

"Thar ye go" the haulier's voice woke Qura out of her doze in the bed of the cart
She jumped up, grabbing her gear and nimbly dropping over the side onto the dusty road
"Thanks All!" she waved with a bright smile as the old man grunted and at a flick of the reins
his cart sped up.

Qura turned to see the gate and walls of Millsand straight down a short road. She idly
wondered what sights and things she could learn in this new town.

She could see one of the gateguard dealing with a trader and his cart and paused as the
other guard walked toward her, towering over her with his pike.

"What's yer business Halfling?" he grunted at her

"Nii!" Qura offered her hand "i'm Qura, i'm visiting!" she lowered her hand as the guardsman
glared at her

"D'you got any magical weapons or armour, trained or wild animals, artifacts or gold valued at
over one hundred pieces or any potions or poisons?" the list was made in one continual breath
and Qura frowned as she considered all options.

"no, I don't ha..." she began to reply

"you're welcome to Millsand" The guard said loudly before his voice lowered a touch "that'll be
one silver entrance fee and five gold deposit to cover any intentional or accidental damage"

"An entrance fee?" Qura questioned "i've not heard of that before"

The guard shrugged "everyone's gotta pay it."

Qura pulled out her coin purse and shuffled it about "that's almost all of my gold!"

The guard eyed the pouch "it's only one silver, the rest is a deposit and will be returned"

As Qura handed him the coins he gave a smile "just ask for Sergeant Mouse on your way out"

"Mouse?!" Qura asked

"Yeah, like in fields, got a problem?" the guard stepped closer to her

"no sir!" Qura stammered

"off you go then" sergeant Mouse dropped the silver piece into a chest and waved Qura
through the open gates.

She wandered through the paved streets seeing more people than she'd ever known and other
races such as groups of heavily armoured dwarfs passing about.

As the afternoon grew onwards she entered the nearest tavern for a snack and carefully
made her way to the bar, climbing up onto a stool to see inn keeper

"how can I help you young... lady?"

"Nii!" Qura smiled "d'you know where I can rent a room for the night please?"

The inn keeper smiled and pulled a tome toward himself "we have three rooms available at one
gold per night, room only"

Qura shuffled through her coin pouch "is food expensive? The deposit was almost all my gold"
the inn keeper frowned "What deposit?"

"The.. the entrance deposit?" Qura looked up "Sergeant Mouse said i'd get it back when I
leave"

The inn keeper's eyebrow raised "There's only one sergeant in our guard and he's sat over
there"

Qura looked to see a trio of guard sat at a table with a serving of food between them

"Oh." she sniffed "I.. I think I made a mistake"

the inn keeper gave her a look "lemme get you a snack." he winked "we have space out in the
shed cheap if you wanted it"

Qura nodded, unable to answer as her eyes began to fill...