

The Hunters Beginning

The Beginning of the Chronicles of the Hunters

TRAVELER

The alien patiently waited for the mixed group of archeological enthusiasts to settle in their seats. The celebrated two week conference for archeologists attracted people from twenty space sectors. It was a two week intensive convention that covered many levels of knowledge in the discipline of archeology and related disciplines. The attendees weren't just professionals, which made it an ideal place to pitch a new concept for hunting for relics. The alien had presented to a group of the attendees the establishment of a new breed of relic hunters. Those present were interested in hearing more which was why the unpublished presentation.

Standing to the side so that everyone had a clear view of the plain wall, images began to appear and a voice that would be heard in a language that those attending could understand began a presentation in more depth. After two hours the images stopped and the lights in the room gradually increased.

The alien stepped forward to answer questions...and questions did come. Each was answered completely to the satisfaction of the questioner. When no more questions came, a date in the future and place was given for anyone that was interested in joining this new community of relic hunters to meet.

The alien then left.

Professor Bobol puffed on his pipe with his rounded cheeks looking like bellows. Smoke from the bowl was pitiful for all the effort, but he didn't pay attention to his pipe. "What I found suspicious was that he spoke Archiatica with flawless articulation. How did you all understand it?"

"He spoke Meciata!"

"No. He spoke...."

Other voices shouted over each other, then they all quieted in astonishment.

"Well," Professor Bobol said, "some of what he said is truthful."

"Psah!" Professor Dogger said. "Just a mentalist that can speak to all of us telepathically. I for one saw it as a female Rogda from Anstra Region. Quite an astonishing species, really."

"Hmm." Professor Bobol said. "By the expressions of the rest of you, you saw he or her as something other than what your neighbor saw."

"So, just what does that mean?"

"That we can't trust whoever that was."

"I'm going to go to the meeting. I like the idea."

"You don't have the responsibilities of a family or job."

"Maybe that's the type of person he or she is looking for."

Professor Bobol looked at the older woman, noting the sad tone to her voice. "Then go and see if you live that long. I have other responsibilities. Classes to teach. A spouse to answer to."

Approximately A Year Later

(Depending on what planet you were from)

The same alien that had given them the invitation was the same that picked them up at the space port and showed them to private and comfortable rooms. Some had never experienced comfort like this and being that they were still on the lower levels of their career, didn't expect to for years yet. The older woman, at the end of her academic career was there. She no longer was asked to go on excavations to archeological sites or to speak on the ones she had been on. Her niece accompanied by her, who was there only because it gave her something to do until she could decide what to do with the rest of her life, or the life after accompanying her elder aunt on some wild vacation to nowhere.

More questions were asked at the space port, but were put off with "Wait until after you hear further of what is being proposed."

A week later, all the people that had showed up were changed people, no matter species or age. They were now Hunters, a group of relic seekers with one rule that differed from the usual rough and anything goes rule that artifact seekers followed. If they found any item of power developed or created eons or days ago they were to honor the story behind it and ensure it was delivered to where it was needed to fulfill its purpose.

The professional archeologists and those that sought lost items for personal profit were a driven group with their obsession to rediscover cultures, objects, and stories and were not shy about using force and sometimes death to achieve their ends, and these people were not weeded out of the Hunters. When they agreed to the one rule they knew it would be enforced, though how they weren't sure nor did they think about it at the time because they believed.

The alien referred to himself or herself as Traveler. Traveler had a list of over two million artifacts and one clue of where they were last seen. The list would continue to grow, Traveler promised.

The rewards?

For the tangible reward - where there was one artifact there would be many others.

The intangible reward was the process that all the professionals and nonprofessionals loved -- the search, adventure, travel, deduction, competition, and being involved.

A time and place was set for regular check-ins for the Hunters, where they formed collaborations, shared ideas, stories, and enforced the one law. They also discussed the interesting fact that they never went without needed items or funds to pursue the artifact they sought. Along the way, they found other relics, backers and collaborators so no one ever starved or went without, provided they didn't over extend themselves. Those that were unwise in gambling that this strange good luck would pull them out of their extravagant living without consequences found to their grief they weren't saved from the consequences of their own unwise choices.

As eons passed, Hunters became a predominant way of life for some species and membership was claimed by both the scrupulous and unscrupulous but the majority followed the pact they made to Traveler. Traveler appeared to each person when he, she, or it, joined and made the promise to follow the one rule. It was discussed briefly about the oddity that Traveler could be anywhere anytime, but Traveler was part of the mystic of being a Hunter, and no one wanted to unravel that mystical side of their chosen way of life.

The old woman, thought to be at the end of her exploration life, found new energy and resources, training her niece, a new convert in archeology, to be a Hunter.