



HUNTERS ON THE HUNT

SIDE QUEST

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Based on CHALDEA by

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INT. THE LODGE - HUNTING HALL - DAY

An eclectic assortment of hunters mill around the Hunting Hall, excitement for the coming tournament palpable.

The SOMARRIAN HUNT has drawn a great number of diverse peoples from all walks of life across Chaldea, seeking adventure and profit.

A VOICE BOOMS, cutting the chatter.

	WILHELM (O.S.)	
1	HUNTERS, LISTEN UP!	1

People turn to the voice, coming from--

STAGE ON THE FAR END OF THE HALL -- a dozen or so HUNT REFEREES dressed in identical black & silver robes face the room, like clergy performing an ominous ritual.

WILHELM, (Human male), Pentavalo demonologist, his facial features remain hidden behind a cowl.

	WILHELM (CONT'D)	
2	Thank you for coming. The hunt will begin momentarily. But, before we begin, Hajra has a few announcements.	2

He steps aside, giving the floor to **HAJRA**, (human female), a bold combination of striking good-looks and cool swagger.

	HAJRA	
3	We can always count on the Week of Death to pull in the psychopaths.	3

The crowd erupts with bloodthirsty cheers.

	MAD MOON (O.S.)	
4	Give us the sighting report, Hajra.	4

A smattering of jests and inside jokes rise from the hunters.

	HAJRA	
5	Okay-okay. I got it right here. (reads from a book)	5

6	The Tinder Box continues to erupt, so there's lots of hot action there. We've lost a number of parties lately in the Dbu Wold. The risk reward there remains high. Vampire infections are on the rise.	6
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She stops amid boos and hisses.

7 HAJRA (CONT'D) 7
 That's more of a health service
 announcement.
 (continues reading)
 8 Orc raiding parties are ranging 8
 from Kor-goor. Get your orcs while
 they're hot.
 (reading the boring parts)
 9 And, the rest is just common carp. 9

She steps aside.

10 WILHELM 10
 Your referees will review the
 rules, for all you idiots who think
 you can game the system.

The crowd gets antsy.

11 HAJRA 11
 Hey, HEY! We also have a guest
 from Hesse today, a reporter doing
 a story on The Hunt. If you talk
 to her, be polite, huh, she's
 giving us valuable publicity.
 (suddenly remembers)
 12 Oh yeah, one more thing, we put an 12
 orange flag on Gary. Stop hunting
Gary!

Wilhelm steps forward.

13 WILHELM 13
 The rules are simple.

14 HAJRA 14
 If it bleeds or cannot bleed--

15 EVERYONE 15
 KILL IT!

16 HAJRA 16
 If it is alive or undead--

17 EVERYONE 17
 KILL IT!

18 HAJRA 18
 If it is organic or inorganic--

19 EVERYONE 19
 KILL IT!

20 HAJRA
If it is good or evil-- 20

21 EVERYONE
KILL IT! 21

22 HAJRA
If its feral or domestic-- 22

23 EVERYONE
KILL IT! 23

24 HAJRA
If it walks or if it talks-- 24

25 EVERYONE
KILL IT! 25

26 HAJRA
If you cannot kill it, capture it
for double points. 26

The crowd goes wild, blood-thirsty for action.

27 HAJRA (CONT'D)
Good hunting! 27

The hunters surge to the exits, emptying out onto--

EXT. ASSEMBLY AREA - DAY

Beyond the Hunting Lodge, carved HITCHING POSTS rise up like tombstones on a vast traffic beaten sunbaked savannah.

The crush of eager hunters head to their assigned posts.

A PALADIN, **DAME MARGARET DEGOLIA**, impeccably dressed in pristine heavy armor, looks up from a parchment, surveys the assembly area.

She turns to her three companions--

28 MARGARET
We're the squirrels. 28

HADLEY HILLTOPPLE, (a halving bard), **KELLY JALEO**, (human sorceress) and **SAKDROUR**, (dwarven barbarian), marvel at the volume of noise coming from the assembly area.

