



OH GOTARRA, ETERNAL SPIRIT,
GUARDIAN OF ALL THINGS BORN UNTO
THIS LAND-- BEHOLD! WE HAVE CAP-
TURED ANOTHER DEMON-SPAWN OF
THE EVIL ONES!

ACCEPT HIS BLOOD IN SACRIFICE,
MIGHTY GOTARRA! WE AVENGE
THE CORRUPTION OF OUR LAND!

TAUT-SKINNED DRUMS
THROB WITH RISING
INTENSITY... ROARING
FLAMES CHALLENGE
THE ANGRY TINTS OF
THE EVENING SKY AS
THE SPIRIT-MAN'S
SAVAGE CHANT
CONTINUES...

FIRE AND FLIGHT

PART I

~WRITTEN BY~
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~ART BY WENDY PINI~

HIS WORDS RECALL A DISTANT
TIME WHEN THIS NAMELESS
WORLD FIRST KNEW THE
FOOTFALL OF MAN--



ON A DOOM-FILLED DAY, AMID THE FURY OF A STORM MORE AWESOME THAN ANY MAN HAD EVER WITNESSED, THE NATURAL ORDER OF THINGS WAS SUDDENLY SHATTERED BY FORCES SUPERNATURAL AND UNKNOWNABLE!!



TERRIFIED, THE BEAST MEN WATCHED AS THE IMMENSE STRUCTURE SETTLED ROUGHLY TO THE GROUND!



TALL SPIRES FORMED AN ALIEN OUTLINE AGAINST THE PRIMORDIAL SKY.

AS THE GREAT HOLE IN THE HEAVENS CLOSED FOREVER--



--THE PRIMITIVE HUMANS UNDERSTOOD SOMEHOW THAT THEIR DOMINION WAS NOW THREATENED.

FOR FROM WITHIN THE MYSTERIOUS "MOUNTAIN THING" CAME THE SOUND OF --



--VOICES!



VOICES RAISED IN FEAR!



FEAR HAS ALWAYS HAD MANY FACES...

BUT IN THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN
CULTIVATION AND BESTIALITY--



--FEAR GAVE DESPERATE STRENGTH TO
THE BESTIAL!



TO THEIR DISMAY, THE INNOCENT ELFIN STRANGERS DISCOVERED THAT THEIR
MAGIC POWERS FLOWED WEAKLY THRU THE AETHER OF THAT SAVAGE WORLD...



THE REASON FOR THEIR COMING
DIED, UNSPOKEN, WITH THE MANY
WHO WERE SLAUGHTERED--



--AND REMAINED LOCKED WITHIN
THE POUNDING HEARTS OF THE FEW
WHO ESCAPED INTO THE WOODS,
SCATTERING FAR FROM THEIR
PALACE HOME--



SO IT BEGAN. AND SO THE **HUNT** WENT ON... DOWN THRU COUNTLESS GENERATIONS—
MAN AGAINST SURVIVING ELVES.

ON AND ON,
AN UNDYING
ENMITY,
FROM THAT FIRST,
FATEFUL DAY
UNTIL--

NOW.

**KILL THE
DEMON!
KILL THE
DEMON!!**

UNTOLD MOONS
AGO THE **EVIL ONES**
INVADED OUR LAND,
TWISTING THE
SHAPE OF THINGS
WITH THEIR **FOUL
MAGIC!**



HEAR, GOTARA, THE CRIES OF THIS CHILD OF DEMONS! LET HIS DEATH AGONY APPEASE YOUR WRATH!



YOU'VE HAD YOUR FUN, OLD MAN... GET IT OVER WITH!



CUTTER... THOSE SKULLS...!

DON'T WORRY, SKYWISE... REDLANCE'S WON'T HANG AMONG THEM—I SWEAR IT!!



WOLFRIDERS READY...



ATTACK!!



HEEYAH!!

RAAAR!

YAAA!



HIS SECRET SOUL-NAME IS TAM...
THE BLOOD OF TEN CHIEFS FLOWS IN
HIS VEINS.



HE IS THE LEADER OF AN ELFIN TRIBE
KNOWN AS THE WOLFRIDERS.

-- SO MUCH, IN FACT, THAT THE BITTER
BLOOD SHED THIS DAY MAY AS WELL
HAVE BEEN HIS OWN.



HOW BAD
IS HE?

I...DON'T
KNOW.

THO HIS FOLK CALL HIM "CUTTER" FOR
HIS SKILL WITH A SWORD, HE IS NO
COLD AND MERCILESS DEATH-DEALER.



CUTTER LOVES HIS SMALL TRIBE WITH
A STRENGTH BEYOND HIS YEARS --



RIDE ON AHEAD, SKYWISE,
AND TELL NIGHTFALL WE
BRING HER LIFE-MATE BACK--

SOMEWHAT
LESS THAN WHOLE!

FIREFLIES TWINKLE IN THE PURPLE DUSK,
GENTLY ILLUMINATING THE HOLT OF THE
WOLFRIDERS.



TREE-DWELLERS,
SHY AND SECRETIVE,
CUTTER'S TRIBE
SHUNS THE DAY-
LIGHT. ONLY AT
NIGHT DO THEY
EMERGE FROM THEIR
HOLLOWLS TO HUNT
AND SING WITH
THE WOLFPACK.

NIGHTFALL?!