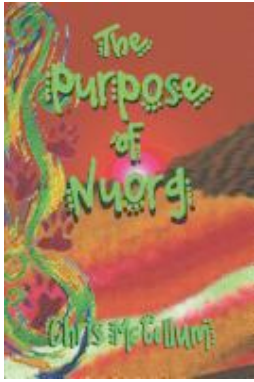


The  
purpose  
of  
N40rg

Chris McCollum



*In this third installment of the "Nuorg" series, our main characters are unknowingly joined by others, each with information or possessions crucial to the ongoing search for the reasons and purpose of Nuorg. Confidence is tested, loyalties are questioned and startling discoveries are made as the memorable cast strives for answers to evermore perplexing questions. Does Nuorg exist and, if so, why? An evolving story that appeals to all ages. See also *The Land of Nuorg* and *The Mysteries of Nuorg*.*

# **The Purpose of Nuorg**

**Order the complete book from**

**[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com)**

**<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/6447.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**

**Your Free excerpt appears below. Enjoy!**

## The Purpose of Nuorg

**J**ahnise sat at Olivia's side as she cried the way any young lady would cry over the tragic loss of her parents. Her body heaved as she cried torrents of tears. The knowledge that the evolving situation was dire led to even more uncontrollable sobs, as Bongi and Stewig moved in closer to comfort her. Occasionally, she would make eye contact with one of them just long enough to send her back into loud, mournful wails. Olivia was emotionally and physically spent. There was nothing any of the onlookers could do but try to console her.

Copyright © 2012 Chris McCollum

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-62141-685-2

Paperback ISBN: 978-1-62141-686-9

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Printed in the United States of America.

Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author.

MessyHouse Publishing  
Franklin, TN  
2012

# **The Purpose of Nuorg**

**Chris McCollum**

“**M**y word, what is your problem now? You have to be the whiniest creature I have ever met in my short life! Am I to expect this mood from you all day?”

The well-dressed young two-legger was stopped in the dead center of the intersection where four of the very busiest roads led to eight of the very busiest towns in the whole entire area of his world. He was arguing with, what seemed to be, every two-legger and contraption within hearing distance. Leggers of all numbers were yelling at him, asking if he needed assistance and trying to push their way around him. They were getting nowhere fast. He was stoically unmoved by the two-leggers' inconveniences. At the center of the traffic disaster sat the reason for this hold-up. The young two-legger looked to be simultaneously angrily yelling and desperately pleading with a large red and black four-legger that decided to quit traveling at the worst possible moment. The slumped four-legger was akin to a Horse at first glance, but was not nearly as handsome. His proportions were skewed slightly from what one normally thinks of a Horse. It was hard to tell if the beast was worthy of a second look as he sat stubbornly plopped in the middle of the dusty crossing. The passers-by that were not yelling for them to move could not help but stare or laugh at the humorous situation.

"Do you think this is working?" murmured the embarrassed four-legger, quietly to his companion. "It had better, 'cause when I get up from here, I will draw even with you. I promise. I have never stooped this low for any reason. This road is filthy! Not to mention the bugs I have crawling all over my haunches."

To the observers, it actually looked like the two-legger was attempting to carry on a conversation with the four-legger, which caused even more loud laughter. Sure, folks yelled at their animals, but they never expected them to yell back. That would be quite a story, at least in this part of the world.

The two-legger, somewhat annoyed, sternly answered, "Would you please be quiet and act like a normal draft animal? Do you think

*The Purpose of Nuorg*

you could do that for me please?" That did not go over well...the four-legger seethed.

The four-leggers that did circumvent the disturbance could not help but chuckle. Most of them knew what was going on and could not help but take mental notes of the grounded four-legger's face. Lots of mocking whinnies, barks and snickers were heard that day by those tall ears. "Oh yes, dear young one, oh yes. Your day will surely come when our positions are reversed."

"Did I not ask you to hush?" Again, it looked to all like the two-legger was actually conversing with the four-legger. All of the passers-by knew that could not happen. Again, the four-legger seethed.

\*\*\*

From her position among the small trees to the south of the intersection, a very protective four-legger suspiciously eyed the movement of every two and four-legger that overtly avoided the show going on in the intersection. She was looking for a particular pair of creatures, one four-legged and one two-legged that may be in too much of a hurry as they passed this way. It had come down the signal chain that they would be passing, although no one knew for sure who they were. She was big, loveable and patient. As long as her two companions kept most of the traffic at bay, she would scrutinize every passer by as if she had a magnifying lens. Her large brown eyes, full of life and obedience, portrayed a loving personality, but hid a very defensive and aggressive interior should anyone mess with her loved ones.

Something about that pair did not look comforting. While all creatures from this area dress immaculately, even in their worst fits, this two-legger looked too ragged and the four-legger with him looked worn out. She immediately tagged them as suspicious. With eye-contact and a nod from her short, compact snout attached to a large square head, she glanced to her left and sent the first sky-traveler on a parallel course to trail these two leggers closely. As she turned her attention back to the intersection fiasco, she could not help but notice the absence of her other medium sized, sky-traveling companion to her right. She noticed, in his place, a rather small, even for a sky-traveler, chubby little winger with bright eyes. An extremely aggressive

*Chris McCollum*

attitude hidden beneath the innocent, outward appearance would lead one to initially misjudge this brand of winger. She did. "And just who might you be? And what have you done with my companion?"

"I ate him. I was very hungry," it stated as alert and focused eyes never stopped surveying the steady flow of traffic. "I have had a very trying trip, so I ate him."