Against the backdrop of mud and battle-scarred hunters, these greenhorns (by the clean-cut look of their unused attire), stick out like angels at a hell rave.

29 HADLEY
Someone is supposed to give us
rules for this contest? 29

30 MARGARET
Bartholomew said, "*Know the rules
well, so you can break them
effectively.*" 30

31 SAKDROUR
You heard 'em. KILL IT! 31

A pack of yapping bloodhounds run over their position,
followed by a troop of mangy mountain folk, cursing, "damn
greenhorns", "Move aside, scobberlotcher!".

32 KELLY
I wanna know where we get dogs? 32

Most of the totems are occupied by mountains of gear and pack
animals laden with weapons, traps, and provisions, making
finding the unoccupied SQUIRREL TOTEM easy to spot.

AT THE SQUIRREL TOTEM

33 HADLEY
Are all the other totem's cool
predators, and then, there's a
squirrel? 33

34 SAKDROUR
Marn flying squirrels hunt
children. Just saying. 34

CLOSE ON MARGARET, mesmerized taking in the wonder of it all:

- HALFLINGS ON BEES fly in formation overhead;
- BARBARIANS ON ELEPHANTS trumpet and shake the world;
- GNOMES ON VELOCIRAPTORS race by in leaps and bounds;
- KNIGHTS ON CHARGERS parade past, each saluting the paladin.

35 MARGARET
It's more magical than I ever
dreamed possible. 35

Kelly considers their meager possessions.

36 KELLY
Why do I suddenly feel, ill-
prepared? 36

A SHARP DELIGHTFUL LAUGH draws their attention to--

A NOBLE LADY, poised and elegant in high-fashion, slowly approaches as she writes thoughtfully in a journal.

37 KELLY (CONT'D) 37
 Are there always this many people
 and animals?

The human woman, **PATRIZIA "POPPY" GATTO**, her eyes, they sparkle like diamonds. Her mouth a grinning delight--

38 POPPY 38
 Oh, hi. What's your name?

39 KELLY 39
 Kelly. Kelly Jaleo, from Andalus.

40 POPPY 40
 Nice to meet you Kelly, I'm Poppy.

41 KELLY 41
 We haven't been given our
 designated, hunting pets yet.

42 POPPY 42
 I don't know anything about, pets.
 I'm a journalist from the Kordavan
 Informant newspaper. I'm working
 on an article on Gravers Dig and
 the Somarrian Hunt. Do you mind if
 I ask you a few questions?

Curious, the others gather around as she jots notes.

43 KELLY 43
 I know what you're thinking.

44 POPPY 44
 Oh?

45 KELLY 45
 I'm a mother, have children with
 responsibilities at home. You
 think I'm out of touch and boring.
 I can assure you, I'm the cool, fun
 mom. Feel free to smoke and drink
 around me. Go wild! If you want
 to be naughty--

46 (winks)
 I won't peek. 46

Poppy stares stupefied... before turning her attention to--

47 POPPY 47
Aaaaannnd.... you are?

48 SAKDROUR 48
I'm Sak. When are we getting our
dogs?

49 POPPY 49
The Somarrrian hunt doesn't supply
dogs or anything. It's B.Y.O.B.

50 SAKDROUR 50
We're supposed to bring our own
dogs? This is the first I'm
hearing this.

51 HADLEY 51
We don't need dogs. Look around--
(re: Hunting parties)
52 we just follow them and their dogs. 52

Everyone nods and grunts their general approval of the plan.

53 POPPY 53
My article focuses on new arrivals
and first time hunt participants.
What possessed you to leave your
homes and travel to Somarria?

54 HADLEY 54
I need the money. I have two
children and a husband who couldn't
find a job if it fell out of the
sky and hit him in the head.

Poppy's pen rolls from bummer to summer delight.

55 POPPY 55
And you are, milady?

56 MARGARET 56
Dame Margaret Degolia. I've always
had a lifelong dream to follow in
the footsteps of the venerable
Sanctus Bartholomew, the founder of
my order.

