

## Nethander chapter 135

After we return from the wasp incident the others tell me about Reeds sister and typically everybody suddenly becomes overly concerned for her safety. Probably best to let the others worry about Reed and let's try to find out more about the different factions here.

This city reminds me of home in a way, not that the people or the buildings look alike, but the level of scheming between the pasha's has some similarities between the thick plotting in this town. Baldur's Gate seemed like a dull provincial town compared to this city!

Like in Calimport it's all about people you know if you want to advance, so in order to find out more about the book we're searching for we first need to create standing in this society. Plotting the downfall of one faction usually brings you in good favor of the opposing faction!

At the moment we're a bit at a standstill but I receive an invitation from one of the families organizing the unofficial fighters championship, I've been asked to meet with the matriarch of this family. This might be a lead we can explore and I decide to follow, luckily for me both Norbert and Felina covertly follow me to the meeting. It turns out that assistance is not required and the old wrinkled lady tells me about an old curse that plagues this town. 4000 moons ago the "place on the other side of the mountain" was cursed and evil spirits captured within will supposedly come free to torture this city very soon. She tells me this because she's aware that I have contact with Oni's and I should send the Oni's over the mountain... This is probably nonsense, but this provides us with a target we can focus on. We'll find out who's using this fairytale as a disguise, or even lure the others into believing we're focusing our attention only on this thus allowing them to drop their cover. If that doesn't work we've at least got a very good reason to meet with the magistrate and the Wu-Jen to discuss this issue and try to get some extra information.

The other agree with me and off we go to see the Magistrate and the Wu-Jen. To keep it short I'll present the outcomes:

- The magistrate is probably innocent of any major plotting going around, he has heard all we have to say and sincerely hopes all problems come forth from this curse (but doesn't believe this at all)
- The Wu-Jen is difficult to read, but I feel that he is impressed by me. Whether or not he is impressed by my actions to uncover his evil plotting, or by my drive to fight the curse is unknown to me.
- The curse is real in a way, the ancient scrolls describe horrible things that happened to the city every 1000 moons after the curse took place, this is marked by an astronomical convergence that only occurs every thousand moons.
- The curse found its origin during the struggle between Shou-Lung and T'u-Lung, warlords tried to wrestle their own little empires and 4000 moons ago, one of the warlords was targeted by the emperors "four winds" and his castle is now the cursed place on the other side of the mountain.
- The city archives scrolls are most likely originals.
- Reed confirmed that the astrological anomaly is actually now, only the duration is much longer than normal, which points to a higher intensity of mishap to the city.
- We've asked for permission to visit this place and the magistrate needs to discuss this with his wife who was actually hiding in the room. She clearly has a major role in this marriage!
- Grimwald also requests permission to visit the cemetery which we receive immediately.

We visit the cemetery and find out it's thoroughly desecrated and that is just about it. The others don't want to stay after dusk to try and find some action here, I also urge the others to visit the ruins first. Whoever is using this curse as ruse to plot against the city will now be advised of our arrival and might evacuate the premises, but the others do not want to take the risk to go there uninvited! Fortunately Kendalan informs us that the magistrate has send us a message that we have permission to go.

We leave immediately to a little temple on top of the mountain overseeing the city and the famous other side. An old monk is keeping watch there and he informs us that we were expected. After a short nap we leave at first light to investigate the ruins. The others keep on talking about the distorted mountains and landscape and they see several rings surrounding the ruins if the castle. Might it be that there's actually something there?

Our fist approach doesn't encompass any true danger besides some Ape-spiders that threaten us with traps and poison darts. I spot them and while Reed tried to talk them down, I release my threatening power, fighting them one on one is pointless and we need to move on. Kendalan and Norbert however start to blow the animals out of the trees by using magic, which they do with great effect and after a few kills the others flee the scene. Reed of course doesn't approve of this and becomes especially angry at Norbert who decides not to apologize and this escalates to the point that Reed teleports away. This is something strange indeed, but we really need to push on and Reeds absence at least makes sure the others concentrate on the task ahead instead of looking out for Reed's safety!