Obviously stunned, she turned and faced the creature. She completely took in this little fellow's stature, blinked her eyes incredulously, and then dead-panned, "You ate a Falcon? You are not large enough to be noticed by a Falcon, but you ate a Falcon?"

"Absolutely, my dear. I didn't care for his looks. Looked to me to be quite the slacker. Feather tone. That is what gave it away. That is why I ate him. He had poor feather tone. You can always trust feather tone." The small winger was not giving anything away with this conversation, nor did he turn his stare to her or anywhere away from the continuing stream of leggers. "I suggest you take a look at that pair of leggers coming round the outskirts of that mess in the middle there," he said nodding toward the melee.

"Which pair?"

"The smart looking pair there, nicely attired, shiny buckles and overalls, an acceptable coordination of mismatched fittings," came the reply.

"I think you are mistaken, little one. I have sent the first Falcon after the leggers that I tagged as suspicious and in need of following."

"Well my dear, you are wrong."

"And why am I wrong in your opinion?" she asked in a very politely perturbed tone of voice.

"You are not wrong in my opinion. You are wrong because you are wrong. The pair of leggers you have sent the Falcon in pursuit of cannot be the pair you are looking for. May I ask what pair are you looking for? Do you have any idea or is it just guessing on your part?"

"Excuse me? Then I assume you must know the ones I am looking for since you are so adamant that the pair I chose to trail is the wrong pair."

"Yes I do. I am so elated that you were able to so quickly discern that I do know who you are after. Thank you ever so much for crediting me with that."



*The Purpose of Nuorg*

She was beginning to tire of the little winger's condescending banter. A low growl oozed out, "Who are you, where did you come from and what do you know about my being here?"

"My dear, don't fret. It is so obvious that you are in on the play there in the intersection. So obvious. It is good for you that the two-leggers overlook us as they do or they too would have figured it out," chirped the not so charming little observer.

"You are a very curt little thing are you not?" she asked.

"If by curt, you mean very sure of my intentions, confident to a fault, smart as any Owl or so on, then yes I am a very curt little thing. However, though little I may be, I can assure you my mind is more than capable of overpowering any short comings having to do with my small stature and, if pushed, I can travel the skies as fast as your Falcon cohorts," he returned.

"I must ask you who you are, why you are here and how do you know me. If you do not impress me with your answers then I will be eating you!"

"How dare you speak to me that way? You really have no idea who I am even though I know everything about you? No creature has advised you of my mission? Is there anything at all within the confines of that thick square head of yours?" he spat.

"There was no answer to any question I asked within that little speech. For your sake, you better start giving me some answers," she growled as she inched closer to the winger.

"Why for this tree's sake do you growl and threaten me? Can you not distinguish that I am up in this tree and not on the ground where I would be at your mercy? You can't climb a tree. Why should I not just fly off and leave you to your own canine ramblings? Several creatures warned me there would be times like these. I should have stayed in the conifer with my mate and her squabs!" This last detail was a complete lie. "I have no business leaving them at a time like this. The Eagle. It was all his fault. Why oh why did I lend him an ear that day? O folly, folly, folly." The little trickster spun the web of his story even more.

He began to pace sideways and back on his perch. He was not all that high off the ground. If she wanted to dispatch the little nuisance, she certainly could. When he mentioned the Eagle, she dropped her guard. Very interested in hearing his story now, she softened her tone. "What Eagle? What was his name?"

*Chris McCollum*

At that very instant, a voice called to her from the intersection. "Belle, come quickly."

Now she was at odds of what to do. Tofur was calling her. This little, now bothered, gray sky-traveler had just piqued her interest and the second Falcon had returned. "Where have you been?" she demanded.

"I am sorry, Belle. I felt a strong urge to follow that pair of leggers myself for a few beats, to act as a diversion. Soon, I felt no urgency to diverge if I may say, and headed directly back. What have we here?" the Falcon inquired as his eyes intently followed the side-to-side pacing of the smaller winger. "Lunch?"

"No, no. Don't eat him. He is not lunch. But do not let him out of your sight until I get back. No, wait. Do not let him off of that branch. I want you to find out who he is and how he knew where to find me. If he is not here, alive and kicking, when I get back, you will be my lunch. Understand?" She immediately turned and ran off toward the two-legged who was still arguing with the bigger four-legged.

\*\*\*

"I'm going to have her take a bite out of your hind quarters if you don't keep cooperating! I promise you I will. Let's see what she knows and maybe we can stop this charade." Tofur promised.

"I will never stoop to this again. Of that you can be positive," grumbled the very agitated creature.

"Would you please stop complaining? Do you have any idea of what cooperation means? You are so stubborn!" Again the passers-by were laughing as the two-legged continued to try and converse with the animal.

Out of the taller grass to the side of the road came a large bounding four-legged. Handsome to behold--rather beautiful to behold, she was an amazing creature. Jet black with touches of deep mahogany, muscles rippling with every powerful stride, onlookers of both two and four legs admired her as she passed. Noticeably missing a normal length canine tail, she maintained complete direction and stability with her sinewy legs and large firm paws. Barrel-chested, with no noticeable defining mark between her head and shoulders, her neck was an extension from both to both. She gracefully leaped over a

*The Purpose of Nuorg*

stalled cart much to the owner's dismay. She landed just as gracefully as she leaped, which was a sight to see given her box-like proportions. Smiling, she dashed to the two-legger's side, wagging the stump of her tail. "You called, Tofur?" She glanced at and couldn't help snickering at her four-legged companion. "You look hilariously striking, Jak!"

"Oh not you too," the four-legger moaned.

