

NEW GODS OF MANKIND



NEW GOD'S HANDBOOK

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Richard would like to dedicate this book to his loving wife Claudia, his dog Maggie, Jesper "Hund" who inspired him to create this game, his sisters, Valerie and Zipporah, his elite gaming friends, Travis, Rick, Hein, Jonathan W., Mitch, Paul, Chris "crazy toes", Crystal, Brian, Tito, Ten, Mike S., Mike M., Ryan, Justin, Randy and everyone who believed in him and his madness.

Brad would like to dedicate this book to his loving wife Jessica



New Gods of Mankind New God's Handbook
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CHAPTER ONE: AN INTRODUCTION TO GODHOOD



LIVE THE MYTH

Amidst the sounds of drums and murmuring voices, an elderly man stands at the dias. The priest wears a bright orange caftan with a tall feathered headdress resting on his brow. His grizzled face regards the crowd and he slowly brings his hands up from his sides. The gathering of men, women, and children dutifully chant louder until the final words of the prayer are shouted in a crescendo.

He brings his hands down abruptly and everyone freezes, as silent as the grave. The only sounds are the crackling of bonfires, burnt food sitting around twisting flames. He has forgotten to eat, just as have every man, woman, and child. They wait for a sign from their god, a portent that they are protected and loved by an entity of vast power and might.

They wait...for you.

BECOME THE LEGEND

New Gods of Mankind is a roleplaying game: one member of the group takes the part of the gamemaster (called Fate both in and out of game) who helps construct the setting for the other members of the group. The rest of the players take the roles of brand new gods, entities who draw the worship of a set of followers somewhere on the Known World. These new gods either hold a single human tribe, or come together as a pantheon for a single tribe. Each player describes the domains he controls, his laws, his specific heavenly abode, and his Miracles. Using his powers, the god is a powerful spirit, capable of affecting the mortal world where his followers reside. From their worship he gains more power that sustains him and keeps him in power. The more followers a god controls, the more powerful he becomes.

BE A GOD

The Known World is a dangerous one. Mankind is very

young and has only just reached the Bronze Age period in most regions. The humans are also not alone; several elder races walk the world and their ancient gods sit in the heavens, both seeing humans as interlopers. Besides the elder races, demons and leviathans make the mortal realm highly lethal to even the most powerful spirits. These fragile humans turn to you for protection, guidance, and hope.

Can you lead them to a golden age of mankind?

WHAT IS ROLEPLAYING?

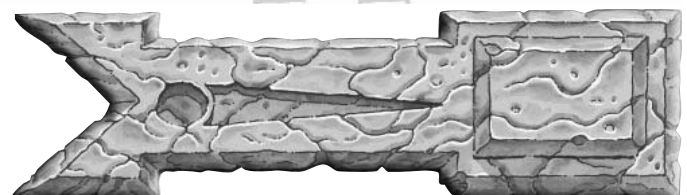
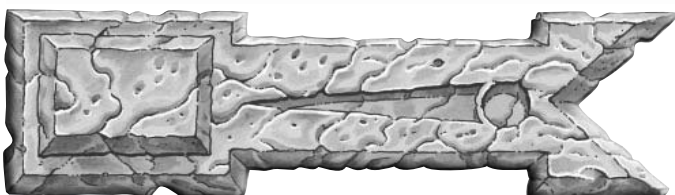
Roleplaying is when you, the player, create a character and describe how that character reacts to various scenes and situations. In the case of **New Gods of Mankind**, there should be a group of two or more players to interact with each other, and a gamemaster—the narrator—to create and guide the players through their adventure. These sessions can last for several hours, so you should discuss who will host the game. Some people prefer to play sitting around a table; others prefer lounging on chairs or on the floor in the living room. In some cases, like when small children rampage through your play space at regular intervals, it may be necessary to find an alternative space to set up in such as a friend's place or a local comic book/game store.

LET THERE BE DICE

Dice are the randomizing factor of the game. There are five different dice used in this game, all of which can be found at a hobby store, most comic book stores, or ordered online. A player will need at least one each of a four-sided die (d4), six-sided die (d6), eight-sided die (d8), 10-sided die (d10), and twelve-sided die (d12). The rules for conflict show you how to utilize these dice during play. These dice provide realism to the game, allowing for unforeseen circumstances and a chance at failure; it is no fun if you know you are going to win all the time.