57 (claps hands & taps feet)
This is my first time adventuring 57
with the common folk. I'm so
excited.

58 POPPY 58
Ah-huh. Have you ever walked in
nature before?

59 MARGARET
NO! This is the first time. 59
 Nothing becomes real till it is
 experienced.

60 POPPY
 Hon, you are in the right place. 60
 (to Sakdrour)
 61 You're clanless? Do you mind 61
 speaking on how you became exiled?

62 SAKDROUR
 I ain't'a shamed, ma'am. The fault 62
 lies with love.

63 POPPY
 Love? Oh, that's precious. 63
 Readers love a good heartbreaking-
 romance. Tell me more.

64 SAKDROUR
 She was an outcast before me. 64
 Giving her my heart, lost me my
 family, my clan. And then, I lost
 her too, to the sea. She never
 returned. I hope to raise funds
 enough to launch a search.

Wilhelm, (the Pentavalo hunt referee) flies overhead and
 hovers over the squirrel post.

65 WILHELM
 Listen up, I'm only going to say 65
 this once. I'm here to observe and
 collect your trophies. Otherwise,
 I don't get involved, so don't ask.

66 POPPY
 Good hunting. 66

Poppy exits the scene in search of other interesting tales.

67 SAKDROUR
 (shouts to Poppy)
 Her name is Javelin--should you 67
 come across her.

Wilhelm descends.

68 WILHELM
 You're Halley's Whores? Horrors? 68

WILHELM

80 Its been known to happen. Listen, 80
 you've entered the most prestigious
 hunting tournament, on the most
 dangerous continent in the world.
 There are more horrors out there
 than you can possibly imagine. If
 they don't kill you, the
 unforgiving environment will.

A HORN BLASTS LOUD, a sign the hunt has begun.

THE WORLD THUNDERS as veteran hunting parties blow bugles
 amid whoop and holler; dogs bark; elephants trumpet.

In every direction hunters cavalry charge into the wilds.

WHEN THE DUST SETTLES

MARGARET

81 That was awesome. 81

SAKDROUR

82 Are we still following the dogs? 82

All they can see is tiny dust clouds on the horizon.

KELLY

83 Damn it, I think we lost them. 83

HADLEY

84 Maybe we should have purchased 84
 horses.

MARGARET

85 I remember from the tales of 85
 Bartholomew, "Hunters on the Hunt",
 he went on foot and did not require
 a horse.

FADE TO BLACK:

SUPER: SOMARRIAN HUNT: DAY 1

INT. SOMARRIAN HINTERLANDS - MIDDAY

Sun looms directly overhead like a relentless taskmaster,
 it's insufferable heat a whip on the backs of anyone foolish
 enough to travel Somarria unprotected.

Fool #1 staggers slowly to a stop and looks about--

The hunting grounds are nothing but sun scorched dirt, course grasslands and scattered trees in all directions.

	HADLEY	
86	I always pictured Somarria with cool evergreen trees. You know, the classic dark forest?	86

Fool #2 peers up at the cloudless sky and wipes his brow.

	SAKDROUR	
87	My legs are too short for this.	87

	KELLY	
88	Keep your chins up, turn that frown upside down.	88

	(studies hoof tracks)	
89	These tracks are still fresh.	89

Wilhelm floats gentle along behind the hunters, like a balloon pulled by a child.

	MARGARET	
90	Is he awake?	90

ANGLE ON: Hunters as they press deeper into the hunting grounds

SOON however, Sun becomes bored with the do-nothing hunters and moves along taking the day with him.

WITH MOON COMES NIGHT and the DEATH constellation.

WIDE ON: The HOARIES collapse under an isolated ACACIA TREE. Sakdrour and Kelly sleep where they drop, while Margaret hums a soft hymn while cleaning her sword.

Wilhelm floats nearby. Eyes closed, arms crossed. Is he sleeping? Meditating? Bored out of his skull?

