



PROLOGUE

draft version 1.2

From the center of all things an energy flows. It arcs up and out like branches of a tree. Currents of energy collide and create a canopy that blankets the whole world. At the trunk the energy roots out, clawing its way to the end of all things. The tree shudders, remembering the great and terrible power that created the energy.

The web of energized currents ripple from the movement. The waves crash back into the tree's trunk, it radiates tiny sparks that charge the air excitedly from its roots to where the water meets the land. Then it dances across the waters, encircling the Near Shore Islands. It swims through the Primer Islands, being captured and harnesses by Master Artisans. The energy conducts and transforms from raw energy to heat, too light, back to raw energy again. This raw energy fizzles and crackles out in the Far Off Shore islands.

And off the Copper coast, passed the Near Shore Islands, on the Primer Island of Clarenby the energy descends on a small port city in the form of bright and warm Sunlight. Heat from the sun's warmth heats the cobbled sand stone road. It blows in and out of open doors and windows beading sweat on foreheads as it passes.

Tall two and three story buildings stand shoulder to shoulder with small alley ways at their base. They crisscross between the buildings and connect major streets. Here in the middle part of the city, shops and official buildings meet to create a market square. The buildings here are painted bright greens, pinks, blues, oranges, yellows, and whites. Flashy wooden signs hang over doors advertising their owner's occupation or its administrative office.

The wind picked up the energy, it was masquerading as a warm breeze. It moved through the Nobel's Gardens bouncing from one nobles' estate to another. Servants worked busily keeping their master's homes well-kept and cool. The roofs

were cleanly swept and shined metallically reflecting the sunlight, reflecting the energy. The warm breeze shuffled across the city into the Copper Way.

In contrast, the homes in the Copper Way were dotted with sea gull nests. Poking out of each roof were smoke stack chimneys. They hadn't been swept and still harbored winters soot, their owners were too busy to clean them. Almost every home here had their upper windows open in hopes of letting the summer heat escape. Ropes stretched between buildings, clothes and sheets hung over them softly swaying in the wind above the streets.

All morning a briny, saltwater aroma had blown in off the ocean breeze. The air had a cleansing property to it, helping to push down the nauseating smell of the Fishery. The energy moved towards the fishery. It sat at the farthest end of the city in the Docks. The warm energy swirled around the Fishery. Birds looking for food drifted up in the breeze.

The Docks also had large warehouses where goods from further inside the island were stored. The energy moved through them electrifying and exciting the people of the docks. There was always something going on at the docks, imports, exports, travel, the occasional fight. It was an exciting place to hang around. Cranes dotted the skyline at the docks. They were used to help load and unload large ships with cargo.

The shouts and commands of men directing workers and crew members could be heard bellowing even before you got down into the Docks. It created an energetic buzz that hung in the air. A metal work forgery was at another end of the docks. It sucked in the energy in the form of heat and used it to craft various metal works. Its smoke stacks constantly puffed out black smoke. The iconic ringing of metal on metal clanged to a steady tempo on that side of the docks.

And that's how they were known, the Forgery side, the Fishery side, and in between was called the Dock side. It was in the Dock side that the energy was finally captured. A large metal sphere was propped up in the middle of a half built wooden ship, joist beams held it in its approximate position. The metal heated from the energy and created an energy of its own.

When this vessel was complete and finally sea worthy the power created by the sphere would allow this ship to sail faster, turn sharper, and travel against the

wind. The sphere had been crafted by Master Artisans and just recently was transferred to the island of Clarenby.

A man stood on the deck of a ship, bobbing up and down just off shore of Clarenby. A slightly tarnished copper spyglass was raised to one of his eyes. He had a thick white scar running down the side of his face. Locking his eyes on the sphere his mouth turned into a roguish smile. Removing the spyglass, he twisted a gear key on the side of the device, it started to tick as it contracted in on its self. It clamped shut and he sat it down on a wooden table beside a map.

A bald man with a thick braided beard stepped to the man. "Orders Captain?" the bald man said.

"Put together a small excursion group. We're goin a' shore." The man, the Captain, pulled out a pen and wrote on the map: *Deldurn*