Galek avoided it narrowly.

Cane had two red knights approaching him with a stone giant not so far behind. Scythe against scythe the last time he had met a scythe in battle it had been his mentor, the person who taught him and the person he looked up to, Cid. He knew he couldn't block both so he went on the offensive. Spinning Cane hoped to each injures one or both or at least cause them to move back. They both jumped back as Cane's scythe passed, but as soon as it did they came forward. Cane had just finished his spin when two scythe came at him, he blocked the one he could and tried to dodge the other but it still was able to strike him.

Only a little over a dozen stone giants had fallen but the red knights seemed to have the upper hand. Salene gave the signal to use Divine Lighting, it as named as such because it couldn't strike anyone that was good, pure or clean. It came easy to the Priestesses since to be one you had to be pure yourself. The mages had a harder time with such things; their spells could unfortunately hit anyone or anything although the elders and teacher claimed to be close to a solution.

More then a thousand bolts of the bluest lighting appeared in the sky and poured down on the monsters below. Stone giants shattered and fell apart some of the pieces even crushing red knights that were about them. The knights that were struck had their armor melt and warp, those that died simple fell to pieces the armor hitting the ground with a hallow sound.

Galek's sword passed through a space in the armor of the red knight but to his surprise it fell off. The knight not missing a moment spun its scythe in its remaining hand. Rushing forward blasting the scythe away with his shield Galek pressed his sword in the space under the helmet. The red knight went still before its armor fell apart.

Before Galek could regain his stance or prepare for his next attack a stone fist exploded the sand knocking him back. The giant's fist missed him by less than a foot, getting to his feet Galek looked up to see the stone giant's head grinding to face him. Its fist rose again, that's when Galek noticed that its other arm was missing. Moving he noticed that it was severely fractured down the entire side. Crouching he waited for the behemoth to heave its fist down again. As it did Galek rolled and avoided it easily, coming out of the roll he jumped and plunged his sword into one of the larger cracks. Gripping the sword tight he used his own downward force to break free some of the pieces. The giant tilted and lurched as its body began to come apart from the side, moving back out of the way of the falling pieces Galek waited for another opening.

Cane fell backward in pain, his arm still cut badly from that attack he couldn't defend or avoid but he did manage to take out one of the red knights. The other however didn't seem to care in the least already stalking Cane for the killing blow. At that moment he wondered if a priestess could see him or if that was how he was going to die. He moved to his knees as the red knight approached, if it had eyes Cane was sure they were glowing blood red with unproven hatred. He had already planned his attack he just hoped it hadn't a chance once it swung. As the red knight's scythe slashed down toward him Cane jumped, his own scythe slashing for the monster's unseen neck. As it passed through the space just under the helmet the red knight's scythe jerked, the smaller second blade that was at the opposite end came up as Cane passed over the knight. Hitting the sand Cane already knew he was hit again this time in his abdomen, it hurt too much to stand so he took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

The priestesses were having a hard time healing the wounded as many of them needed more than one. Salene gave another signal for them to use Divine Lighting again, there wasn't as many blue lighting bolts as before, many of the priestesses were already weakened from healing and couldn't spare it. More of the stone giants fell and red knights melted, their number at last becoming more manageable.

Cane felt warm, at first he thought it was death taking him from his body but he soon realized that the pain in his arm and body were gone. Opening his eyes he turned back toward the priestesses to find that many of them had golden wings about them. Smiling he silently thanked them and noted to himself that after the battle he had to personally thank every one of them.

Galek like almost all of the warriors on the frontline felt rejuvenated. He like the rest of the warriors of his tribe knew what that meant, the priestesses were using their best healing powers but that meant they were now drained more than before. Not wanting to waste their sacrifice Galek roared victory and charged ahead.

The mages were still throwing fireballs at the stone giants' upper bodies seeing as how the blast couldn't reach the warriors below. Kigam moved his hand forward hoping his idea would work, a green beam surged from his hand toward the head of a stone giant. It blasted through the stone sending cracks through its whole body killing it. The other mages seeing the success began doing the same, the stone giant number dropped dramatically after that.

