
Nomad

And the Scrolls of Velkaar

Eric Robertson

Prologue

The blazing sun beat down heavily upon the stark white canvas that stretched over the old wagon. Metal axles squealed as the worn wooden wheels struggled to move through the shifting sand of the barren desert. The strong young stallion trudged wearily forward, pulling the fully laden wagon. The driver pulled his reed brimmed hat down over his eyes in a vain effort to block out the harsh sun. From within the old creaking wooden wagon, the sound of a crying child could be heard. The faint whispers of the mother were barely audible to the two men walking beside the wagon. One of them was old, with a white beard and a face that was wrinkled from too much sun. The other was a young foolhardy lad who always seemed to Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar have his head in the clouds. Both had seen too many harsh days without food and very little water. On the long trek across this immense desert everything was carefully rationed; there was no room in the small wagon to carry extra supplies. A second woman's voice rose from within the wagon, louder than that of the mother, but still too quiet to make out the words. It was still fairly early in the day, but everyone was feeling the strain of the heat. They had been in the desert for several days, and the only thing in sight was more sand. The dunes rose and fell like a turbulent sea. Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar There was no plant life and very little animal life to be found in that barren wasteland. Still, the lack of life was perhaps better than the alternative, for the creatures that roamed those sands were usually not very friendly to travelers.

The men were tired, the horse was exhausted, and the women and the child were in no better shape. They gave thanks for each passing day without the dreadful winds that blew sand into everything Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar and forced them to stop early and ration further their already scarce supplies. They also gave thanks for their fortune of not running afoul any of the dreadful creatures that lurked in the loose sands of the dunes, or the vicious

gangs of ruthless sand pirates that stalked the lonely wastes, preying on travelers such as themselves. It was a hard existence in the wastes, but it was harder still for those who needed to move through it and were not wealthy enough to hire guides and guards for the long journey. It was about six days into their dreary trek Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar when the driver of the wagon suddenly sat up and shouted with alarm, "Pirates!!" as he pointed to the north. In the distance the two men at the side of the wagon could just make out the shapes of men on horses Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar riding toward them. The family had no chance of outrunning them with their worn out horse and old wreck of a wagon. The two men and the driver pulled swords from the back of the wagon, three old rusted blades that could not slice butter, but it was all that they had. They told the two women to take the child and hide under the wagon. The men covered them with a tan tarp that blended into the sand, and they made a circle around the wagon. They had little hope of defeating the horde of merciless bandits that greatly outnumbered them, but they stood firm none the less. To protect their family they would lay down their lives without a second thought.

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The dreadful shouts and howls of the filthy Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar bunch of hardened sand raiders could be heard in the distance. The bandits had long acclimated to the harsh sun and the dry desert air. They had the clear advantage of strength, numbers, and skill, and they knew it. Nothing stood between them and their prize except for three worn out, thirsty, starving scarecrows of men with blunt swords. It would be a slaughter; there was nothing that could be done. The three men knew what their fate was, they knew that they would not see another day, but they prayed that the women and the young child would survive. They prayed that their deaths would be quick. It seemed an eternity to wait as the raiders made their way across the sand. They were in no great hurry, but still they seemed to fly over the sand; eager to make the kill.

The attackers did not stop as they got to the wagon. The first wave of them charged in with their horses in an attempt to trample down the three defenders. The young man and the driver were able to jump out of the way, and the young man rolled down the side of the dune. The older man was just not quick enough to avoid the pounding hooves of the stampeding horses. Broken and near death, the old man Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar lay in a heap upon the sand, completely ignored by the second wave of bloodthirsty savages. The driver was standing alone atop the dune, while the younger man tried in vain to scramble up the sandy dune. The driver was quickly mobbed by six heavily armed raiders whose mere stink could knock most men off their feet. The driver was paralyzed with fear as the six men became eight, then nine, as more came to join the fight. The young man could do nothing but listen to the screams as the bandits tore the driver apart; he scrambled with all his might to reach the summit of the dune. Then, just when he was there, at the top, a heavy boot landed full on his face. Semi-conscious and unable to move, he watched helplessly as the brigands ripped the wagon apart scavenging anything they could. The wind began to kick up Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar sand; and just when the youth was about to lose consciousness completely, something caught his eye. A figure moved in the distance, a lone shadow against the stark desert sands. One of the raiders saw it too, and he quickly pointed it out to the others. Several of them dropped what they were doing and rushed out to meet the newcomer, weapons drawn. They hurled screams and shouts at the figure as they rushed toward him. Just Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar as the bandits reached the shadow on the desert a great wind blew up sand

obstructing the young man's dim view of them. The wall of sand fell away as quickly as it had risen, and all the young man could see was that lone figure slowly marching toward the wagon. There was no sign of the bandits, they were gone. The remaining raiders gathered their weapons and charged at the newcomer with rage and hate on their tongues. It quickly became clear what had happened to the first wave of bandits, as the second wave engaged the stranger. Steel flashed in the light of the sun and the raiders went down one after another. The shadowy figure danced among them like the wind. His blade slashed swiftly and true, and before long all that was left was the stranger, a shadow on the desert. Then darkness overcame the young man, and he drifted into unconsciousness.