Tofur bent down to look the Rottweiler in the eyes. "Well, can we stop this little game yet? Jak is about ready to revolt. I don't think he can take much more of this humiliation. You know how tightly wound he is." Then he laughed.

Belle answered, "I think we have what we came for. Get him on his hooves and let us reconvene over at my lookout. But first, clean him up!" She laughed and immediately retraced her path to further question the little sky-traveler. There was much more to him than met the eye.

Tofur reached down and made an attempt to repair Jak's harness. Since there was nothing wrong with it, his attempt to repair something that was not broken appeared clumsy at best. "I hope you are happy now," he mumbled into the large ears. "If you had messed this plan up, I would have rode you hard and put you up wet."

"Yes, I'm sure you would have. Don't try me or I will sit here for good."

Tofur laughed hard, "I'll wager you would not. Come now, get on your hooves and let these fine two-leggers get on with their business."

Jak had to get the last word in. "Fine two-leggers, are you serious?"

\*\*\*

Whistler was not the best Falcon for a "see, but don't be seen" caper. His tail feathers were shaped in a way that allowed wind to sneak between them and produce a noticeable, yet not unpleasant sound whenever he flew. The faster he flew, the more pronounced the whistling sound. It was best for him to fly as slowly as he could when tailing as he was now. He had no problem following the pair of leggers as they crept along the main road. His sight was keen enough to give him an advantage of distance and the limited whistling blended in well with the breeze. Something was bothering him about the leggers. The

*Chris McCollum*

pair was slowing down far too often to make adjustments to the four-legged's load. He had to get closer yet remain cautious.

\*\*\*

Belle quickly returned to the two wingers. When she returned, the smaller one was still pacing non-stop back and forth and back and forth. "Belle, my dear, this gray little thing is making me nervous. He has not ceased this incessant pacing since you left. Not only that, he keeps muttering on and on about an Eagle. What Eagle? I don't know. He won't say. He has been told of something that has put quite a dent in his realm of comfort. What did he tell you earlier?"

"Really, Taytay, he has revealed nothing to me. I'm at a loss just as you. It looks like we are about to lose him though."

"Maybe we can shock him back to reality? Would it not, at least, be worth a try?"

"What do you suggest?"

The Falcon abruptly jerked his handsome head upward and moved a bit higher in the tree.

Without warning, Belle thrust herself upward and let loose a menacing, ferocious bark that shook the leaves of the tree. She also brought her bared teeth within the tiniest distance imaginable from the little winger. The shock of the moment slapped the small fellow back to a coherent state.

He stopped pacing. "What? Why would you perform such a violent act towards me you big canine ogre!"

"Welcome back to our time, little fellow." Taytay said with hint of caring in his voice. I thought you were gone silly."

"Excuse me? I would never have gone silly. I may have tried going silly, but not gone silly. Never mind that, as I was saying an Eagle came to visit me several day-rounds ago." The Dove's story began to meander between straight-out lies and faint tidbits of truth. He would leave it up to his new companions to sort out the facts. "He was very concerned about the future of all of our lands. Why did he pick me? I can't begin to tell you."

"How did he know about you?"

He looked straight at Belle, "I can't tell you that answer because I don't know it. There are far too many things I don't know about this for

*The Purpose of Nuorg*

me to be very comfortable with any of it." He continued, "The Eagle, I believe his name was Vincen, came into my glen seeking volunteers of the wisest and noblest sort, spouting some nonsense regarding the return of the terrible years. Nobody could fathom what he was saying. I had a hard time myself until we were able to speak alone. Those in my area respect me much more than either of you seem to. Anyway, he was directed to me by just about every creature in my area, for obvious reasons, and I took it upon myself to get to the bottom of his meddling."

"Wait. Please back-up a click. The return of the Terrible Years? Are you serious? Was he serious?" asked the shocked Falcon.

\*\*\*

Whistler was going to have to push his luck. Should he make a bold move on the pair or just swoop in and see what he could and quickly retreat? He opted for the latter. A quick swoop should be just the right move. It wasn't. Just as he was lining up the direction of his attack, the two-legger pulled hard on the cord binding the left saddle bag on the four-legger's back. The contents of the pack exploded beneath the outer covering, sending a medium sized catch net directly in to the path of Whistler. The Falcon could not avoid it. He was snared instantly with no ideas for escape remotely entering his mind. He fell hard from the sky and landed bruised, but alive a short walk from the four-legger.

The two-legger was too surprised to talk. After checking the wide-eyed look of amazement in the eyes of the four-legger, he ran to where his captive lay dazed in the net. He hurriedly kneeled to the ground and began gathering the net. By gently pulling the net together from the corners, he bundled it together and lifted it from his prey. "Are you alright Falcon?"

"Well what do you think? You nearly killed me! What is that contraption you just used on me? Wait, did you just talk to me? Are you a Talker or am I dead or nearly dead?" The Falcon was shocked for the second time.

The two-legger quickly put the net back down over the Falcon's beak to shut him up. "Quit talking back to me. Do you want to expose me? You have no idea who may be in this area."

*Chris McCollum*

"Blah, blah, mumble..." the net loosened, "You started talking to me first!"

"Well stop talking back," the two-legger whispered loudly before pushing the net to Whistler's beak once again.

"No, okay, okay. I'll stop talking for now, but you have some explaining to do."

"Who are you with and why were you following me?" the two-legger asked.

"You knew I was following you?" Whistler whispered in return.