ROLEPLAYING A GOD

In **New Gods of Mankind**, you will create a character—a deity—and play out the god's actions and responses to a setting and plot described by Fate. There is no clear-cut





winner or loser; you are successful if your god grows in strength and power, and unsuccessful if your god is forgotten or your followers are extinguished. It is your goal to become the biggest and most powerful god you can. The other players are trying to do the same, however, and you will also have other, far more experienced deities and spirits trying to kill off or convert your followers so you do not succeed.

More importantly, you “win” if you and your friends have fun, even if your god is crushed and forgotten.

WHY YOU NEED THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook provides you with everything you need to play a god. It explains what the spirit world is like, the other deities and spirits you will be associating with, how to create a god for this game, how to play the game, and the lay of the land in the mortal realm. A map of the Known World is provided to better aid you in your journey. Fate has his own book, which contains details for creating the adventures your god partakes in. It is highly recommended that you do not look in Fate’s book, since it will ruin some of the fun and surprises in store for you.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abyss: The spaces between the Fires of Creation, could either be considered Outer Space or the void between dimensions, such as the space between the mortal world and the spirit world.

Ancestral Spirit: A soul that has not gone on to the Well of Souls after death, preferring to exist either in the mortal realm or the celestial realm to serve mortals or gods.

Artifact: An object that has been granted power. Usually given power by a god, leviathan, or demon, but can sometimes also include an object created by a powerful magician or Hero.

Belief: The power granted to a god, leviathan, spirit, or demon through mortals on the Known World. Only

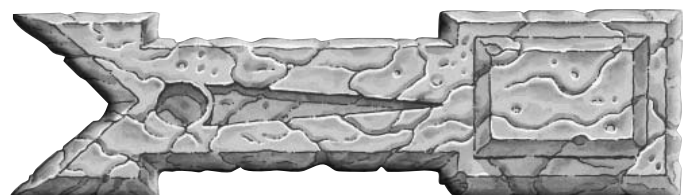
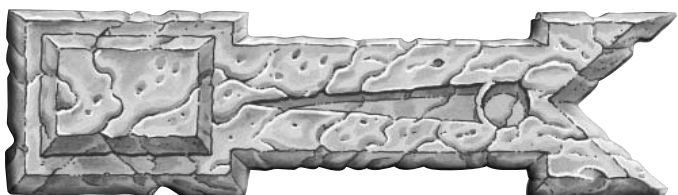
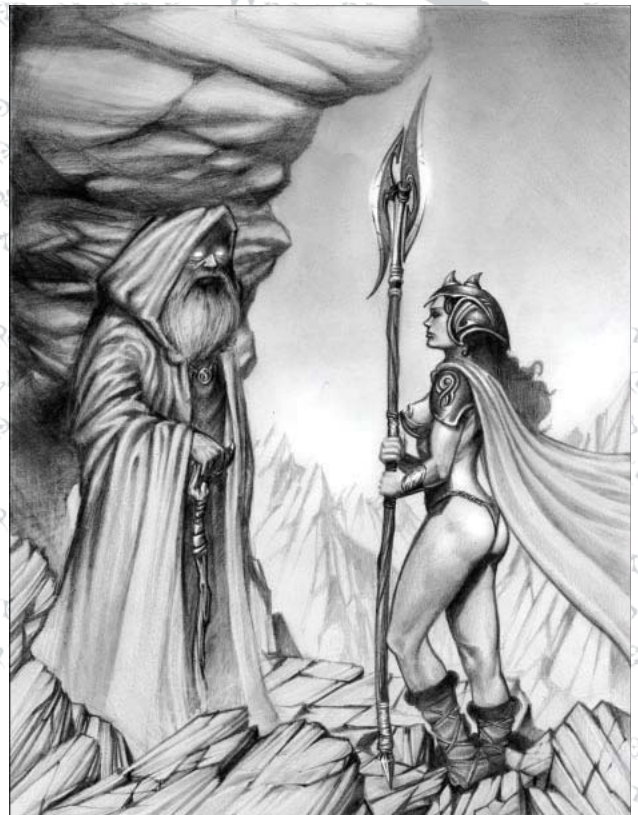
living mortals can generate Belief. This Belief translates to a numerical value that can be used by a god to maintain itself and create Miracles.

Body: One of three attributes of the mortal followers; Body represents the physical strength and resiliency of a mortal.

Celestial Gardens: The celestial realm where Fate resides. Many mortals end up here to await judgment and most of the gods meet in the Gardens to discuss matters relating to their mortal followers.

Celestial Spheres: The four Spheres of the heavens, divided into the seasons, with the Celestial Gardens in the middle. Your character makes his home in these heavens.

Commandments: A set of laws you create for your followers to obey.





