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The King of the Merchants

The King of the Merchants, like all the other heroes from the City, was a heroic man. Unlike the merchant predecessors before him, he was not cunning or shrewd. Instead he won favors - and eventually his position - from his infamous generosity and leverage to his acquaintances. Because of their King, the Merchant Gangs eventually climbed the social ladder. But also because of the Merchant King's love for heroism, the Merchants learned from his example, and became not only Mercenaries fighting for "justice" in their democratic anarchy, but also Pirates, starting wars against each other because of alliances and loyalties to acquaintances.

The King himself did not notice this change until his most beloved, his son, the Prince of Merchants, was captured by an enemy faction. So the King went himself, to get his son back. He dove through flocks of gliders and jets until he finally arrived at the airship of the "Faithful X" merchant gang. An ironic name for such traitors, an advisor liked to comment. When the doors weren't unlocked, he charged through them with a saw and hammer. A dozen soldiers, as rash as their leader, accompanied him into that room. Dynamites exploded. He scarred his face and scorched his proud beard. His saw was broken. "This is nothing! A prank by rats!" he scoffed and continued to fight his "evil enemy." As relentless as his manichean attitude was, the roaring thunder of warhammer was stronger. He hammered into the next room, sending turncoats fleeing. The six soldiers who survived this incident lived to recall their king's bravo. The King's physical force was so strong that whisks of his warhammer reflected the laser bullets of the enemy. They prayed to the other six who perished, before the king taunted, "we are not done yet! A bear walks on two legs!" He discarded his warhammer, now broken through abuse. The king who always saw the glass as half full, decided that he will not give up until the entire Faithful X is in ruins. That is when he reached the last compartment. All of the crew members of the Faithful X were huddled in the main room. Their leader retains her poise, but is fearful of the king, who - from the point of view of all in the room - has destroyed their home with only his fists. Those who lived recall the terror of his giant muscular hands, bruised and beaten, and his burned face -one that they no longer recognized. Thus, the Queen of the Faithful X surrounded herself with younger members, who all pointed at the king with battered guns. As the bear-like figure lumbered forward, the merchants huddled closer, and aimed higher and higher as the "monster with the burned skin" breathed on them and heaved, "where is my son?"

When they heard this, the merchants turned towards the Queen. The Queen relaxed, recognizing the heroic king, and with words as soft and sharp as roses questioned, "You've lost your weapons,"

"Scraps!" the King interrupted.

"Your soldiers,"

"I can do with half."

"Scarred your face, and lost your beard. You can grow it back, I suppose."

The king has had enough of this talk, and demanded. "Release my son or I will destroy this ship." The king's soldiers charged their guns and stood on edge, without waiting for his signal.

"You cannot replace your son." A familiar voice rang through the crowd. Out from the shadows appeared the Prince of Merchants. "You have destroyed half a ship and half your guards without considering a knock on the door. Father, I came here on my own accord."