"Of course I knew. That noise you make is quite noticeable to people like me because we can communicate with our four-leggers and she is the one that heard you. She noticed you right after we made it through the intersection...around what we perceived to be a deliberate distraction, which we did not need at all. We, too, are following somebody, only now he or she is behind us and we snared you as a diversion of our own in hope that our prey would happen upon us. But, we had to use the net on you instead of them because we thought you were spying on us for them. Which you were not because she never heard the whistling noise until just after you were sent after us. Plus, we wanted to know who you were anyway..."

"Would you please take a breath? I am lost. I thought one was supposed to put one thought in one sentence? You just rambled me almost to crazy." Whistler was worn out. "Let me go and I will lead you back to my group. Then, after you settle down, we can all discuss our plans. Then, we will see who is after whom. Will that work for you?"

"Yes, yes, I suppose it will. But how will I be able to keep tracking the one I have been sent to track if I go back with you to meet who sent you to track me and will that put us too far behind our prey to track them as we should, knowing what the reason is for us to be tracking them to begin with."

"Whoa, whoa." Whistler could only shake his head, "Oh my. Is this a habit with you? Is this how you normally carry on conversations? Please, let me up and everything will be fine. I will introduce my group to you and then we will formulate a plan for you to continue your task."

"Okay, I will release you...Just hold still and don't panic." The two-legger did exactly as he said. He released the Falcon and loaded the net back into the exploding saddle bag.

*The Purpose of Nuorg*

The draft four-legger ambled over to the Falcon, "So," she motioned to the two-legger and with a very deep feminine voice asked, "Can you tell he hasn't talked to creatures like us in a while?"

"Wow," replied Whistler.

**H**er hand quivered as she raised the quill from the ink well and set it to the diary parchment.

*Day 27. I am still not sure of the role I am playing in this vilely concocted plot. But, in order to quell the uprising of my folk, I will go along with the visitors--even though the heartache suffered at their hands seems to be increasingly insurmountable. The rider returned today on that evil black steed of his. I often think that horse is more involved with whatever plan is being hatched here than the rider or any of the others in his group. How one animal can reek so fervently of bad tidings is hard to comprehend, but reek that animal does. You can see it in the beast's eyes. They glare--no, they boil with badness. My horse and those of her group want nothing more than to stay as far away from the black monster as possible. A friend told me earlier the foam that bubbles from its snout sizzles like aig on the frypan when it lands on the ground. I have no idea how long they will stay. I wish they would leave immediately. Almost a month has passed since they came. My folk have been uprooted from their comfortable homes and have been forced to work in every available mien to accommodate the visitors. I have been spared from the uprooting, I think in part to preserve the look that all is well, but the messages I have written under duress, the words I have been forced to utter...needless to say, it makes bile rise in my throat. I am sickened by my actions. The rider is coming for me again...I pray that this diary survives if I don't. I don't know how much longer I can go along with this act before my temper forces me to unleash the power of the heirloom. I have so misused it before. Father, comfort my heart...Ev.*

Not to raise the suspicions of the Rider, she quietly secured the diary with a knotted string, wrapped it in an old worn dress, tied it snugly with a ribbon made of long curly brown hair and placed the large collection of writings back into the wall. The fiery red, curly tresses that fell to her waist exactly portrayed the personality within the



### *The Purpose of Nuorg*

young maiden, while the fair skin did little to diminish the staunch conviction within her to do good. Her eyes, blue as the sky, saw good in lots of things and lots of people but saw none in those she now called the visitors. Daily, although her smile began to dwindle, she carried on the rituals of leadership instilled in her by generations before, but still, she was frightened. The Rider claimed ownership of the one living thing that she had left from her family, her messenger. Sure, she still had her favorite horses and her livestock, but he took her messenger. The only connection she had with her sister half way across the world was now precariously in the hands of the visitors and she could not be more apprehensive about her future. Her folk called her "Princess". The visitors called her "key number two". Her only sister called her Evaliene. Like her brown-haired sister, she was also called a "Talker".

The knock on the solid door had a metallic sound to it. Why the Rider felt compelled to wear battle armor where ever he went did little to quell the mystery behind his arrival two days after the original group of visitors invaded this quiet little town just west of the Green Glen. Again the agitated knock resounded loudly through the front room of Evaliene's chambers. She heard it loud and clear, just as she had heard it the first time. Knock. Knock. Knock! Again, much louder than the previous times. The Lady of the house had just finished hiding her diary. She came into the front room, brushing her hands off on her plaid wool skirt. A skirt of this type was never meant to be worn by a person of her means; however, it was just one of many precautions she used to blend in with the folk of her adopted town. Not many knew her secret and up until now no one else needed to know. She had moved to town rather uneventfully, but so had a lot of other two-leggers about the same time. The ones that came after her acted differently toward her with good reason. She remained humble and kept to herself, but occasionally one or two of the new town folk would slip and call her Princess or some other type of royal moniker. Usually this type of talk wouldn't raise an eyebrow, but with the new visitors in town, she made it known to all, in no uncertain terms, that calling her Princess or anything of the like would not be permitted for any reason.

"I'm coming, can't I have some time to prepare for my guest before he should barge into the room!" She yelled not too politely to the strange man on the other side of the door.

"I suggest you learn to act more quickly when I knock from now on!" the gruff Rider shouted in return.

After hearing his outburst, Evaliene walked toward the door even slower than before, mumbling something to herself about what her father would do to a common thug like this thing beating down her door, while she double checked her heavy sash buckle. She quickly glanced over the door at the door frame to make sure the board concealing another hidden storage compartment was secure. Nodding to herself, she smiled a short smile before putting on the face of a worn down prisoner. She lightly slapped her cheeks to redden them up a bit to camouflage her calm demeanor. She stopped just short of the door, poised herself, turned the large knob and greeted her antagonist.