The red knights were the only threat left that had any number but they were less than two hundred at that moment. The last eight stone giants fell, leaving the red knights open to anyone's attacks. The mages rested, they knew their attacks could harm anyone close to the armored creatures.

The tribes suffered much more dead in this last part of the battle the death toll raised to over fifty but again compared to the monsters losses they were still on top. The red knights were surrounded and killed one by one without any more casualties. Everyone cheered as the last red armor fell to pieces on the bloody sand. Galek wasn't sure if it was really over, he made a few full turns only seeing cheering and jumping allies. Allowing himself a small break to rest he started to try to clean his weapon and armor.

Kigam on the other hand was worried; none of these monsters seemed to be powerful enough to make him feel its entrance through the portal. As if on cue with his thoughts, a loud roar was heard that same roar that stopped the fire monsters. Everyone fell silent looking around as to its source many looked toward the dune where monsters had come before. Seconds passed like hours till a head appeared, green hair around a large face with two pink horns protruding from its forehead. It was as tall as the giants made of stone but looked much stronger. As its full body came into view on the dune no one could say what it was. It held a massive shield that was easily twice as tall as any of them as the axe just as massive in size. It wore no armor but around its waist was a belt with a large skull. It stood motionless for a moment its eyes darted around taking in the entire scene.

Kigam was sure that this was the creature that he felt come through the portal but he wasn't sure if it was a monster or the god Igolanos. Either way he had a very bad feeling about it. The massive creature arched its back as it let out a deafening roar that filled the ears of everyone. The roar turned into a growl as it closed its mouth and stood straight again, it continued as it started taking steps forward. Galek wasn't sure what it was but he did know who is, the last enemy that stands between victory and defeat. Cane stared at the beast as it strode confidently toward the warriors, he was scared as many of the warriors were but like them he didn't show it. As it walked over the bodies of its fallen kind it just stop or look down it just crushed whatever came under its feet. Salene knew that the priestesses would have to call upon the lighting one more time at least before they would solely heal.

Kigam already had a plan, first tornado to slow it then fireballs to blind it then energy to rip it. He counted down in his head for the right moment but it came early as a hail of arrows and javelins flew overhead. He gave the first signal placing a tornado right in front of its left foot.

The giant beast stepped right into the first tornado as dozens more appeared around each foot. The force of so many tornadoes in such a small place started moving the fallen monsters, dead bodies started to lift and pull toward them. The sand was whipping up as if the land had just turned upside-down. The arrows and javelins hundreds of them hit the monsters in mass, all but a few bounced, broke, snapped, or just fell off of its skin. The few that did pierce its thick rough hide stuck in place but no blood oozed from the wounds. The falcons had a much better reaction, they hit the monster but didn't pass through as normal they rather made large gouges and gashes in its skin. Those wounds showed signs of blood but very little.

The second wave of mage attacks started, fireballs exploded all over its body, again the monster showed no sign of feeling any of it except when it blinked if a fireball exploded near its eyes. The monster had stopped but Kigam wasn't sure if the tornados had done it or if it had just stopped by itself.

The green energy beams came in large number now, not to the surprise of Kigam they didn't pass through the monster. Much like the falcons they only burned the skin making small wounds, although if one of more was in the same place the wound became bigger and bleed more. Kigam had an idea.

The monster let out a growl deep within its throat, it then stepped forward right out of the tornados. The warriors on the front line prepared as the monsters took the final steps toward them. The frontline moved forward almost all-together making the last charge of the battle. The monster tilted its head down watching the warriors rush it while it slowly raised its axe.

"NO!" Kigam yelled as it came crashing down. Sand flew almost as high as its head as the monster's axe crashed into the ground. One fighter was killed his body was hardly recognizable; others were thrown from the impact. Kigam started giving order to the mages to pass along before he ran to where the archers and atalantas were.

