

## Brukun: The Valley of Conquest

### 1. Origins and Conflict

The region of Brukon as we know it today was born from the desire for expansion of the lords and settlers of Skolt, a city located to the north, and their desire to seek more pastures. The journey south revealed a valley of brutal beauty, full of fertile grasslands and abundant pure water.

In the heart of this new land, where the Jorvund River meets its tributary Heskall, the city of Brukostad arose, the largest and busiest in the region. In the beginning, the settlements fought against a fierce enemy: the semi-nomadic orc tribes, who for centuries roamed these lands, guided by the rains and the seasons. The war between the settlers and the orcs was bloody, and every inch of land was conquered with sweat, blood and tears. The technological superiority of the men who came from the North, combined with Skolt's support, ensured victory, forcing the orcs to migrate eastwards towards the Coloured Hills, a region of rock formations rich in minerals. But the fighting did not end with the war. The memories of the massacre, of the burned villages and of the fallen warriors are a burden passed down from generation to generation, both among the settlers and especially among the orcs.

### 2. Flora and Fauna

Brukun's nature is both wild and magnificent. Pine forests cover the hills to the west, while weeping willows bend along the rivers. In the mild summer, fields of brightly coloured and hardy windflowers colour the green plains with abundant pasture.

In addition to the direwolves and grizzly bears, there are the Grakuls, enormous birds that fly over the rivers, diving like spears to catch fish. There are also the mysterious White Wyverns, serpents with icy scales that are said to hiss in the wind before attacking.

Along the right bank of the Jorvund River, a vast swamp stretches, always shrouded in mist, where the Ruins of Khaz-Midra are hidden. The remains of an ancient city, its buildings are crumbling domes and arches carved with complex geometric patterns. Towers now tumbled down are entangled with vines and roots, while half-submerged columns emerge from the muddy waters. It is said that this place was built by a forgotten civilization and is guarded by creatures with luminescent eyes that prowl the flooded alleys.

### 3. Hardships and Adaptation

In the early years, life in Brukon was a constant test. The biting cold of winter reduced the strongest to weakness. Without sturdy buildings, many families succumbed to the harshness of the season, with their frozen bodies only being discovered in the spring.

Giant wolves attacked in the dead of night, hunting animals and sometimes breaking into huts to devour the inhabitants. Worse creatures lurked in the darkness: the Skaugs, snow creatures with glowing eyes and razor-sharp claws, carried off animals, children and lone travelers. Some nights,

distant screams could be heard as a premonition of imminent death.

Throughout the early years, hunger was a constant companion. The first harvests were scarce and the solution came with time: the raising of Swamp Cattle, pigs and the cultivation of black wheat, a cereal resistant to the cold. Hunters became essential, bringing in meat from moose, hares and the dangerous grizzly bear, a ferocious predator that could wipe out an entire village if provoked.

#### 4. Daily Life, Customs and Culture

The people of Brukon have inherited many customs from their northern ancestors. They live in large communal halls, where they celebrate their achievements, tell stories and share food. Hospitality is sacred: refusing shelter to a traveler during the winter is considered a serious offense.

Honor and strength are highly valued. Young men go through rites of passage, hunting their first prey or dueling in training arenas. Women play an active role in society, being able to fight, run businesses and even govern villages. The concept of revenge is also strong, with family disputes lasting generations.

Festivals are marked by the consumption of fermented drinks, roasting meat and dancing around bonfires. During the Dawn Festival, which celebrates the end of winter, there are competitions of strength, hunting and races on the ice. The music is melodious and joyful, composed of rustic drums and flutes.

Despite the hardships of life, the inhabitants of Brukon are resilient, forged by cold and adversity. They know that between the merciless nature, the vengeful orcs, wild beasts and political instability, only the strong will survive to tell their tale.

#### 5. Economy in Brukon

Although marked by natural challenges, the financial situation has flourished over the generations, sustaining not only the local villages but also supplying Skolt and other northern towns with essential resources.

##### 5.1 Livestock

The vast wetlands of Brukon are an ideal environment for raising livestock adapted to the muddy soil and seasonal flooding. The Marsh Cattle are a mainstay of the local economy. Strong and resilient, this breed of cattle can forage in semi-flooded terrain, thriving where other animals would not. Their fatty milk is the basis for the famous Marsh Cheese (or "Stink Cheese" as the locals joke), a product with an intense flavor and strong odor that is both a staple food and a delicacy exported to Skolt and beyond.

Marsh Pigs, descendants of domesticated wild boars, supplement the livestock economy. Their rustic and tasty meat is highly prized in Brukostad, and is made into sausages and cured meats that sustain the locals during the long winters. Since they feed on anything else they can find, they are easy to raise and require little maintenance, making them a valuable resource for the region's farmers.