Perhaps fate had smiled Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar upon him, or maybe it was just a cruel jest by the gods, but the young man lived. When he awoke he was inside the wagon; and there beside him were the two women, and the young innocent child. His mother smiled down at him as he opened his eyes, his aunt was tending to the child. They were alive. He searched in the dim light for his father or the driver but Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar neither was there. His Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar mother was talking, but the young lad did not understand what she was saying at the time. Later he would learn that it was that mysterious desert wanderer who had saved them and brought them back to civilization. The young man's mother talked of the desert wanderer often from then on, always telling the stories of his great adventures. It was those stories that I grew up hearing, thinking that most of them were probably just made up fairy tales. There was a time when I thought that my mother might have just made up the whole desert experience to make her bedtime tales more interesting. Yet when I came of age and began to travel the world, I found that my mother was not the Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar only one who had stories to tell. It seemed that no matter where I was, I would hear the tales of the lone wanderer. Stories of great battles, monsters of legend, and ancient empires long forgotten in the annals of time. He was portrayed as a warrior, or a sorcerer; and some were even convinced that he was an ancient god, perhaps even Velkaar himself.

The unknown man became the subject of much scrutiny among the scholars and poets. There were many expeditions into the desert trying to find the man who had spawned so many fantastical stories; and the king even offered a reward for the mysterious desert wanderer. Their efforts were wasted. The searchers came back exhausted and empty handed. In many instances the search parties failed to return altogether, swallowed up by the treacherous desert sands. Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar I began collecting those tales, looking through history books and ancient lore. I was completely obsessed with finding the origins of such a man, and with learning his true identity. For years I searched and scrapped together bits and pieces of truth. I tried in vain to put the pieces together. I tried desperately to understand. Years later, after losing my family and alienating my friends, I finally put most of it together. The knowledge that I have gathered, the history of the man and his people, is all beyond what Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar I had ever thought possible. I started out searching for one man's story, and along the way I have uncovered the very nature of this world.

I have discovered the lone wanderer's identity, the last descendant of a long forgotten people. He is the desert dweller, the wind rider, the great wanderer, a man chosen by the gods

to fulfill his people's destiny. He is the nomad.

The Nomad

It is perhaps best, Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar in order to understand the nomad, that I first relate Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar the history from which this man came, the history of his people from their humble beginnings to the rise of what was arguably the greatest civilization this world has ever seen. This history, which I have compiled over countless years of tireless research, is perhaps the most thoroughly examined history of this world. In following the stories and legends surrounding this one man, I have indeed uncovered a truth long forgotten by mortal man. It Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar may Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar seem at times as though the facts that I relate are fictitious or mere fancies of a crazed mind, but I tell you now that these facts should not be quickly dismissed. I have thoroughly examined the ancient texts and consulted with the wisest of the wise, and it is my understanding that the events of Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar the past as they directly affect our present nature are not always explained in ways that are satisfying to our perception of how the world works. It should be brought to your attention Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar that the gods are not bound by the same rules as mortal men, and Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar so it can be said that the natural laws did not apply when the gods were in direct contact with the human events that transpired in the past. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the facts that I present in this Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar text are as accurate as can be Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar gleaned from the sources that I have at my disposal, so long as one can accept that gods existed and that they roamed freely about this world.

It all started deep in the desert we have all come to know as the desert of Velkaar. Of course in Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar those days the great places had no names, well, no names known to mortals in any case. The desert itself was much more Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar immense, and far more treacherous, yet still there were tribes of hardy people who inhabited this waste. Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar Rumors tell us that humanity may very well have started somewhere in that great desert, but that is perhaps a tale for another time. The tales I relate to you this day are thousands of years in our past, not all the way to the beginning, and yet close enough for many to believe it was.

The history of the nomad's people trails back to the largest of the scattered desert-dwelling tribes; and that particular tribe would eventually become known as the tribe of the winds. But we will get to that.

Let me start from the beginning. The tribe of the nomads was a proud tribe of desert

wanderers; they were the strongest of the desert tribes. Many came in search of the wisdom of their wise elders and priests. The nomadic people held the secrets of the desert; they knew Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar where food and Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar water could be found, and they knew where the dangers lay in wait. Most of all however, they were powerful in the ancient arts of magic. Their magic was of a different kind than we have these days. The tribal sorcerers used an ancient magic that was not black or white. It was a magic that used the primal forces of this world. With those magics and the knowledge to use them, the tribe prospered in the harsh desolate wastes while many other tribes were forced to leave the desert or, in staying, died off. As their knowledge of the world increased, the nomad's people became aware of the influence of the gods. They began worshiping one god above all others, and the name they gave this being was Velkaar, which translates to 'of the winds' in their ancient tongue. So it was that they paid homage to their god; and as they believed that he dwelt among the sandy dunes under the great sky, so they named the great desert in his honor. They believed that Velkaar controlled the mighty winds which blew through the desert, bringing the refreshing yet rare rains, or raising the sands into a deadly storm. The tribe believed that it was by the god's will alone that they lived in his kingdom, and that it Nomad: And the Scrolls of Velkaar was his right to take life wherever and whenever it pleased him.

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