Conflict: Encompasses both battles between mortals and battles against other spirits or gods.

Cost Factor: A value multiplied by the base cost of a Miracle to determine the final cost in Belief. It costs more belief to create a Miracle in an enemy god's territory, or one that affects more people, for example.

Creator: The entity that set the heavens, Well of Souls, and Known World into place. The Creator's appearance and whereabouts are unknown to most everyone save Fate.

Demon: A spirit that escapes the Well of Souls and does not enter a mortal body. Some demons have never been mortal, while others return to the Well of Souls after having incarnated and then escape. Some demons go on to become leviathans or gods.

Domain: In game terms, this is the element, concept, or physical object type that a god has control over. Examples include water, rocks, owls, wind, love, war, etc.

Dice Pool: A dice pool is a specific number of dice you roll in a conflict.

Divine Sight: The power of any god to look into the mortal realm in a place that god holds sway, either through a tribe's ownership of territory or through the presence of those followers.

Elder Gods: Elder gods are the major deities of the elder races on the Known World. These are the gods that have existed for millennia in the Celestial Spheres.

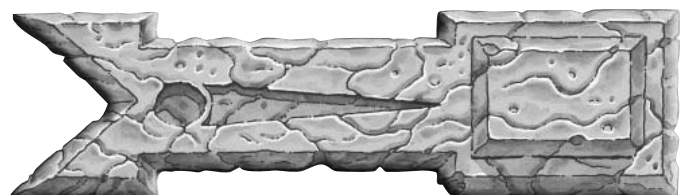
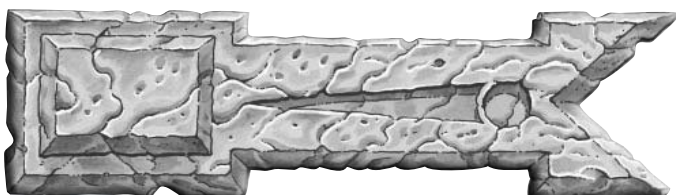
Elder Races: These are the mortal races on the Known World that have been here for millennia. They include the undines, salamanders, gnomes, sylphs, and giants.

Fate: The caretaker of the heavens. Fate is a powerful being that helps propel souls to their destinations. Fate also grants godhood to qualified spirits and demons. Fate intervenes only when absolutely necessary and helps guide the gods and maintain order. Also, the term for the gamemaster in **New Gods of Mankind**.

Fires of Creation: As easily explained as the stars of the universe, or as enigmatic as a dimensional realm where gods and mortals dwell, each Fire of Creation is separated from the rest by the expansive Abyss and most deities never travel from one to another.

Followers: Mortal souls that worship a specific god, giving that god Belief. A god must have followers in order to exist.

Gamemaster (GM): The storyteller and guide for the adventure; the GM not only sets up the adventure and keeps track of the numbers, but also plays the role of any entities or mortals the new gods interact with, including Fate, the elder gods, leviathans, and so on.





Hero: A mortal that is granted vast power by a god to assist him in the mortal realm. Heroes range from great warriors and wise men to paragons of their craft.

Incarnation: A god in mortal form. Any god that enters a mortal body to traverse the Known world is said to have incarnated.

Inclination: The type of Miracles a god performs regularly, divided into Destruction, Creation, Transformation, and Control Miracles.

Leviathan: Rogue spirits bent on destruction. Equal to gods in power, they generate Terror from their victims. Terror feeds a leviathan like Belief feeds the gods.

Maintenance: A period of time in a year when a god gathers Belief from his followers and checks to make sure he is paying appropriate attention to them.

Mind: One of three attributes of mortal followers; Mind represents a mortal's intelligence and wisdom.

Miracles: The god's capabilities for abilities that defy nature and logic. These Miracles are how a god manifests himself in the realms. The god can use these Miracles to generate more Belief and protect his followers in times of need.

Known World: The mortal world controlled by the gods in the celestial realms. Everything marked on the map is considered the Known World. It is acknowledged that there is more to the planet, but few have traveled further to explore it.

Pantheon: A group of like-minded gods, usually working together to guide and protect a single group of mortals.

Player Character: A character in the game that is controlled by one of the players.

Scale: In conflict and miracle-casting, the scale is how many mortals are affected by the situation.

Season: A turn in the game. There are four seasons to a year, and during each season events occur that may require the gods' intervention. The length of a season may vary in real time from several minutes to several game sessions.

Spirit: One of three attributes of the mortal followers; Spirit represents a mortal's force of will, mental resiliency, and enlightenment.

