Introduction Stories: Adventures of the Golden Hand

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This is one of a collection of short stories that are used in the introduction of the main book to help describe the scope of what can be done in Land of Karn: Fantasy Role-Playing Game. They were not designed as whole stories, but snippets to be used as examples of different kinds of styles and themes you can include in your games using the LoK rules.

Adventures of the Golden Hand
They call themselves "The Golden Hand Clan" and each of them represents one of the fingers of that hand. They have been traveling and working together for seven years now, making a meager living off the goods they have found and plundered through adventuring and treasure hunting.

This day has seen them searching the ruins of an ancient Armon fort they discovered in the eastern woodland of the Twinwood Forest. While Marcus, the leader of the clan, and two others, Teven and Kogan, searched the upper levels of the ruins Aloen, an open Shifter, and his Gnomish friend Tmik sat in the lower level resting and talking.

"I don't think they are going to find anything here." Tmik says as he pokes around in the rubble around him. "This place has been picked through and cleaned out of any useful items thousands of years ago. Now it's just a pile of rubble so we have no reason to stay here any longer."

"Don't judge the place so quickly my friend." Aloen calmly says, not even opening his eyes. "There is more here than can be seen on the surface. Let me have some silence so I can concentrate, it is time to do a reading. I have rested enough." On that he rises and walks over to a wooden plank leaning against the wall, placing his hands upon it.

The small one also rises and says, "I'll go find the others while you play your little mind games." Before Aloen can reply the Gnome is gone up the stairs.

The psychic concentrates and its mind starts to search out the past of this place, looking for its secrets. Its mind fills with images of this place from long ago, but they are jumbled and unclear. Out of this mental mess comes one image of interest and possible use.

The others returned to find Aloen clearing some debris away from the corner of the room. He motions for them to help and without a word or hesitation they do. It's only after a few minutes of digging and moving that Teven ask "So what is it we are looking for under here?"

As if it was almost on cue Aloen pulled up on a small wooden beam and a large trap door started to open in the floor. Without breaking a smile Aloen says "This, my impatient friend. It's an old escape tunnel."

"Let's go." Shouts Marcus as he unsheathes his sword, "We got some treasure to find." His gladiator bravado is suddenly halted when he reaches the bottom of the stairs and finds himself face first with

a large iron door, sealed with an even larger lock. He shakes his head in embarrassment, turns back to face the others, and in a much more tempered voice says, "Teven, I think this is your show."

Teven, a tall Frenal with pale blue hair, passes the muscular human with a quick glancing smirk on his face. He kneels in front of the door and pulls out a small leather case. Quietly to only himself he says "This looks like a job for the number four." He slides couple metal bars from the case and into the lock. Within seconds there is an audible click and the door swings open before him.

Standing up the mechanic looks over at the Human, motioning back through the door with his hand, and says, "It's all yours chief."

Marcus rolls his eyes, grips the hilt of his sword again, and pushes through the door. Aloen lights his lantern using a cantrip he picked some years ago and follows. The others file in behind him, with Teven taking up the rear.

They make their way along the darkened tunnel as it leads strait away from the ruins through the cold hard ground. After a good seventy feet the cut tunnel turns slightly to the left, but there is rubble all over the ground where a smaller opening in the wall ahead of them. This hole appears to have been poorly dug or chewed open by some creature, most likely a Rock Muncher ages ago. Aloen holds his lantern up to the hole and Marcus looks through, still holding his sword ahead of him. A slight breeze causes the flame to flicker and caresses his face.

"There is something in there." Aloen says without emotion, and in an almost cold and distant voice. "Something alive and it knows we are here."

"Then let me at it." Interjects the gray bearded Dwarf gruffly.

"Kogan is right," says Marcus, "And he should go first since it's such a small tunnel and he can see better than us." On that he steps aside and allows the Dwarf to pass. Kogan Steelblade quickly marches in, axe in hand, and is followed by the others.

Tmik, the little Gnome, suddenly stops and tugs on Aloen's arm, bringing down the lantern in his hand a bit. He touches the wall, feeling something on it for a second, and says "Umm... Guys..." in a very timid voice. "We got ourselves a Cave Spirit here." He then peels some fine webbing off the wall and shows the white cotton-like material to the others.

"Crap!" grunts Teven, "I hate Feather Spiders. Can we get out of here?"

The answer is never forthcoming for a spray of poison hits Kogan on the side of the head. He lets out a yell and spins to swing at his assailant. About ten feet in front of him and quickly moving away he sees the white ball of the Cave Spirit and its numerous feather like legs shifting elegantly.

"Kogan," shouts Tmik, "Let me see your face. I can stop the poison before it..."

He never gets to finish his sentence for the Dwarf interrupts with "Not until it's dead friend." He then quickly moves farther into the caves with Marcus and Aloen close behind. All of them heading the same direction as the spider.

Teven takes a step back and says, in a rather weak and cracked voice, "I'll… Umm… Wait here

and… Uh… protect Tmik." Then under his breath he whispers, "We may need his healing later." The others disappear farther into the cave until only the sounds of a distant battle can be heard.