"Good day sir. I saw you and your handsome steed barrel into town this morning. What is the evil nature of your visit with me today? Do you have more lies you would like me to address with my folk here? More false messages to send out for you? Just what exactly do you need from me today?" she asked with the politeness of a Jackal.

He cautiously glanced around to witness the usual small group of nosey town folk who made a nuisance of themselves whenever he approached this dwelling. He growled at her through a strong, set, clenched jaw, "I need for you not to make a scene, be quiet and let me in." He grinned. "You know what is at stake here if you make a spectacle with me or any of my friends while we are in your ridiculously stupid little town, if indeed it is a town at all. More like a trash yard if you ask me. We have Pigs where I come from that wouldn't lie in this mud hole if they were dead."

She curtly replied through a wonderfully fake smile, "I asked you once, now what do you want this time?"

Anger rose in his bones with every condescending word she spoke. He continued, "I'm telling you, you need to speak to me with respect, you spiteful wench. Remember what I have of yours? I could easily bring it back to you in pieces if you wish. There was a little incident earlier this morning during the ride in that nearly sealed its fate." He laughed, "As if it had not been already sealed. Listen closely to me now," his voice dropping to a raspy whisper, "Whether you cause me to or not, if that creature claws me one more time, I will chop its feet off."

He held up his right arm, and then shoved it in her face so she could get a good view of his blood stained sleeve with long diagonal

*The Purpose of Nuorg*

slits ripped into the mail that protected his flesh. "This mail cost me plenty of coin and I don't intend for that creature of yours to rip it from my living flesh!"

Evaliene could not help but smile a tight-lipped, wry smile. She briefly glanced over the door and thought to herself what she alone could do him without the help of her messenger whether he wore the mail, full armor or not. Feigning weakness, she sobbed, "I am sorry. Please, you promised you would not hurt her! You said you only need to borrow her and I obliged. Do not threaten her again or you can consider someone else your puppet in whatever game you are playing." She pleaded with the Rider with as much theatre as she could muster.

"Do not disrespect me again, verbally or otherwise, because, if you do, your messenger will take the punishment in your stead. I promise you that!" he spat.

The town folk gathering near the dwelling were getting restless and began a covert movement that was quickly detected by the Rider. He hurriedly bullied his way into the room and demanded warm mead to drink and hard bread with dried fruit to eat. The two-legger had grown fond of the mead from this house. It had become habitual for him to demand it any time he was near. He found himself longing for it. Before his travels, he would demand that she supply him with at least two weeks' ration. It never had quite the same effect on him as it did when he drank it at her table. The bread was nothing special, the dried fruit was dried fruit, sweet and chewy, but the mead was more than ample to wash the rest down. The Rider stormed to the table, yanked a chair out and sat down hard. As he banged his good forearm down on the table, he yelled again. "We have spared your town and all of you in it because we could, not because we wanted to or needed to. If you or any of the pitiful others here decide not to cooperate with any of us, we will destroy the town and everything in it! Do you understand me? I am leaving this miserable waste dump tomorrow to take the latest bit of good news to my governor. When I return, if anything here has changed or if I even think it has changed out of our favor, I will personally set fire to every dwelling within my sight. Is that clear?"

Evaliene had to change her demeanor fast. The Rider's fuse was burning very short. She returned to the quiet, unassuming maiden. "I am sorry, Sir, please calm down. Here is your drink. I will fetch your

Chris McCollum

food for you. You say you are leaving tomorrow? For how long? I apologize for upsetting you."

The Rider's stay proceeded with no further outbursts. She kept his mug topped off with mead. She had noticed early on that when he got angry, he often said things he was not supposed to say to her. She found she could use this method to gain information she would not get otherwise. The more mead he drank, the easier he was to control. So far, today had been a good day. The governor? Which governor and why? Are they really going to spare the town after they are through with it? Burn down the dwellings? She had lots to do once he left. After eating and drinking his fill, the Rider abruptly left. She saw him out and bolted the door behind him. Evaliene walked to the table, picked up a chair and carried it back to the door. She stood on the chair and pried the trim piece from the top of the wooden door frame off to reveal the hidden compartment. She took a heavy object from the space, replaced the frame board and returned to the table. After laying the object on the table, she said to no one in particular, "So you're going to bring her back in pieces?" She lightly tapped the object then removed a heavy cloth bag that covered one end. When she did, it was, as she suspected, glowing.

\*\*\*

Evaliene's hand was not shaking today as she opened her diary.

*Day 47. I can hardly believe the change the Visitors have made on this town. I am not sure this can last much longer. The Visitors seem content to occupy our town forever. Why are they here? I have no more answers to that question today than I had on Day one. I haven't been made to write false letters under duress in a few days now. I hope that period has ended. I am so tempted to smash the entire lot of them, but I fear we would be back to square one trying to find out the reason behind these people. The Rider is growing more condescending and vile with each passing day. The accident on the mountain has made him merciless, not that he had much sense of mercy to begin with. His right arm is all but useless to him which some of us know will work to our favor should a fight break out. My Protectors are begging to dispatch them all. I cannot let that happen*

## *The Purpose of Nuorg*

*yet. The poor townspeople are at a loss. They have yet to pass any blame towards me for the invasion; still I think it may come before this is over. The food is gone and the harvest has been in for some time now. The Visitors brought nothing with them. They have pillaged our stock of nearly everything. They have not taken to violating the townspeople. If or when they do, that will be their end. My Protectors will not sit idly by and condone that type of action. I certainly will not. I will order them all dispatched and it will be immediately taken care of. There shan't be one left breathing. I hope Mad got my letter and the real message I intended. Surely she can unlock the code. There seems to be some commotion outside my window. I have stayed in all day, not wishing to bring anymore attention forwarded my way. I wish this would all go away.*

Evaliene wrapped the diary and packed it away in its hiding place. The ado outside was becoming increasingly disruptive. She closed her curtains and stepped outside. In the street, the Rider had a man tied to his saddle. He kept spurring his black Horse to run. The Horse refused. "Now that is odd," she thought. "Why doesn't that monster do the Rider's bidding?"