Spirit World: An all-encompassing title to the Celestial Realms, Abyss, Fires of Creation, and Well of Souls.

Spirits: Beings that were once living mortals, now beyond mortal life.

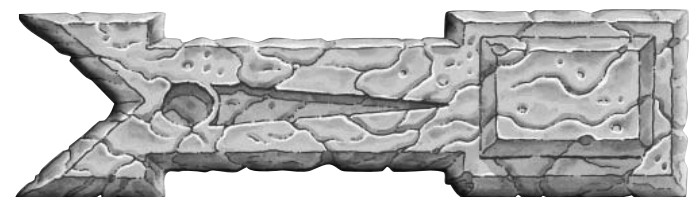
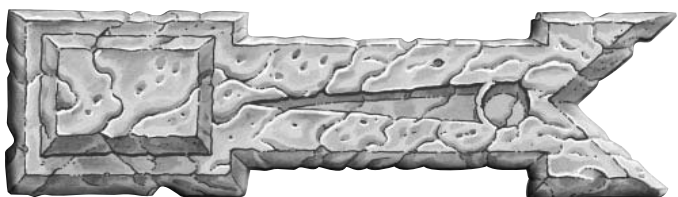
Symbols: A representation of a god's power and a means to identify the work or followers of a god. These symbols can also be used by the faithful to call on the god in times of need.

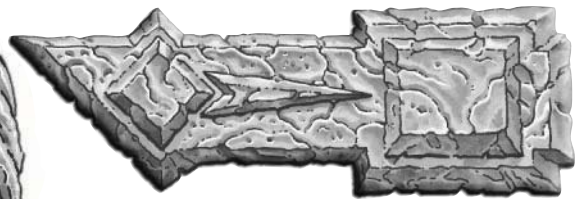
Terror: A form of Belief created by destructive entities. Highly addictive, Terror can only be used to create "Miracles" that cause more Terror.

Veil of Dreams: The point between the mortal world and spirit world. The Veil of Dreams is where mortal minds go when they dream and the realm that spirits must pass to reach the heavens.

Well of Souls: An ever-flowing container of souls separate from the spirit and mortal worlds. Souls come from this well to incarnate on the Known World and most souls return to this well after their bodies die. Demons are those spirits that leave the well and do not incarnate. Only Fate truly knows how the Well of Souls operates.

Wood Nymphs: A minor race that has been on the mortal world almost as long as the elder races. They do not worship gods in the celestial realm, preferring to worship themselves and create Belief in this way.





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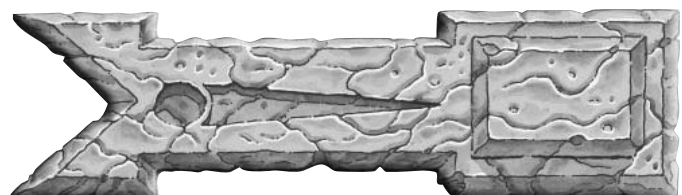
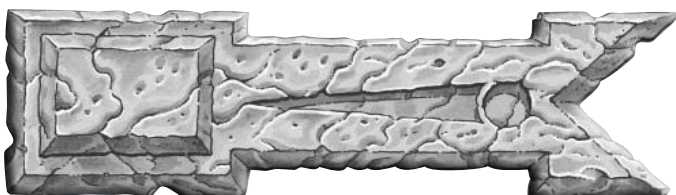
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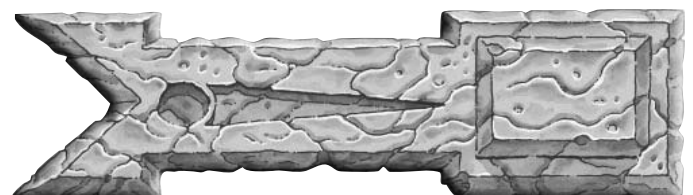
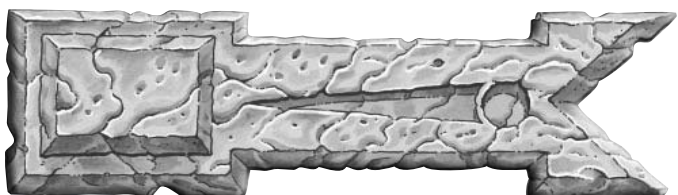
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CHAPTER 2: XIL'S GUIDE TO THE KNOWN WORLD

As written for Queen Thassalandri of the exalted city Naara-Beesh in the lands of Sssthra.