Hadley fidgets, something weighing on their mind--

	HADLEY	
91	Wilhelm. Yoo-hoo, Wilhelm.	91

The referee's eyes slowly ratchet open.

	WILHELM	
92	What?	92

	HADLEY	
93	Wasn't something supposed to happen today?	93

94	WILHELM	94
	Like, what?	
95	HADLEY	95
	You know, thrills, spills, chills?	
	The eyes ratchet closed.	
96	WILHELM	96
	You are much too close to Gravers Dig to find anything of significance.	
	FADE TO BLACK:	
	SUPER: SOMARRIAN HUNT: DAY 2	
	SUN "THE SCHOOL YARD BULLY" IS BACK AND POURING ON THE HEAT	
	The four hunters, stiff from sleeping on hard dirt, grouse their discomfort as they stow their gear.	
97	SAKDROUR	97
	It's barely sun up and it's already a bloody inferno.	
98	MARGARET	98
	Bartholomew says, " <i>No matter how far afield we are, we all exist under the same blessed sun.</i> "	
99	SAKDROUR	99
	Whatever. Which way?	
100	HADLEY	100
	Hold on. Wilhelm, help us out.	
	Wilhelm stares disinterested, like a wart on the sky.	
101	HADLEY (CONT'D)	101
	Which way to the action?	
102	WILHELM	102
	It's there. You just need to look.	
103	SAKDROUR	103
	You know where?	
104	KELLY	104
	Tell us, we'll make it worth your while.	

105 WILHELM 105
 You do not have enough *anything* to
 bribe me, but I will give you this
 one hint.

They gather around. A hint at this point is like a Yuletide
 Feast to a starving vagrant.

106 WILHELM (CONT'D) 106
 You will find the prey you seek...
 (he studies each in turn)
 107 further away from the lodge. 107

108 HADLEY 108
 Huh? What kind of hint is that?

109 KELLY 109
 Who is your boss? Your Pentavalo
 Headtavalo? I'm gonna report you
 for dereliction of duty.

110 WILHELM 110
 Xune. You can write him, in care
 of the senate in Saratof.

Wilhelm rises on hot thermals.

EXT. NORTH WALL OF SAKSUNAR VORTEX - DAY

HIGH AERIAL: The FOUR HUNTERS walk along the edge of an
 escarpment over a sand lake hundreds of feet below.

EXT. SAND PLAINS - DAY

CLOSE ON: SUN BLEACHED BONES visible in the shifting sand. A
 FOOT suddenly kicks it spinning. Sakdrour looks back.

111 SAKDROUR 111
 Everything is dead in this land.

112 MARGARET 112
 Perhaps following the path of other
 hunters is not a winning formula
 for finding new prey.

113 HADLEY 113
 Interesting notion.

114 MARGARET 114
 Bartholomew says, "Find your own
 path."

125 MARGARET Even Bartholomew fell to despair, 125
 realizing that success didn't
 always align with his chosen path.

Sakdrour grunts painfully.

126 KELLY Who is this Bartholomew you keep 126
 talking about?

127 MARGARET The leader of my order. The 127
 greatest disciple of the Tuatha de
 Dannan. I have all his books.

Sakdrour points to the left.

128 SAKDROUR See them trees, lets stay there for 128
 the night. We can reverse course
 in the morning.

129 HADLEY Maybe we can murder a squirrel. 129

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - NIGHT

The four hunters sleep quietly under a brilliant stellar
 novella. High spirited Anumians act out a melodrama.

Suddenly, a DARK FORM stumbles into camp and collapses with a
 clatter unconscious.

EVERYONE BOLTS AWAKE, scrambling to the side of--

An INJURED NIKKEI WOMAN, in prominent samurai garb.

130 HADLEY She's lost a lot of blood. 130

Sakdrour picks up an ORANGE FLAG

131 SAKDROUR Hunters. Are we allowed to 131
 interfere?

Kelly impulsively responds with a HEALING HAND.

The woman's body spasms. She takes in a sharp breath.

132 KELLY Sweetie. Sweetie. You okay? 132

The woman scrambles into a sitting position. Momentarily disorientated, she blinks trying to gain her bearings.