"I demand to know what is going on out here." She quickly walked out of her door and into the center of the melee. She glared at the Rider. "Why do you have that man tied to your saddle horn?"

"What concern is it of yours, lady?" asked a Visitor, holding the Rider's Horse. "I'd say it's a good day for a bit of discipline, I would."

"How dare you even think such a thing, you imbecile?" Evaliene did not back down. "Unbind him immediately or else!"

This exchange got the Rider's full attention. He returned the glare. "Or else what? This is the man who so kindly loaned me the Horse that very nearly killed me! I will not unbind him, nor will anyone here or I personally will be responsible for their last breath. Do I make myself clear? He knocked one of my men unconscious, stole him of his overcoat, then, as if that wasn't enough to get drug behind a Horse, he sent his puny little Horse on a mission to do me in!" He was literally fighting with the black Horse to move. He spurred him repeatedly. With blood running freely from the wounds opened by the spurs, the Horse remained absolutely resolute, it was not going anywhere. "Now, my lovely, if this stupid Horse of mine would do as he was told...we could get on with this."

"You will not continue this, you despicable and vile man," Evaliene promised. "And, might I add, the more you bark like this in public, the more these locals realize how stupid you actually are. Your mastery of your own language is reprehensible."

"Go shut her up," the Rider exclaimed to his crowd. "I don't care how you do it. Just don't let me hear that voice again today or ever!"

"I'll get right on it, sir," one of his followers shouted over the commotion. He did not make it to Evaliene's side. He never took another step. He was lost in the crowd and his body was never found or asked about.

"Did any of you stupid people hear me? I said shut her up!" The Rider was dismayed at the lack of obedience by his men. Again he shouted into the crowd. "Someone shut her up!"

Another lone voice answered back, "Fine, I will take her. I rather think I'm gonna enjoy it too!" Exactly what happened with the first to answer the Rider happened with the second and again, his body was never found.

Evaliene had enough of this. Furious, she raced back into her dwelling and quickly bolted the door behind her. In haste, she forgot to draw the curtain near the dining table. As she madly grabbed the chair and threw it beneath the door, she checked her sash. Good, the buckle was in place. She recklessly climbed the chair, reaching up haphazardly to pry off the frame board. She snatched the heirloom out of the hiding place then yanked off the heavy cloth cover. It was glowing so brightly that it radiated through the window curtain before reflecting off of the shiny silver pendant on the Horse's bridle. The Horse accidentally caught sight of the glow as the livid Rider nearly pulled the bit through the animal's throat causing him to rear up.

"It can't be!" the Horse yelled to no one in particular. "She can't, not now, not yet!"

The Horse violently reared up again, high enough to intentionally cause himself to topple over. The action caused the Rider to lose all hope of maintaining his balance. He tumbled off his crazed steed causing the Horse to fall on top of him, crushing his leg with the full brunt of the four-legged's weight. The fall sent his head crashing down on the hard-packed dirt path immediately leaving him unconscious. The Horse, on a mission, wildly struggled back to his hooves, but the Rider stayed down, knocked out and partially crippled for the rest of his life.

### *The Purpose of Nuorg*

The Horse staged a raging fit before barreling head long through the dazed onlookers, the front garden and into the front door, boldly freeing it from its hinges and bolts. As the Horse crashed through the entrance, the door took a short flight across the foyer, hitting Evaliene full in the side and knocking her ungracefully to the ground. The heirloom, thrown from her hand, sailed under the heavy couch near the mantle and landed with short slide, followed by a thud as it became tightly wedged under the sturdy oak frame. An eerie glow escaped from the slit between the dust ruffle and the hard wooden floor. Evaliene, instantly realizing she was under attack, painfully scrambled on all fours toward the nearest wall she could see with her groggy eyes. She fought dizziness for her senses and grasped with both hands haphazardly at her waist while positioning her body with her back to the wall. She glanced up menacingly at her attacker, ripped the buckle from her sash and took a second to scan the room for the heirloom. She then set her sights on the mad Horse. She was on her feet in an instant, wielding the flexible blade of a finely crafted dagger in her left hand. She screamed for the animal to stop, "You! How dare you burst through my door! I might not kill you with this, but you will feel pain! You have overstayed your welcome here! I should have never trusted you!"

The four-legger backed himself into the doorless opening enough to block out the charging horde of visitors and special town folk who were soon to follow. Fortunately, he was large enough to do this. The Horse did not have much time with the dagger-wielding, outraged lady of the house coming at him from the front and the over-protective town folk nearing his unprotected backside. He knew her people would be coming for her rather than taking advantage of the pandemonium-induced distraction outside to whittle down the ranks of the visitors. The Horse shouted back at Evaliene, "What do you think you are doing? In one self-centered blink of your eye, you may have ruined everything with your out-of-control, red-headed temper tantrum! It is not time for that! Do you not know what I am doing? What we are doing?"

Evaliene was speechless.

"Speak up, Princess! Has no one briefed you on what is going on here?"

"How do you know I am a princess? Nobody is supposed to know that!"