Queen Thassalandri, Jewel of the High Queendom of Naara-Beesh, High Servant to the Blessed Dragon God Thaminx, ruler of the lands of Sssthra, conqueror of the Plains of Lashon, guardian of the house of Thaminx, Supreme Archon of the Eastern Lands of Frinth; I, your humble servant and guide through the Frinthian Wars, Xil, commander in Your Majesty's armies of Naara-Beesh, have completed, at your request, a comprehensive guide to the Known World. Included in this text are my personal notes and comments from each city and territory, including the strange customs of their people and the bizarre phenomena and features of each land. My commentary is of a personal nature and separate from the main text—I am a professional first and foremost. Not included are the unknown lands that lie to the west past the accursed island of Kukulcan. It is my hope that this collection of knowledge will help Your Highness in her quest to liberate the world from false gods.

With many blessings and gems, Xil, Chief Intelligence Officer in the armies of Naara-Beesh, formerly of the Silver Scroll Gatherers in Arador

THE NORTHERN CONTINENT OF NAALGROM

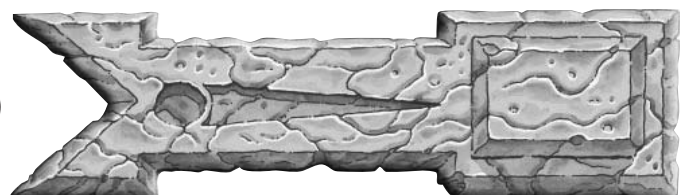
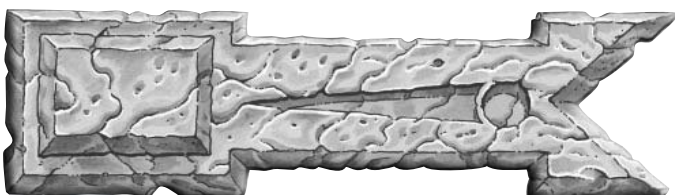
AR-NALUUN

We now control these waters, my queen. The fleets of House Draax (blessed be Her name) roam the waters, hunting all that lives. Craftspeople can make an excellent heating oil from the flesh and blood of the creatures who roam these waters. Still, one should take caution in these cold seas, as the denizens of this region worship Plthunlos.

Ar-Naluun, a frigid, ice-choked sea, is an area of tense



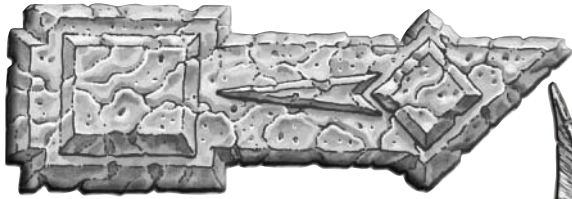
calm in the Known World's volatile oceans. These waters are filled with arctic animals such as sea lions, whales, and other aquatic mammals and fish. Ar-Naluun is famous as a hunting and fishing area for humans and salamanders. Undines frown upon such activity and attack human or salamander ships that actively hunt their kinfolk. Most of the time, humans, salamanders, and undines pass each other without incident, as the area is so vast and the harsh environment limits travel. Storms occur throughout the year and can start unexpectedly. During the winter months, most of the sea is clogged with ice and no ships can pass through. Many boats have disappeared into those waters.



Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have a detailed history with the world? Here is a detailed map of the Known World, showing the six Elder Races and their ancient gods. The map is framed by a stone border with a central sunburst and a mask at the bottom.



FOR SURVIVAL BESIDE SIX ELDER RACES AND THEIR ANCIENT GODS, THE GODS OF THE ELDER RACES WERE BORN AND GAVE THEM THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD AND EVEN THEIR OWN. THEY ARE THE GODS OF THE ELDER RACES AND GAVE THEM THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD AND EVEN THEIR OWN.



The waters of Ar-Naluun are the coldest in the Known World, with many ice storms, cold currents, and glacial flows. The frozen teeth of Plthunlos, a collection of icebergs and sheets of broken ice anchored atop an underwater mountain range, is the most dangerous area in the seas of Ar-Naluun. Another well-known spot of contention between undines and salamanders is the Rift of Draax, an underwater hot vent that spews new land mass into the ocean. The rift is forming a small chain of islands off the coast of Sssnamon; Sssnamon's salamanders regularly skirmish with the undines. The undines' main city lies in the green cliffs called Nesh. Undines call Ar-Naluun their home, but salamanders and humans constantly arrive from Sssnamon, Samona, Sssthra, and Frinth's north coast to plunder the area.

Undines from this region often have skin colored in deep purples and blues with dark wavy seaweed for hair. Humans here are light-skinned with thick, dark wavy hair. Salamanders are white to tan.