133 MARGARET Thank Bartholomew. 133

134 KELLY How are you feeling? 134

She snatches her sword, clutching it to her chest.

135 KELLY (CONT'D) I'm Kelly. And these are my friends. Don't worry, we won't hurt you. 135

136 MARGARET What's your name? 136

Margaret offers water. The injured woman gulps it back before answering.

137 RIN Rin. 137

138 SAKDROUR What happened to ya, Rin? 138

139 RIN Orcs. 139

140 SAKDROUR Orcs? Here? How far away? 140

141 RIN At our camp. They came at us, as we slept. They were everywhere. So many. I killed at least [five]. 141

142 HADLEY Where are your friends? 142

143 RIN Dead. I don't know. 143

Rin tries to stand but her wobbly legs refuse to work and she collapses, exhausted.

144 KELLY She's in shock. We should let her sleep. 144

Kelly puts a bedroll under her head and a blanket over her.

145 HADLEY 145
 Shall we hunt these orcs. If its
 true and the other samurai are
 dead. We can take their kills,
 right?

146 MARGARET 146
 To see evil and not vanquish it,
 makes goodness meaningless.

147 SAKDROUR 147
 We'll have better luck in the
 morning. Orcs are nocturnal.

Sakdrour returns to his bedroll.

148 HADLEY 148
 If it's all the same, I'm gonna
 stay up for a while, keep an eye on
 things.

EXT. SOMARRIAN WIDE VISTA - MORNING

Sun stretches and yawns, waking to a new day as we hear
 cheerful relaxing morning music.

Song birds chirp gaily as they dance and frolic in the trees.

SUPER: Somarrian Hunt: Day 4

EXT. JUNGLE GLADE - MORNING

A HAND: jostles a sleeping Sakdrour.

149 SAKDROUR 149
 Whaddya want?

150 HADLEY 150
 (points up)
 I think something's up.

The dwarf rolls over and gazes UP--

WILHELM and HAJRA float above, conversing in hushed voices.

151 SAKDROUR 151
 What's she doing here?

152 RIN (O.S.) 152
 She's my referee. Must mean all my
 friends are dead.

EVERYONE RISES, ready for action. A few hours rest and Kelly's medicinal touch has Rin on the mend.

SAKDROUR

(to Rin)

153 You coming back with us to the lodge? 153

MARGARET

(to everyone)

154 We can not in good conscious allow this atrocity to stand. 154

RIN

155 The orcs have my bow. I can not return home without it. You can come with me, but I'm going. 155

SAKDROUR

156 Kill orcs? What was I thinking. Hell yeah, let's kill 'em all. 156

The barbarian and samurai vigorously shake hands.

HAJRA (O.S.)

157 Do you all consent to this merge? 157

Hajra and Wilhelm land amongst the hunters.

HADLEY

158 If we get their points, definitely. 158

Everyone nods affirmative--"Yes", "Aye!"

HAJRA

159 Rin? 159

RIN

160 I will do what I must. 160

Hajra winks at Wilhelm.

HAJRA

161 Good luck, buddy. I'll see you later. 161

WILHELM

162 Where you going? C'mon on, don't leave me here. Hajra? 162

(holds up fist)

163 Rock. Paper. Scissors?? 163

Hajra laughs and they face off, duelists at the ready--

179 POPPY 179
You witnessed the battle?

180 WILHELM (O.S.) 180
Yes, ma'am. I was the designated
referee on hand. Very little
escapes my attention.

Wilhelm sits across from the K.I. reporter, arms and face
hidden within the folds of his black and silver robes.

181 POPPY 181
Recreate the scene for me, if you
would.

182 WILHELM 182
The hunters were searching for an
orc raiding party when they
accidentally fell into a cavern.
It all happened rather quickly.