"Yes, of course I know who you are. I'm sure every four-legger in this country knows who you are. I had a good idea who you were the night I first met you and your white Horse. Sadly, we have dispatched several of our own in order to protect your identity from the two-leggers outside of your Protectors. Your Protectors know. Have they not told you? We have no failsafe way of knowing if you are the only Talker remaining here or not. We certainly hope you are. The whereabouts of your younger sister are closely guarded."

"You know of her too?" Evaliene was beginning to feel pain, her head was reeling.

"I know much more than you think! Rhiannon is below your rear window. Grab your diary, your escape bag and the heirloom! Don't forget anything! Go out your back window, climb down the ladder. Rhiannon is saddled up and she knows where you are going. I can't tell you and neither can she! Do you understand? We have no more time. What is the signal for your people to take arms against the visitors? The time is not right but, thanks to you, the time is now. Well, what is it?"

"What signal? Rhiannon? She won't get near you. She despises your existence! You burned that bridge with your despicable behavior. You, the black Rider's steed, she will never speak to you again!"

"Why are you two-leggers so inept? Forget that for one moment will you? You must have a signal to give your protectors when you are in danger. What is it? As for Rhiannon, she is my mate. We were born for each other. It's a long story and you have to go! Again, what is the signal?"

Evaliene was struggling for balance. She scooted over and lifted the couch off of the heirloom. She stuck the dagger back into her sash buckle, managed to stand and dashed to her bedroom. She grabbed the escape bag from behind the door and her diary from its hiding place. Folded over in pain from where the door blasted into her side, she hastily crammed the diary into an inner pocket in the bag. Still slumped over, she raised her skirt high enough to slide the heirloom into the holster in the top of her riding boot. It was uncomfortable, but necessary. She straightened up as much as she could before running back into the front room. "The signal, the signal," she muttered to herself. "What have I done?" She remembered.

"Hurry, Princess, I am being bombarded. They are throwing objects at my hind quarters to get my attention. Soon I know I will feel the



*The Purpose of Nuorg*

stabbing sensations from weapons of every sort. Set the signal and flee!"

"The signal," she exclaimed. "Yes, I remember." She struggled to the front window, threw open one shutter, ripped down a curtain and hung it over the window sill.

Immediately and without so much as one verbal order given, her people retreated from removing the black Horse from the door and turned on the Visitors that had ravaged the town for the past several weeks. They were relentless. Spurred on by the townspeople, the Protectors were making quick work of the rag-tag Visitor army. Two of them retrieved the crippled rider and stole him away before any of his underlings could make a fight to save him. They did not kill him; he was too valuable breathing. The rest of the Visitors were fair game. If they tried to fight, they were dispatched. If they surrendered, they were taken prisoner. Within the ways of the Protectors, being taken prisoner was much often worse than being quickly dispatched.

The black Horse began kicking and snorting as a ruse to fool those Visitors still capable of being fooled. Most were not in any condition to care what the Rider's Horse did. He put on enough of a show to allow Evaliene time to get out the rear window, down the ladder and onto Rhiannon's back. No sooner had her full weight settled into the saddle, the graceful white Horse took off at a feverish pace with only two wingers in pursuit. With a tip of a wing, the second winger signaled the remaining Horses and assorted four-leggers to stampede in circles around the town to further draw the attention away from Evaliene and Rhiannon's escape. The path had been scouted and the guardian Horse knew exactly where she was heading. Evaliene, still doubled over in pain, did not.

Perrie scanned to the horizon for clues. The assembly of two-leggers had to come from somewhere. She attentively searched for a vestige of a marauded village or signs of a lengthy encampment. With one eye always open for an impending attack, the other eye focused on an origination point for the hapless travelers. As she flew, she worried. She knew it was taking too long. There was no place to find.

How he knew she was there was not for her to know. Still, he saw her and still he watched over her. He too, was keeping one eye open for an attack on her. Truth be known, he was keeping both eyes open for her benefit.

\*\*\*

“Perrie has been gone for a very long time, Hemoth. This bag has a lot of supplies left in it, but there is not much food. This group has eaten nearly all of it. What should we do now?” Madaliene looked up to her protector as he stood on his hind legs thinking Perrie would soon appear with news, good or bad.

“Princess, Perrie has been gone too long for my liking. We can’t make any plans without some information from her. We need to ask more questions of these leggers. Surely one of them has answers.” The Grizzly spoke to Madaliene without taking his eyes from the surroundings. “I really can’t see anything.”

Lightning sat slumped on the ground, eyeing the two-leggers as they filled their empty stomachs. “Princess, is there any food left for us or have you given it all to these two-leggers?”

Madaliene reached far into the bag and pulled out the last of the fruits. “Here you go, Lightning. There is just enough left for one meal each for the three of us and a few bits left for Perrie, if she will hurry back.” She tossed him a few fruits.

“Thank you. So you say this needs to last?”

“Yes, Lightning, it certainly does.”

*The Purpose of Nuorg*

Lightning lifted his tired, hungry mass and stood beside Hemoth. “What do you think we should do now?”

Hemoth continued to search for an unknown quarry. “If Madaliene is running out of food, we are going to have to find some other way to feed these leggers. As far as our next Nuorg-related mission, well...I’m not sure.”

Lightning nodded in agreement. “Hemoth, do you feel a need for a long nap?”

“Yes, I do. We have to put those kind of thoughts out of our mind, Lightning. There is no time for that now. Princess, have you heard any of these leggers talking about anything?”

“No, Hemoth, I have not. I think it’s time we question them again.”

“One of them must know something, Princess. See if the older one will start talking again.”

Madaliene stepped over to the older man’s side. He was slowly munching his way through the last bit of food she had tossed him earlier. “Sir, what more can you tell me about where all of you came from? Why are you here?”