Many gods, demons, and spirits stake their claim to this territory. The undine gods Plthunlos and Celundynn and the salamander Dragon God Draax all have followers here. Legend says that Plthunlos and Draax clashed here in ancient times, creating the Rift of Draax and the Frozen Teeth of Plthunlos.

Environmental Type Ample (Undine Only)
Uninhabitable all others/ Prominent Seasons (winter)

AR-FESLYNN

This gulf has proven to be troublesome, as undines and humans both run rampant in this area. I served on a Flasggon raiding ship in my early days of service to you, my queen, as a flying scout. We captured several human fishermen, but a school of undine warriors attacked us. I barely escaped with my life; the ship and the rest of the crew sank to a watery grave.

The Gulf of Ar-Feslynn hosts the largest undine population in the north as well as many human and salamander ships.

The cool blue waters and mild seas make for good fishing. Temperatures rarely drop to freezing, allowing year-round activity. Near the Horn Mountains lies one of the oldest undine cities, Jaash. In the gulf's center is one of the undines' primary holy reefs: Ur-Celynn, also called Burial Reef. At the center of this reef is the ancient tower Morsuuth, which the First Ones created. Many fishing and trading boats from the human cities of Hrace and Laanad travel these waters, as well as salamander raiding ships from House Draax.

The undines and humans here coexist peacefully, but salamanders from Shha-narath create tension. Their raiding ships are on the constant prowl for new slaves and trade goods.

Undines here bear skins of blue and purple, with lighter skin tones than those of Ar-Naluun. The gulf's humans are fair-skinned with light hair.

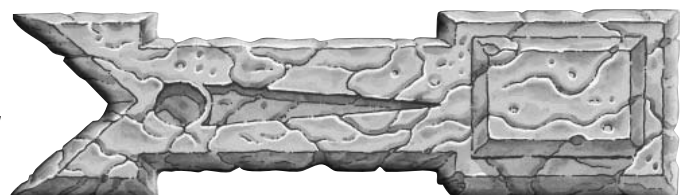
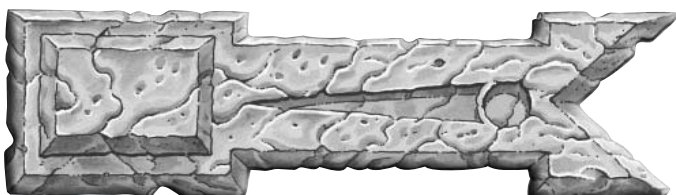
Celundynn, the undine goddess of the seas and cliffs, carries heavy influence in these waters. Gods of the human nation of Hrace also hold sway here, particularly Baesop, God of Storms.

Environmental Type Lush (Undine Only) Uninhabitable all others/ Prominent Seasons (spring, fall)

ATANASTAN Starting Area

Not only is this soggy land filled with unwashed humans and nasty demons, but furry, upright creatures wander the swamp as well. Twice as tall as Atan rats, these creatures, which some locals call Baaistru, seem to have social skills and can use tools. You can find their many nests near Seer Lake. Some humans here use them for pets or guardians. I do not recommend them for eating, as their cooked flesh is rancid in odor and lacking in taste. Another creature of note is a malevolent spirit that haunts the swamp—the Laaistru.

In Naalgrom's far western corner, where few sane men travel, is the cold, boggy land of Atanastan. Most of the area is wet marshlands with swamps, bogs, rivers, and lakes





flowing around twisted, sagging trees and long, spear-tipped reeds. The temperature gets hot for a few moons during the summer, but shrouds up in a cold fog for most of the year. Sleet and hail are common in winter.

Seer Lake is a pilgrimage point for all races, as its waters bring visions to oracles and priests. Next to this holy lake is the human city of Atan, a thriving metropolis filled with cutthroats, pirates, and shady merchants.

Most Atanastan humans are short, light-skinned, and civilized. They live off their wits and cunning. Dark curly hair and bright blue eyes set off their round features. A few cannibalistic human tribes live on the land along the coast and rivers, cooking their civilized brethren in their dinner stews.

No gods claim this region, though many have tried, and their ruined temples attest to their fleeting influence. The locals claim that a demon host called the Laaistru haunts this land, possessing the local tribes and anyone who wanders too far into the swamps.

Environmental Type Ample (Human/ Undine) Harsh (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (winter, summer)

JASINU Starting Area

I have not seen my homeland in some time. This place always strikes a chord of comfort in my heart, soothing my pains. My tribe has relocated to your lands, Your Worship, but a few of my relatives stay in our ancestral home. I make a pilgrimage to the City of Whispers every so often, exchanging facts and knowledge.

