

# Questing Chronicles. I

Wednesday, 15 June 2011

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A tale of the venerable Lord Roth, in his ever continuing search for the Grail.

The Roth Saga.

Questing Chronicles. I.

Part I.

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The sleeper awoke to darkness, heart hammering, ears straining and muscles tensing. With an almost impossibly swift motion the figure which lay upon the mossy carpet of the forest floor had scissored his legs and used the momentum to rise into a crouching stance. Alarmed at the sudden movement a huge steel grey warhorse tethered to a nearby beech sapling began to whinny and toss its mighty head to and fro in excited anticipation. Oblivious to the frantic actions of the mighty warhorse the figure sent his senses out into the night to seek out the cause of his rude awakening.

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Scanning the trees his eyes searched feverishly and instinctively for any sign of movement, when suddenly without conscious thought the figure abruptly rolled to his right and snatched up the steel broadsword that lay next to the bedroll in a single fluid movement. Before sinking to one knee and raising the sword up above his head to block the blow from a crude club that was swinging down with lethal force to crack his skull.

The tall defender accepted the bone jarring strike on the sword allowing the clubs momentum to push downwards before he surged up, using powerful legs to add impetus to his counter and pushed his attacker back with irresistible force. The assailant caught off guard from the strength and speed of his opponent could only watch in wide eyed horror as the club flew from its clawed fingered grip and its intended victim agilely spun on his heel to bring the steel sword down in a lethal arc to cut...

Breathing heavily and with his powerful muscles twitching with adrenaline, the tall man walked towards the body of his attacker and wrinkled his nose in disgust at the terrible odour that was emanating from the fallen beastman corpse, the monstrosity's fur covered legs were still twitching and drumming the ground in a horrid parody of life, while the severed horned ram's head and lost club lay amongst a small bramble thicket a few feet behind.

Â "Tracherous beast!" the tall man roared at the repugnant corpse in a deep and powerful voice. "How dare you accost a nobleman when he is at rest, you dog!"

Â Turning briskly he marched to his snorting and aggravated steed, and held his left hand out to calm the great beast.

Â "Be still great heart, It is over." he soothed.

Â Before breaking camp and saddling his mighty warhorse Kalidus. He untied Kal's' reins from the beech sapling and led the horse to the centre of the sun dappled forest clearing that had served as their home for the eventful evening.

Â "It is getting to the stage where even the Lord Roth cannot be garaunteed a bit of peace for one single night, even in his own sodding domain, Lady give me strength!" fumed the enraged elderly knight. Dutifully, his horse nodded it's mighty head in sympathetic agreement.

Â With increasing difficulty and exasperation the Lord Roth struggled into his ancient armour and garbed himself for war. Tall and broad he stood resplendant in his black plate armour, a silver dragons skull proudly emblazoned on the breastplate.

Â "A moment noble kalidus, i must pause for a piss afore we continue our quest." he scolded his impatient steed who had been pawing the ground in eagerness. Stroking his long, white walrus moustach in consternation he turned to head for the nearest tree, when Lord Roth was once again assailed by the feotid stench of the fallen beastman.

Â "You rotten cur, assault my nostrils no more." he cried, before quickly realising that the beastman was not only behind him but also downwind.

Â "Right." he thundered. "I have absolutely had it!"

Â Storming back to Kalidus in a rage he mounted the great steed in a graceful leap before turning the warhorse to face the horde of filthy beastmen that were just now pouring into the clearing.

Â "By The Lady! You rotten sods have caught me on a really bad day and for that, you are all about to recieve a damn good thrashing!" he bellowed. Spurring Kalidus forward to charge he drew his broadsword and raised it high

overhead, the early light from the morning sun glittered along the length of the ancient blade.

“For King, Country and The Lady!” he screamed as man and horse crashed into the horde of surprised beasts.

Sometime later.....

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“Cursing both vocularly and fluently the Lord Roth broke the still silence of the ancient forest with his dulcet tones. “Bloody beastmen!” he cried. “In my bloody forest!.....No more i say, no more.” he moaned once again to his faithful steed, whose mighty head and purse-like ears were already slumped in abject weariness at listening to yet another of it's masters colourful rants. “I've not even had any sodding breakfast yet, most important meal of the day you know.....Yes indeed, and at my age with my bowel problems i need all the fibre i can get!” Jabbered the aged cavalier, “I've not been regular since....”

\*..zzzzzz..\*

Lord Roth turned to his right to look incredulously at his faithful steed, who had just begun to snore. “Why you cheeky old sod!...Kalidus...Kalidus!” he cried. “You've only gone and fallen asleep again you ponce!” he roared at his four legged companion, who had suddenly drifted off.

“Noble steed?....Warhorse?.....Lady give me strength.” he muttered darkly to himself.

Lord Roth leaned back against the bole of the beech tree that he had been leaning on before Kal's rude indifference, and winced silently at the pull of the fresh stitches in his side.

“Oh well.” he told himself “Maybe a quick nap”. And within a few short moments, he too began to snore.

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## The Roth Saga.

## Part II

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Â Lord Roth mounted the saddle stiffly and with obvious discomfort. Warily he shook his head in disgust and quickly wished he had not, as his vision began to swim once more. With slow deliberate movements he slowly inched his hand down to the saddlehorn to retrieve the leather water canteen which hung from it. Gritting his teeth as his fingers throbbed in agony after recently being re-set after being broken, and grabbed hold of the swinging vessel. With infinite care he raised the canteen to his bruised and battered face and winced as his split lip opened up once more; as he took a swig of lukewarm water. After returning the vessel to its original place on the saddlehorn he looked up sharply as Kalidus whinneyed in apparent sympathy.