The older legger slowly chewed his final bite and looked at her with eyes nearly void of emotion. “Little girl, we have no where else to be. None of us has a home to go back to. We have no idea if we are free from those that left us alive or merely awaiting their return to complete what they started. Why are you here? Where did your group come from?”

Madaliene paused, “To be honest with you sir, we are from all over. The Falcon that came in with us is from the far northwest, the largest Grizzly is from the far north, the other Bear is from the Great Forest, which I assume is somewhere in the middle and I am from, well...I don’t really know where I am from. Are you sure you can’t tell me more about your group?”

“Miss, that sounds very interesting and could very well be a rouse to get some of my folk talking to you about things you don’t need to know about. Might that be your reasoning for the questions?”

Madaliene could not figure out the older legger. “Why would I offer all of our food to you, if I wanted to do away with you? I am here to help you, but if you feel you don’t need it, just tell me and we will again be on our way.”

"If that is the way you want it then fine. Leave us be. We don't need help from your group. We have eaten our fill of your food. We will survive one way or another, if it is meant to be."

Madaliene stood up shaking her head and walked back to Hemoth. "Hemoth, we should go. These people do not want us here. Why did Lightning's ax-pike bring us here to begin with? Maybe these leggers are not the reason for us being here after all."

Hemoth smiled at his charge. "Princess, could there be another reason? And if so, what is it? I would love to know."

Perrie came in flying low as she was instructed. She was not showing any sign of tiring, "Princess, Hemoth, I am sorry it took so long. I found a lot of nothing out there, too much nothing to be legitimate. Someone has changed the landscape beneath our feet. There is not one iota of anything for miles. There is no sign of another winger or legger of any kind except for these we have here, however, a large winger is watching from on high."

Madaliene and Hemoth immediately jerked their heads skyward; they scanned the blue sky with eyes that could never see as high as the watching winger was drifting. "We will have to take your word for that, Perrie. I know I can't see any movement up there at all." Madaliene continued to scan for what she could never see.

"Believe me Princess, it is definitely up there."

"You say you saw nothing of note anywhere. Is that correct Perrie?" Hemoth was not looking skyward any longer. He stared into the young Falcon's eyes. "Absolutely, positively correct? You saw nothing?"

Perrie met Hemoth's stare. "Without a doubt, Hemoth. There is nothing out there."

Hemoth once again looked to the sky. "Then where did they come from?"

Perrie joined Hemoth staring skyward. "Hemoth, we have to find out. They could not have just appeared."

Hemoth laughed, "Why not, Perrie? We did."

Madaliene moved in closer to Hemoth's side. Lightning soon joined them. Shortly, all eyes were focused high into the sky searching for something none of them could hope to see. For a moment each was lost in their thoughts, rehashing the last few days. Lightning noticed the absence first.

*The Purpose of Nuorg*

“Where did they go?” Lightning asked, flustered. “They were just here.”

“What are you talking about Lightning?” Madaliene turned to see what was missing.

“The two-leggers, Princess, where did they go?” Lightning walked around trying to spot the group.

“Hemoth, Hemoth, look—they are all gone!” Madaliene was frightened.

The Grizzly Bear and the Falcon were greeted by the same sight as Lightning and the Princess. “First, they come from nowhere and now they disappear to nowhere. Everyone, gather in. Lightning, get us out of here!”

“Wait Lightning! Don’t do anything yet. Take a look over there. Look at where they sat.” Madaliene pointed with a wide sweeping gesture. “What do you see?”

“The food,” answered Perrie. “They did not eat the food you gave them, they...they increased it.”

“Yes, they did eat it,” Lightning added. I saw them chomping on all of it.”

Scattered about lay the food Madaliene had tossed from Frederick’s bag to the two-leggers and more. She walked over and picked several pieces of it up. She held it for the others to see. “Can someone explain this to me? There has not been a bite taken from any of this, yet we watched them eat it all. Now...now there is more here than I gave them. What is going on?”

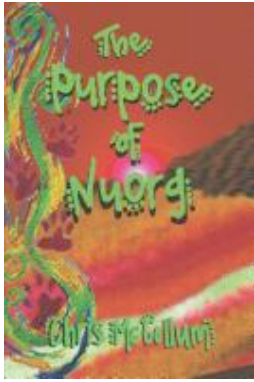
Hemoth hurried to her side. “Let me see that Mad!” The Grizzly took a few fruits from her hands and plopped them into his mouth. As he chewed, he spoke, “This tastes normal to me. There is not even the slightest tooth mark on it. Princess, gather this up and place it back in the bag. We may need it yet.”

Madaliene collected all of the food. “Hemoth, how strange is this?”

Lightning began to collect what he could from the ground. “Mind if I eat some of this? I’m a bit hungry.”

“Sure Lightning, go ahead. I don’t see what it can hurt now.”

Madaliene ate a few fruits herself. The food tasted even better than it had before. Was it because they were hungry or was it because of something else? None of them seemed to care. Again, high above them all, he smiled as he soared.



*In this third installment of the "Nuorg" series, our main characters are unknowingly joined by others, each with information or possessions crucial to the ongoing search for the reasons and purpose of Nuorg. Confidence is tested, loyalties are questioned and startling discoveries are made as the memorable cast strives for answers to evermore perplexing questions. Does Nuorg exist and, if so, why? An evolving story that appeals to all ages. See also *The Land of Nuorg* and *The Mysteries of Nuorg*.*

# **The Purpose of Nuorg**

**Order the complete book from**

**[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com)**

**<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/6447.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**