Do not worry, Your Highness; I do not share state secrets with my clansmen. No eyes but yours will see this book.

Between the lands of Kathonia and Samona lie the flat plains of Jasinu. Known for its vast expanse of endless rock, short grasslands, and shrubbery, Jasinu is a featureless land with little in the way of trees, hills, or anything to break up the horizon. Only one location stands out in this prairie—the Crater of Lugos, the sylph god. A small series of caves

stretches within the crater, including a small city filled with sylphs. Legend says that the sylphs who live in the crater watch over a god who fell from the sky.

Jasinu's mild temperatures and even seasons make it an ideal home for nomads, who hunt the vast herds of animals that roam the plains. Buffalo, elk, deer, and other wild game can wander here, as do small packs of wolves and wildcats. Near the sea are several small beaches with a few human tribes living off the ocean's bounty. A small human city, Laanad, lies near the coast. The city is a small fishing community that maintains trade with several human cities, including Hrace.

Humans both primitive and civilized Humans inhabit this region. Sylphs live here as well, and the two races share trade and commerce. Sylphs do not allow humans to live in the Crater of Lugos, but may go there to barter and trade.

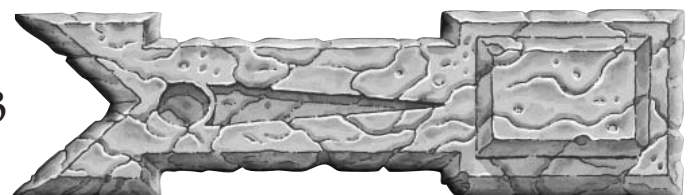
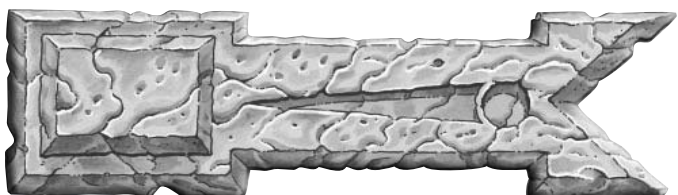
Humans from this region are light-skinned, freckled nomads with brown to reddish-blond hair. Sylphs of these lands vary in color but maintain a dark, flat, skin complexion of leathery brown, jet black, or indigo.

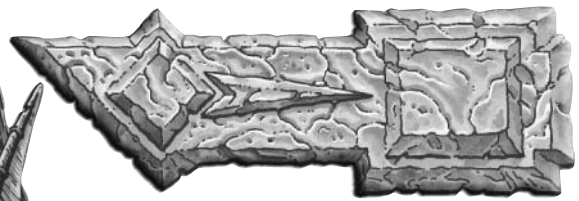
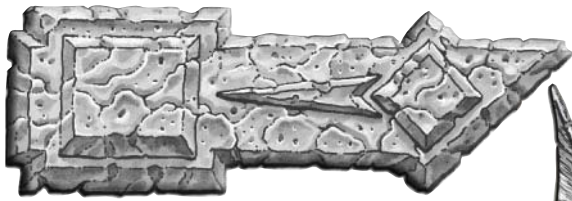
Lugos, the sylph god of the wind and whisper, rules this land. The humans here have no gods of their own for now and give limited fealty to Lugos.

Environmental Type Ample (Human, Sylph) Harsh (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (None)

JUREL

I have never been as cold as I was in the giant lands of Jurel. The hateful creatures who live in these lands know nothing of civilization or proper intelligence—only savage bloodlust and a keen animal's instinct to find anything living, and then kill it. Even my wings did nothing to help me; the vicious monstrosities lobbed boulders and branches at me! Imagine, me flying a great distance, only to suffer attack from below. I hid near a particular circle of stones, as the giants' few smarts leave them when they near it. On cold nights I can still hear them chanting to their god, Thuun, as they enter their blood frenzy, killing





nearly creatures and each other. I shall never visit this land again.

Jurel, an icy realm on the northwest strip of Naalgrom, is filled with giants and monstrous creatures. Ice and snow covers the area, with the occasional mountain, hill, tree, or obelisk that marks where the Jurelian tribes perform their rituals. Fierce blizzards and hailstorms haunt the land, and avalanches near are common in the Ice Crown Mountains, though summer carries an occasional reprieve from the harsh climate. One of the Jurelian giants' main areas of worship is the Grun Circle of Stones, where they sacrifice people of other races, creatures, and rival tribesmen.

