

Flowers in the Desert

The Legend of the Greenwarden

“The Earth is a living creature and that all who dwell upon and within it children to its great power.” – Shaman Ghen’kun of the Uk’tu’Nath Ogre tribes

In ancient times, before the Coming of Man and the rise of the Kingdom- even before the Harroo and Elves colonized the world the land was wild and untamed and traveled only by the First People- the Orcs and Ogres. In this time of possibility and magic many stories and legends have filtered down through the Tribes to present day of powerful Orc and Ogre Heroes who possessed abilities far surpassing even the most powerful Dragons of today.

One such story, recounted to the children of the Uk’tu’Nath by generations of Shaman and Chieftains, is the legend of the Greenwarden. So powerful the respect and belief in this Hero of old that an entire region of desert has taken his name- formerly the location of his Tribe and, it is said, created by the sorrow of the Earth at his death. To this day the Uk’tu’Nath do not travel more than the farthest Northeast section of this Desert saying that the peace of the dead must remain undisturbed lest the wrath of the Earth befall those who enter.

I have studied the old myths of the Orc tribes for several centuries. Many tales exist, and as far as I can tell, most have stayed relatively the same in content, despite the disparity that typically comes from oral traditions. The myth of the Greenwarden in particular is very interesting because it includes names of places that can be found easily upon further research. This is how I first heard the story, and how I would hear it again to this day, if I was to ask an Orc to tell it.

---Barrister Yatha
Sage’s Guild of Craelant

Earth, protector of her children, mother of The Greenwarden, how do you weep now? Your son who we hold in great admiration, he who lived his life as a battle for the betterment of our proud people, has died. Weep not in sorrow, but in pride. His life, and noble death will be remembered, as an example to all Uk’tu’Nath, no, to all sentient beings. We fight, as he, who had slain the great lich Condringulrat, as he who fought the monstrosity that is Mutero. We gladly give our lives, in glorious battle, in hopes that the world is better from our sacrifice.

The year was that of the fallen elder wood. Battle was as it is now, the way of life. The energy in the air was evident to all. A great hope had spread through our people, the likes of which had not been witness since the formation of Uk’tu’Nath, though at that time, we did not know why. The battles to destroy the foul lich, Candringulrat had grown quiet over the winter months but the smell of spring and thus battle was in the air. As would be expected, the homes of all that could fight were busy with preparation.

Sharpening blades, the crafting of fine armors and even the occasional sound of a spell of defense could be heard among the songs of battle.

The forward scout Prurosh was to make his way from the defensive lines to report the news of an amassing force of undead. The force was of our very brothers that had fought and died nobly the previous fall. The beast Candringulrat had raised them as abominations. The news would indeed spur an outcry of rage, but more important was the organization of a counter force, to push back the horde, and if all went well, Candringulrat himself would finally be slain.

Prurosh rode fast, and nimbly, being the youngest in his family of horse trainers, he was ideal for just this sort of assignment. Since the Ga'Nin'gren had joined with our people our ranks had been bolstered, and many of their most talented, including the family of Prurosh, had taken on additional responsibilities. Prurosh, was as skilled a rider as any that could be mentioned, but when the Earth wants something, the call must be answered. He knew that he would have to duck a branch that had only moments before seemed much further away, but it seemed to come alive, and tore Prurosh from his steed.

What seemed like moments later Prurosh awakened to find that he was unharmed, aside from a slight of embarrassment. Though as he stood he noticed that he was far from the road he was taking. He could see the clearing in the distance, but no fall could have taken him this far. As Prurosh further studied his surroundings, he noticed quickly, that he was very near a small cave, and may have been worried that a bear might had drug him this far, if not for the faint cry of a young one. All semblance of fear left Prurosh as the cry became louder. He rushed into the cave, with his great sword drawn. The sight of the newborn Orc stopped him in his tracks. The boy seemed to be one with the earth. Prurosh could not tell where the boy ended and the earth began. Vines and moss blanketed him, yet he seemed quite comfortable.

Prurosh was never one to neglect his duty, but the child would need cared for in the meantime. He decided that his parents could be located at a later time, that is if they had not been taken by the undead, and that thought shook Prurosh more than any he had known for some time. Somehow Prurosh already knew that the boy was the son of the earth herself. This child was a gift to his people, one who must be cared for, and taught the way of his people, the way of the warrior.

As Prurosh reached the road he noticed strange tracks, where none were before. The trail could only be that of a patrol of undead. If he had not been for his fall, he would likely be dead, and worse, his fellow tribesmen in Hadhilca would never know of the impending attack. Prurosh thanked the Earth, and hurried along the road toward Hadhilca. He encountered no undead along the path, either with the help of the earth, or by his own careful movements.

As he reached Hadhilca, Prurosh was assaulted by warm greetings, from friends, and by even more curious stares. He knew well not to answer any of the numerous questions from his fellow Orcs, least word not get out of him being insane. He made his way to his home, where he was greeted warmly by his wife Kuicul. After explaining why he carried a newborn baby, Prurosh, and Kuicul decided that they would raise the boy as their own. Only moments later, Prurosh continued on to the elder's hall, to relay the horrible news. In times of war, no happiness can last long, before being overtaken by the grim reality that is war.

The Greenwarden grew up fast, as is normal in the young of Orcs. At the age of four he could swing a sword as well as any sword master in the tribe. Unlike the others however, the Greenwarden exhibited strange powers over the land and its animals. The landscape seemed to change to his advantage in armed combat, and animals served as his scouts in the forest. Many a battle was won against the foul undead horde because of the prowess of Greenwarden. Soon Greenwarden commanded his own group of hardened Orc warriors. So loyal were they to Greenwarden, it is said they would follow him even into death.