Â "Don't give me any of that you vandal." Grouched Lord Roth testily, "I'm in bloody agony here."

Kalidus, recognising the scolding tone in his masters voice, dropped its mighty head and flattened its ears at the rebuke and continued plodding along in silence. Lord Roth was pissed off, and continued to stare huffily at the back of Kalidus' head; and no bloody wonder.

Â There he was snoozing away against a tree absolutely knackered after killing all those sodding beastmen. Then making camp, stitching the nasty wound in his side and giving Kalidus a rub down and feed. When not half an hour into his snozzle Kalidus only started having one of his sodding dreams again didn't he. Causing the damn horse to start pawing the ground and kick his powerful back legs. And before he could fully awake from his stupor, the blasted horse had rolled over and pinned him against the bole of the tree; crushing him. And then proceeded to kick and brutally trample the Lord Roth into complete unconsciousness.

Â When he finally came to, in a sea of burning agony he turned his head to look for Kalidus who was standing dejectedly nearby. Through dry swollen lips he called weakly to his steed. And when no answer came, the Lord Roth in worry had somehow managed to make it to his feet despite his broken ribs and crushed body, and walked drunkenly towards the strangely silent horse. He had managed to grasp Kal's tail and work his way up to the beast's mighty head. All the while calling Kal's name hoping for the slightest response. When suddenly, like air rushing out a bellows. The bloody thing let out a really thunderous snore and continued to do so in earnest, oblivious to the knight clinging in desperate agony to him.

Â In seething rage and frustration he had bellowed in his faithful horses ear, "Kalidus wake up you ponce!" Only for the horse to get spooked and bolt off with the Lord Roth still clinging tightly to it's mane. He had managed to hold on for a few seconds only as his fingers were broken, and fell under the horses hind legs. And once more Kalidus on instinct, proceeded to viciously trample him into brutal unconsciousness.

Â When next Lord Roth awoke it was to absolute hell, and after realising he could still move was about to try and stand. When a warm wet tongue began to lick the side of his neck. Slowly and in great pain the Lord Roth turned and looked at his steeds black liquid eyes in ludicrous amazement, half expecting to see horns had sprouted from the things bloody head. And after reasuring himself there was none, had been furiously livid with Kal; and had been in the huff with him for the last two days.

Â "Alright, alright stop your moping Kal" said Lord Roth to his steed. "I'm fine now...it's just...i would'nt have been so angry if you had'nt already done the same thing only a couple of months ago dammit." moaned the agonised knight. Kalidus realising he was being let out of the doghouse, perked up his ears and began to prance happily as Lord Roth began to scratch fondly at the great steeds neck.

"I'm gonna have to start sleeping up trees at night if these damn flashbacks keep happenin' in your sleep, you senile old sod."

Â And together, they headed deeper into the forest of Chalons.

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The Roth Saga.

Part III

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Â The Lord Roth was in a melancholy mood as he stared deeply at the deep golden licks of flame that had begun to rise from his rekindled campfire. He had not slept all night and had watched the pristin silver orb of Mannslieb being chased by Morrsliebs sickly green presence across an almost cloudless jet black night sky. Only for both aspects to hide their faces at the approach of a weak, watery sun that emanated no heat and could in no way lift his brooding miasma. It was not the toll his body had been taking over the course of the last week, nor was it the events that had led him upon this path. Indeed the terrible wounds inflicted upon him by Kalidus' sleepwalking antics had almost disappeared from his body, leaving almost no evidence of its occurrence apart from a few very light yellow bruises. Why even the terrible wound he had recieved during his melee with the beastman host four days ago had already formed a jagged silver scar that could have been on his body for years.

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Â As for the choices that led him here, if they were his choices. How could he bemoan or complain. He knew that it was his fate to take the questing vow. All of those near and dear to him knew one day it was inevitable. No, he could not complain. The Lady had blessed both his own life and those of his family. He had known great love with his dear wife the Lady Susanna, and had loved her long and true for thirty wonderful years until her passing six summers ago. He had left his domain in the more than capable hands of their son Kael, now the instated Lord Roth of Fenmere, and his sons wife the damsel Kiyra. Both of whom were raising Their son, his grandson. His pride and joy, Alric; which was short for Chivalric. He wished he could have had more time with them all but the call had been on him for five years already, and he could resist it no longer. He had left the castle six months ago celebrating his sixty sixth birthday with only Kalidus for company as he pushed deeper and deeper into the forest of Chalons.

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Â His...or rather his son's domain lay on the edge of this great forest and he was trying to give his son's young family the best start by thining out the dangerous beasts and monsters thst lived within it's sylvan embrace. In order that no host of evil denziens could build up the necessary numbers to mount a threatening attack on his son's lands. In this regard he had been terribly successful so far, slaying uncountable beastmen and a small Orc warband; along with the odd river troll. However, somewhere along the way a sentient force had begun to pull at his very being, andÃ draw him ever deeper into the very heart of the forest; where few if any men have ever seen. He knew also that he was being watched constantly, but he knew inside himself that he must continue following this force ever onward; it was his duty.

Â The Lord Roth reached into saddle bags that lay next to him and pulled out his most prized posession, a holy relic of great power, the Insignia of the Quest. Just holding it in his hands hardened his resolve and reminded him that there could be no more important thing left to do with his life than to protect the lands of Bretonnia, destroy her enemies, serve Her and continue to quest for the Grail. With growing enthusiasm and energy he quickly broke camp and saddled Kalidus, who upon sensing his masters impatience was also eager to be off. Swiftly mounting his steed the Lord Roth cried out,

Â "Onward, greatheart! For honour, for chivalry and for The Lady!"

Â Before both horse and rider crashed through the undergrowth and headed deeper into the very heart of Chalons.