183 POPPY 183
Did you follow?

184 WILHELM 184
I did. I take my duties seriously.
I would follow them into hell, if
that was required.

185 POPPY 185
Did you aid them?

186 WILHELM 186
No ma'am, I'm strictly forbidden
from intervening in the hunt.

187 POPPY 187
I see. Go on.

188 WILHELM 188
That part of the world is riddled
with treacherous sinkholes.
They're almost entirely pitch dark.
Except for a little bit of ambient
light from the ceiling.

189 POPPY 189
Orcs do love darkness.

190 WILHELM 190
Yes ma'am, they have keen night
vision and fester in dark holes.

191 POPPY I imagine the hunters were at a 191
disadvantage?

192 WILHELM Yes, ma'am. Entirely. Disoriented 192
in the dark, floundering in their
heavy gear.

193 POPPY Floundering? You mean water? 193

194 WILHELM Yes, ma'am. Cenotes are deep pits 194
filled with ground water.
Subterranean rivers link them.
It's a perfect habitat for orcs.
The hunters fell into the deep end.

195 POPPY It was a trap then? The orcs were 195
waiting for them?

196 WILHELM I don't know what the orcs were 196
doing. There was a lot of yelling
and screaming going on as the
hunters fell. Any kind of quiet
tactical advantage was not an
option.

197 POPPY And you didn't help them? 197

198 WILHELM No, like I said, that's not my 198
function. By the time I flew down
into the cave, Hadley had swam to
the shore and was facing multiple
opponents. Kelly was on the other
side of the lake. I knew this
because I could see flames and
light from spell fire.

199 POPPY Sakdrour? 199

200 WILHELM The orcs had a mounted arbalest. 200
Almost immediately the hunters took
fire. It was actually probably not
the best use of four orcs time.

(MORE)

WILHELM (CONT'D)

It would have been more efficient if they would have engaged the hunters directly in the water. O' well. Stupid orcs. They do love their contraptions.

POPPY

201 So the... 201
 (reviews notes)
 202 arbalest didn't work? 202

WILHELM

203 Oh, no. It worked. Sakdrour was 203
 harpooned fatally in the head. Or,
 it would have been fatal if I
 hadn't come to the rescue.

POPPY

204 You saved his life? 204

WILHELM

205 I am kind and generous referee. 205

Poppy sips wine while reviewing her notes.

POPPY

206 The hunters were in the dark, 206
 floundering in a lake, surrounded
 by enemies in superior numbers and
 taking fire from a mounted
 arbalest.

WILHELM

207 Yes, ma'am. That about sums it up. 207

POPPY

208 Where was Dame Margaret? 208

WILHELM

209 Bottom of the lake. In full armor. 209
 Psst. Yeah. Playing submariner.

POPPY

210 Did she drown? 210

Wilhelm laughs.

WILHELM

211 Anyone else, yeah probably, but not 211
 Dame Margaret. Bartholomew blessed
 her with many talents including
 under water walking.

(MORE)

WILHELM (CONT'D)

It was a terrible shock to the orcs, imagine if you will, a paladin in full armor striding out of the water like a boss.

POPPY

212 What then? 212

WILHELM

213 It still wasn't good. First Sakdrour and then Hadley went down. Kelly kept blasting away with spells. Margaret managed to secure the beachhead. But with each death, the remaining orcs hatred intensified. They likely would have prevailed if not for a secret advantage. 213

POPPY

214 The samurai warrior? 214

WILHELM

215 Yes, Rin. Once she joined the fray, samurai and paladin back-to-back, Kelly healing. The rout was on. The orcs didn't stand a chance. 215

POPPY

216 And the happy hunters returned to the lodge with their trophies. 216

WILHELM

217 They returned with much more than that. 217

INT. SAGRADO ZONIA CENOTE - DAY

Sakdrour, Margaret, Hadley and Kelly gather quietly, as Rin gently retrieves her Yumi, (a samurai bow).

She holds the bow reverently to her forehead and bows in prayer.

RIN

218 My honor is restored. 218

She stands and bows.

219

RIN (CONT'D)
You have honored my family. Honor
may not win power, but it wins
respect. Arigato gozaimasu!

219