## 5.2 Agriculture

Although livestock and mining are the main economic forces in Brukon, there is one agricultural crop that has become vital to the region's livelihood and commerce: Black Wheat. This hardy variety, with its dark color and hard grains, is one of the few that can thrive in the cold, moist soil of the plains. Grown mainly during the milder periods of the year, it is the basis for a dense, nutritious bread that is essential for surviving the long winters. In addition to local consumption, it is exported to Skolt and other northern regions, and is highly valued for its durability and resistance to mold. Some noble families of Skolt pay dearly for "Storm Rye," a strong spirit made from this wheat, the production of which is kept secret by the farmers of Brukon.

## 5.3 Mining in the Colored Hills

Mining is another major economic force in the Brukon region. The Colored Hills, rich in minerals, provide iron, copper, and small amounts of silver. The city of Brukostad has become a key trading hub, with caravans transporting metals to Skolt, supplying the forges and arsenals of the north. The orcs, who were displaced eastward generations ago, have become skilled miners, trading the minerals they extract for tools, cloth, and food from the humans—now sedentary and mostly with greater purchasing power and access to goods.

This trade has brought development, but it has also caused tensions. The humans of Brukostad control much of the export, while the orc tribes resent their dependence on human merchants and their commissions. In addition, in recent years, some orc chieftains have begun to invest in maritime trade, seeking to ship minerals directly to distant ports without the need for human intermediaries. Small orcish ships now roam the coast, trading iron and copper with foreign merchants, increasing their own profits and reducing Brukostad's influence over their operations.

This has led to further strife. Human traders view this move as a betrayal, while the city's lords debate ways to counter this new economic threat. Rumors have swirled that some human caravans have been sabotaged by unknown parties, while orcish ships have mysteriously disappeared at sea. The precarious balance between the two cultures is more unstable than ever, and many wonder if this commercial rivalry could soon turn into something much bloodier.

## 5.4 The Beginning of Lumbering

With the expansion of the population and the growing demand for building materials and fuel, logging has become a new economic activity. The regions of Ormsvik and Stormvik, located to the west, near the dense forests, have become the main centers of this activity.

The black pines, tall and resilient trees, are the main targets of the lumberjacks. Its timber is prized for building houses, boats, and fortifications, and is exported to Skolt. Brukon's economy continues to grow, but its people know that this land is not easily surrendered. Everything extracted from it—be it milk, meat, metal, or timber—comes with a price, and only the hardiest thrive.

## 6. Politics and Local Tensions

Trade between Brukostad and the Colored Hills became vital. The orcs learned to mininig, fish and sail the sea, while the humans benefited from the minerals extracted from the hills, which they traded for manufactured materials, furs, and grain. But the distrust never disappeared.

Marriages between humans and orcs began out of political necessity, but soon began out of love, producing a new generation of half-orcs. These individuals were viewed with suspicion by both sides, often considered bastards without real place. In times of tension, they were the first to be accused of treason. There are whispers that a group of purists in Brukostad want to expel them or, worse, eradicate them.

Brukon is still under the control of Skolt, who has appointed a Jarl, an iron ruler, to administer the region. The current Jarl, Hagvar Ulfsson, rules with a firm hand, ensuring that taxes and tribute flow to Skolt without interruption. However, there is growing resentment among the inhabitants, who want autonomy over their lands.

The lesser nobles and merchants of the region are beginning to plot for emancipation, arguing that Brukon is self-sufficient and that Skolt merely exploits them. Small riots have already broken out in smaller towns, and there are rumors that a secret council of local leaders plans to seize control of the city when the time is right.

To make matters worse, the towns of the region themselves are bitterly rivaled. Some are loyal to Skolt, fearing reprisals, while others seek independence and plot against the Jarl. This uneasy balance could crumble at any moment.

## 7. The Land Never Forgets - The Orc Side

Before the storms of iron and fire, the orc people of Brukon lived as they had always lived: following the cycles of nature, hunting in the grasslands and fishing in the icy waters of Jorvund. Their villages were made of wood and leather, built and dismantled as the seasons changed. Each winter was a struggle, but they knew the land, the rivers and the mountains. Their spears and bows kept the direwolves and grizzly bears at bay, and there was no fear in their hearts.

Then came the men of Skolt.

They came from the north, in small groups at first—explorers who looked longingly at the hills and valleys. The orcs saw them, but did not attack. They were few, frail, and ignorant of the dangers of Brukon. Winter would take them. But the men returned. They brought herds, built fences, and burned fields to plant seeds. They came in ever-increasing numbers, with heavy wagons and iron weapons. They built palisades where before there had been only the wind and the sound of birds.

The orc chiefs sent emissaries. The land was vast, there was room for everyone. But the men did not listen. When the snows cleared, the first

fighting began. Small, stealthy skirmishes at night. But they were not just hunters or herders. Warriors came from the North, dressed in thick furs and chain mail. They marched as one, they fought as one.

