

Pangea

9 Lives of Rakesh

Sidebar

Awoken are a type of intelligent life found on Pangea. They are created through shamanic magic infused into mundane beasts, like cats, dogs, and even insects!

“Um, is that a dragon?” Vik asks as his curiosity gets the better of him.

“Is that a cat person??” Omara asks as all sense leaves her. “What exactly have we stumbled upon?”

The feline fellow, standing about three feet tall, lowers his cart and walks over to the Appenendats. He dusts his hands on his trousers before extending a hand to the group. “Name’s Rakesh. Pleasure to make your acquaintance!”

“Do cats normally talk on the surface?” Eryk is staring at the man in wonder. “This seems very abnormal.”

Rakesh laughs heartily. “Never seen an Awoken before, I take it? No harm done, though you may want to adjust your questions, haha. Not all of us are as welcoming of the humanoid folk as I am.”

Vik shakes Rakesh’s hand. “Pleasure, sir. Are you from these lands?”

“Oh, very much so! Most Awoken are from around the Laal Sahara, but I make my journeys outward from time to time. Best way to gather supplies! Hahaha!” Rakesh waves to his dragon companion. “This is Pan. He’s helping me make a place that we can all call home, here in the Laal Sahara.”

“Is that your name for it?” Vik motions to the Red Desert. “Lull Sarah, was it?”

Rakesh chuckles once more, holding up a hand. “Laal Sahara. La-al. Sah-harr-uh. It’s beast speech for Red Desert, so you can call it either. A kind enough Awoken won’t judge you for trying.”

“Laal Sahara, got it.” Vik nods. “Pleasure, Pan and Rakesh. I’ve not seen either of your kind before. Are wyrms such as Pan native to the desert?”

Allura giggles, covering her mouth. “Sir Vik, that feels a rather rude thing to ask.”

Vik turns beet red, holding up his hands defensively. “I meant nothing by it! I merely mean-.”

Pangea

9 Lives of Rakesh

“All is well, Ser Vik. No harm done. Are you all traveling this way?” Rakesh asks, with a nod to the north.

Omara nods, motioning to Eryk. “We seek the pale dwarves of Baneland. Do you know how far it is from here? Our business is somewhat urgent.”

Eryk scowls. “It’d be less urgent if we were going to the right place, not their silly hole in the ground...”

Rakesh bows his head to Eryk, perhaps apologetically or possibly to honor him. “I have met a handful of white-haired dwarves, if that is what you are referring to. They have not always been the most pleasant of visits, but I harbor no ill will to them or their kind. I am actually heading in that direction, though I go not all the way. Care to share the road with an old Tom and his scaly companion?”

Omara looks at the others, who all slowly nod their agreement. “It would be an honor, Sir Rakesh. We’ve spent some time just the four of us, so some new conversation would be nice.”

Rakesh returns to his cart, Pan curling up under some furs. “Right this way then! We’ll want to make good time before sunset. The desert can be an unkind mistress after dark, if you aren’t careful.”

“Lead on then,” Allura says as she follows after the catfolk. “I am eager to hear your tale, my good sir.”

“Oh, not much to it, to be honest.” Rakesh chuckles as his cart drags through the fading grass. “Old housecat turned Awoken by a friendly fellow of sorts. Set out on my own when the time was right. Now, I have a dream that drives me forward. I wish more folks were like that.”

Omara picks up the pace, walking tandem with Rakesh. “What sort of dream? I know a thing or two about life goals, heh.”

Rakesh nods north to a sight unseen. “Near the Rift, I’ve started building a home. A place people the world over can come to and trade! I call it... Rakesh. Named after me, of course.”

Omara nods along, stifling a laugh. “That is an interesting dream indeed. Why here though? Is the Red Desert a good spot for something like that?”

“Why, it is the best place for a trade city! People will have a reason to come there, which will then help them learn about other cultures, like the Awoken, or elves, or dwarves. A place where there are no judgements, nothing separating one merchant from another. That is my dream, my dear.”

The cart rumbles as Pan lifts his head from his cover. In a deep voice, he responds in kind. “And we shall make it so, my friend. By my word, it shall be.”