Cane ran forward among many others just moments after the first impact of the axe. The foot of the creature already had many warriors stabbing, cutting and slicing at it. The monster raising its axe moved its foot forward pushing many away before bringing it down crushing two underneath. Cane couldn't believe the power of this monster; victory surely wasn't what it seemed to be before. Salene started the chain of lighting, since there was only one target each priestess only needed to channel one bolt, which wasn't as much strain as six. The blue bolts looked to form into one as they erupted down from the sky toward the furious creature.

The creature for the first time since it appeared showed pain, it growled then roared as the lighting tore through its body. The lighting ceased a moment later, the monster's fur smoked, its weapons hot but its grip just as tight. Pike men, knights and fighters jumped cutting, slicing and gashing the creature's legs. Mechs bashed its feet and threw bombs towards its upper body and crotch.

Kigam quickly returned to the mages where he hoped everything would go as planned. Before he could start his channeling the monster swung its axe, seven warriors were killed they were either beheaded or cut entirely in half. Kigam knew he had to act know he channeled that green beam again but held it waiting for the others. The archers and atalantas readied their attacks as all of the mages prepared. Kigam knew it might be hard for everyone to hear him but he hoped that the small delay didn't ruin his plan.

"NOW!" Kigam yelled as he released the green beam toward the creature's chest, the rest of the mages did the same and at the exact same spot. The archers loosed their arrows and their falcons flew, the atalantas threw their javelins. The mage attacks connected first, all of the energy combined burned the hide and jerked the giant backward. The arrows and javelins didn't have much affect but the falcons did, as Kigam knew, their assault united with the mages was enough to push the monster off its feet.

The energy even burned through its flesh as it fell backed tearing into the muscles of its chest. The falcons combined ripped into the monster finally ruptured out its back. The monster's roar was a high pitch; it was a roar of pain. Unfortunately when it fell it crushed five warriors, the shockwave of its fall knocked almost everyone around it off their feet.

"YES!" Kigam yelled as did many others with cheers, but the battle wasn't yet over. The monster grunted and tried to get back up but the warriors wouldn't let it stand again.

They swarmed around it, many even climbing the creature attacking its open wounds. One fighter climbed his way on the monster head using its fur as grip, he overturned his sword as the monster's eye looked at him then he plunged it down. Another roar of extreme pain as it thrashed the fighter being thrown and others being crushed or broken. Salene let the priestesses heal one more time before they all called up the lightning one more time.

The creature began to spasm and jerk as the lightning filled its body. The attacks from the warriors continued since they weren't affected by the lightning. Kigam knew that he and the mages couldn't do anymore at that point. The roar, growls and grunts softened as the attacks continued. It seemed forever but finally silence found the battlefield.

Galek climbed the beast and walked over toward its mouth, it didn't move and he could hear or see signs of breathing, it was dead.

"VICTORY!" Galek raised his sword as he yelled. Everyone joined in the cheer as they moved away from the monster bodies that covered the sands outside of Navisko. Cane limped toward town when he felt an arm on his shoulder, turning he saw a smiling priestess who told him to stay still a moment. He walked back to town thanking her many times on the way.

The sun set that day on less faces than it had that morning. Everyone felt bad for those that had died but in battle death is certainly something that plays a big part. No discussion had started yet about what to do neither about the bodies nor about the tribes and their new alliance. The messengers that were sent out shortly after battle to tell news of victory to the tribes returned with grim news. The entire trip to the tribes and back showed that monsters were everywhere all over the land. It seemed that only the tribes themselves were safe at that moment.

Kigam's worst feared became reality; the portal had expanded to the point where it now covered the entire land. It was much weaker than it was before so a repeat of what happened that day would not occur but it did mean that monsters could come through the portal anywhere on the land.

It was placed in the history of the tribes that the day of that battle, the day they thought they had won victory was the end of an age, the end of the age of peace and prosperity and the beginning of the age of death and destruction.