

**Of the Sky, Of the Sea, and of the Stones**  
**Chapter 2 - Of the Sky**  
**Part 23 - Arriving at Orosilla**

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The ship continued to sail east, towards Orosilla, though the scholars and I continued to stare out to sea. The Aetherians did so likely in mourning, lost in deep and sorrowful thoughts.

My gaze, however, was scanning all within sight for other strange and powerful creatures. I was deeply saddened about the tremendous loss of a whole flying city, but my mind could not rest in my visual search. I was so very paranoid about the potential destructive might of colossal beasts that could be lurking above and below that I could not rest for the remainder of the voyage.

The days following the escape from Temptes Equit were dreary for the scholars and stressful for me. The unfortunate crew of the Bitterwind had to deal with constant sobbing and my darts up and down deck (from seeing a wave and thinking it a sea monster, or some such paranoid delusion).

We reached Orosilla without further incident, thankfully. Everyone seemed to be happy to call the voyage to an end, though the scholars and sailors bade each other fond farewells, despite the depressing mood of late. As agreed upon, I paid Captain Roac double the initially agreed-upon amount due to my request to transport the Aetherians as well. The coin I lost then set me back financially for close to a year, but it was worth it to preserve lives and knowledge.

The Bitterwind had made landfall upon one of the banks of the small rivers on the north-western side of Orosilla. The docks nearby led into the island's bustling capital Lofous, but I led the Aetherians around the city and to the north, towards Mount Oros. Even though crime and violence were not very high on the island, cities were packed with threats to foreigners. With blue skin and a variety of vibrant hair colours, the Aetherians would simply stand out too much. Also, ornaments of precious metals and now one-of-a-kind books would be too tempting for thieves.

The ascent up the mountain seemed to do them good. As we climbed higher and higher upon the well-worn trails, the altitude and thinness of the air seemed to remind them of what life above the clouds was like. On occasion, we took a break at

one of the many comfortable resting spots along the way. Members of the GLRU were constantly making trips up and down the mountain, as one of the world's more important Chapters of the organization lied atop the peak. This Chapter was also my home, as a select few were permitted to reside within the building in order to focus on their studies with less disturbance. Having garnered great respect for my work involved with the discovery of a possible 4th Source via the cryptic sample from Agalloch, I had earned a spot in Mount Oros' residence and access to its world-class facilities.



*Figure 30. Mount Oros' GLRU Chapter and its lovely view of the ocean*

I was able to attain access to these residencies and facilities for the Aetherians upon our arrival, though not easily. At first, the loremasters in charge of the Chapter were shocked by my return with Cais, his vibrant cats, and the other cyan-skinned folk. It took a lot of explaining but eventually everyone's mental books were flipped to the same page. The loremasters permitted the Aetherians to stay but only on the condition that they share their knowledge, books, and contribute to the organization via continuing whatever studies they were in the process of pursuing in *Temptes Equit* (or at least the Orosian equivalent).

As for myself, I was charged with seeing to the needs and the acclimatization of the scholars from the flying city. This took a great deal of my time away from my own studies, but I could not very well leave my blue friends to figure out the nuances of Orosian academia on their own. In the process, over years, I helped to integrate the Aetherians into the GLRU society, and to great effect. Everyone benefitted from the exchange of knowledge, which eventually changed the way all modern scholars across the world saw things.

Gaps in history were filled, unexplained phenomena were made plain, and understanding of Okeanós was colossally deepened. Though, of all the information shared, that of the nature of a flying city's Soul enraptured my mind the most.