The orcs resisted. They knew the plains, the hills, and the marshes, they used the fog and the vegetation as their allies. But the men had metal. They had walls and spears too long for a warrior to approach. And above all, they never stopped coming.

The battle lasted for years. Villages were burned, families torn apart. For every orc warrior who fell, two northerners took his place. The cold did not stop them, nor did hunger break them. So the tribes set out. The chiefs ordered the migration eastward, toward the Colored Hills, where men still dared not tread.

When the blood no longer watered the land, the time of truce came and trade began. Iron for meat, seafood for grain. Warriors took human wives, and children of two heritages were born. But the past never completely fades.

Among the elders, the whispers of ancient battles still echo in the silent nights. Old orc warriors look upon Brukostad and still taste the bitter taste of defeat. Human nobles mutter that the orcs are barbarians disguised as merchants. And at the center of it all are the half-orcs—children of two opposing histories, of two bloodlines that should never have mixed.

They carry the distrust of both races. Humans see in them the savagery of the orcs. Orcs see the blood of the invaders. Many live on the fringes of villages, never fully accepted.

Marriage between humans and orcs is no longer a rarity. Some families have learned to see the benefits of such a union—trade alliances, security, and in some cases, even respect. But even now, when an orc warrior takes a human wife or an orc woman marries a farmer, there are murmurs in the halls, furtive glances in the streets. But the young men of this place are beginning to see the world differently. They have grown up hearing stories of conflict, but their hands have never held a weapon against the other people.

## 8. Legends and Fears

The darkness of Brukon is populated by more than just wild beasts. The elders speak of the Draegrimm, specters of orc warriors slaughtered in war, who appear in snowstorms, seeking vengeance on any human who crosses their path.

Another legend is that of the Old Man of Ice, an entity who dwells in the mountains and punishes those who disrespect the land. Hunters who waste meat or kill for sport are said to find their bodies frozen and flayed, their eyes turned to pure ice.

### 8.1 The Ukra'Dor Forest and the Forgotten Vale

The Ukra'Dor Forest, or "Path of the Lost" in the ancient orc tongue, is a hostile territory, shrouded in a cold and perpetual mist. Twisted trees and rugged terrain make it treacherous. Whispering sounds echo between the

trunks, confusing travelers and causing them to lose track of time and direction. Only the most experienced dare to walk along its edges, for it is said that those who enter its heart never return.

However, those who know the secrets of the land know that beyond Ukra'Dor, hidden among mountains and eternal mists, lies a magical valley, a paradise where the cold never touches the earth and crops flourish all year round. From there come the fresh fruits, vegetables and exotic meats that supply the cities of Brukon and Skolt, even in the harshest winters.

#### 8.1.1 The Valebearers

The connection between this valley and the cities is not made by ordinary human or orc traders. Those responsible for transporting goods are known as the Valebearers—wanderers who, according to legend, made a pact with the ancient guardians of the place.

They travel always cloaked in their timeworn clothes. It is said that their footprints disappear into the mist and that they are never seen entering or leaving Ukra'Dor—simply appearing in the cities at dawn, with wagons laden with impossible fruits, succulent meats, and vegetables that no other soil in this cold region can produce. Their faces are never seen, and those who have tried to follow them into the forest have never returned.

#### 8.1.2 What They Bring Back

Trade between the Vale and the cities is not one-sided. In exchange for their provisions, the Valebearers bring back carefully selected offerings—not gold or silver, but ancient artifacts, forgotten scrolls, old books, rare seeds, and in some cases, even people.

There are dark rumors that on nights of the full moon, they accept those who wish to leave, never to return. Some speak of the terminally ill seeking healing, others mention war-weary warriors seeking a new destiny. But no one has ever returned to tell of what they found beyond the mists of Ukra'Dor.

#### 8.1.3 The True Mystery

Many have tried to discover the truth behind the Ukra'Dor Forest and the Forgotten Vale, but to this day no one has received any concrete answers. Some say that the Bearers are descendants of an ancient race that protects the secrets of the vale. The more mystical believe that the vale is not a physical place, but a realm separate from reality itself, accessible only to those who know the right path.

What is known for certain is that as long as there is silence and respect, the flow of goods will continue. But those who attempt to violate the secrets of the Vale may never leave the Ukra'Dor Forest.

### Conclusion

Brukon is a place of constant challenge, where beauty and danger walk side by side. Its inhabitants are shaped by cold, war, and fear of the unknown. Even with the uncertain peace, the scars of the past still run deep, and the wind that blows across the plains carries both promise and threat. In the

heart of the vale, humans, orcs, and half-orcs struggle to forge their future, while snow covers the bones of those who came before them.