It was the year of celebrations. Greenwarden led his group in the largest battle of the war against Candringulrat. Many of his fellow officers fell in battle, and Greenwarden was left to command the army alone. So great was his leadership and prowess in battle, the horde of undead was pushed back to the tower of Candringulrat. As the last of the horde was defeated, and the dead Orc soldiers were removed from the battlefield, Greenwarden led his small group of warriors into the heart of Candringulrat's tower. Many horrors they faced, and defeated there, powerful undead monsters, which wielded the very chaos that created them and sinister vampires that simply refused to die. Greenwarden and his warriors defeated them, and pushed on to Candringulrat's very chamber, where they saw him for the first time. His skeletal figure seemed frail, and weak, but he commanded magics, that were terrible, and powerful, but more powerful was the magic of the earth, which Greenwarden wielded as a finely crafted sword. He countered the magic of Candringulrat, and cut him down with a single cut, of his deadly blade. For his victory, and because of his astonishing leadership skills, Greenwarden was awarded the title of chieftain, of his tribe. He led his fellow Orcs, with respect, and honor, for many years. The tribe grew prosperous, and many great artworks, and magics were created in his honor.

The Greenwarden, used his great power to move the river Ightok making it flow close to the village. The farmers used the river well, so that food, and water were plentiful, and no Orc lived without. The Orcs loved their great chieftain, and he was a kind and generous leader. He would turn none away, neither when they sought his training, or a home the village itself.

With such prosperity, however, the eyes of those that would take what Greenwarden had created grew jealous. Many threats were repelled in the following years. Undead threats, small in comparison to Candringulrat, but unforgivable all the same, attacked the tribe. Soon even the eyes of a jealous dragon named Mutero, looked to the Uk'tu'Nath, as a way of increasing his horde.

He came disguised as one of our own. He wielded the power of the earth in a way that even our most powerful scholars could not. He could do things that only the Greenwarden himself was able to. Mutero said that he had come from far away to join our great tribe, so that together we could forge a greater prosperity for Orc kind. The Greenwarden distrusted Mutero, but for the betterment of his people, he let Mutero become one of the Uk'tu'Nath. For many years our people suffered greatly. The great magics that were created, were lost and many of our great warriors, and artisans disappeared, and were never heard from again. Mutero did nothing for the tribe. He stayed in his extravagant home, and simply reaped the benefits of our tribe, while making no contribution. One night Mutero had been seen taking a great artifact from the home of the head shaman. The shaman had been preparing the artifact for several years, and had

just completed it the previous day. The Greenwarden had, had enough. He confronted Mutero, who simply laughed, and called Greenwarden a fool. He ordered the great Greenwarden to leave his home, and to follow his orders from this day forward. Greenwarden drew his blade, and challenged Mutero to take his title of chief, if he thought he deserved it.

Mutero called upon the chaos in an attempt to strike down Greenwarden, but it was expected, and Greenwarden countered the assault with one of his own, while quickly moving closer to Mutero. Greenwarden closed the gap between in but a few heartbeats, and readied his blade to end the menace's life; however before the blade struck true a gigantic black dragon stood where Mutero once was, and the beast had Greenwarden nimbly backpedaling away from it's horrid breath for an instant, but after that moment of surprise, the Greenwarden was ready for the second assault which he dodged by rolling to the side, cleanly avoiding it. The beast became annoyed, and attempted to claw, and bite Greenwarden fiercely. The great chieftain parried the blows, and answered them with attacks of his own. Mutero howled in protest.

The sounds of battle had awakened the townsfolk. Most of the Orcs in the village made their way to the burning ruins that were once the home of Mutero. The sight of the dragon caused many to consider fleeing, but the voice of their beloved chieftain moved their hearts to battle. All who could fight, and many who could not, charged forward to the dragon, causing the monster to take to the sky.

Mutero swept in low, and used his breath to burn the townsfolk who had come against him. Greenwarden cried out and leaped atop the dragon before it could take to the air once more. The town was burning beneath the as Greenwarden, and Mutero battled high in the night sky, they were a blur of sword, magic, claws, and teeth. The night was bright with the fires of burning buildings, and the remaining Orcs could see their chieftain trading vicious blows with the beast. Powerful and hideous spells of chaos were countered by those of the earth, the Greenwarden wielded, but those that missed fell to the village, and many Orcs felt the pain of chaos biting into their bodies. Shamans rushed to the fallen in an attempt to help, and many were saved, but the chaos, and terrible dragon magic continued to fall.

Greenwarden felt the suffering of his people, and abandoning his own defense, he lunged forth in rage to the neck of the monster. His blade surged with powerful magic, which is said to tear the very soul from those who would do the earth harm. It is the great sadness of our people that before the Greenwarden's blade severed the head of Mutero, and the magic from the attack sundered the beast's very soul, the horrid dragon magic that the beast was forming bit into the great chieftain. Greenwarden, and mutero fell to the earth in a tangled heap.

The most powerful shamans were not able to raise Greenwarden, and the pain of this great loss, will be felt by all Uk'tu'Nath as long as our great tribe continues to live in this land. The earth itself felt the loss of her son in such a way, that the forest of Hadhilca, the home of our tribe soon lost all fertility, and fell into a desert wasteland.