Jurelian giants are fearsome creatures, intelligent to a degree but lost to primal instincts and uncontrollable rages. They stand two to three times as tall as a human. Jurelians have three eyes and long shaggy coats of fur colored in whites, browns, and blues. Four large arms connect to the hunched-over torso, and strong trunk-like legs propel the creature.

Tales say that several minor gods call this land home, with each tribe worshipping its own deity. The most notable of these Jurelian gods is Thuun, Lord of Destruction, who holds sway over several tribes and demands constant sacrifices. The sylphs believe that a god named Grun once existed, and that he ruled all the giants until the other gods exiled him.

Environmental Type Lush (Giants only) Harsh (Humans, Sylph) Uninhabitable (All others)/ **Prominent Seasons** (winter)

KATHONIA Starting Area

The lore of your people covers the knowledge of this holy land, and I will not further extrapolate upon it. I will, however, warn you against the human threat. Humankind infests these lands and should be enslaved or destroyed. Humans breed like rabbits and have little regard for the mysteries of this land; they befoul every place they inhabit.

Nestled in the Horn Mountains beside the Celestial Lakes

is Kathonia, a series of rivers, lakes and marshes home to a great variety of reptilian creatures. The temperatures are semi-tropical, with mild winters filled with rainstorms and scorching, humid summers. The Celestial Lakes to the north are home to several human tribes. Further south are the marshlands, which are filled with large reptilian creatures. These creatures are wild variants of the reptilian mounts salamanders use. Local humans tame some of them, while salamander hunters train some of the rarer species, turning them into highly prized mounts. The flying lizards are some of the most popular.

Humans and salamanders roam this region, and a few human villages and salamander forts dot the perimeter. Humans here are primitive and fierce, as they are constantly at war with their surroundings and the salamanders. They are olive-skinned, with dark wavy hair and deep-brown eyes. Salamanders who hunt in this region are from the land of Zzzalon, and come to gather the beasts and humans for sale.

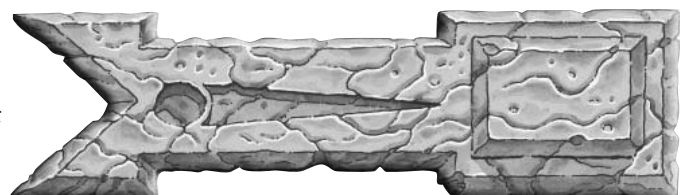
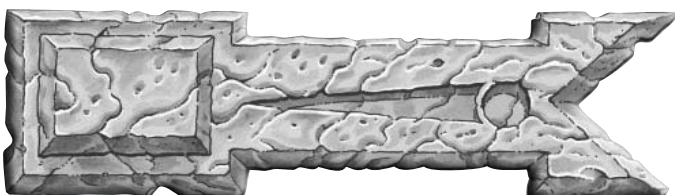
Within the Horn Mountains are inner cliffs, which form a holy place for salamander priestesses. Kathonia is called the Nest of the Ancient Dragons of the World and the Birthplace of the Dragon Gods. No human or salamander god dominates this region, though rival dragon gods contest it.

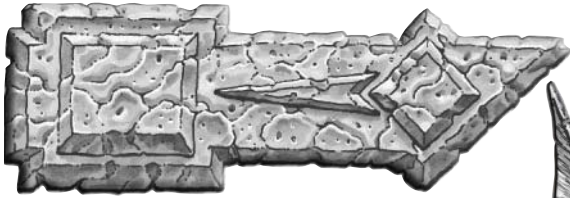
Environmental Type Lush (Humans only) Ample (Salamanders) Harsh (All others)/ **Prominent Seasons** (summer)

KYBEL Starting Area

I have a cousin who lives in this wasteland. He came here during a bout of madness, which some demon monstrosity brought upon him. Before I entered Your Majesty's service, I visited him often. He lives in a cave and keeps some unusual artifacts. However, after three days of eating moss stew and enduring incoherent ramblings, I left for saner lands.

The frozen land of Kybel is a barren waste where harsh





people and creatures struggle to live. Crystal growths stand throughout the region. The land is home to many strange spirits and demons who are exiles from elsewhere. It is a place of fallen gods and vengeful ghosts. Few things grow in Kybel, as ice storms and subzero temperatures envelope the area year round. Kybel humans have little farmland or livestock and look elsewhere for sustenance.

Few people live in this area. A couple small villages stand amid the snow, filled with outcast humans in ice huts, insane sylphs who burrow deep in ice caves, and the occasional gnome hermit. The humans here are blue-eyed, fair-skinned specimens with blond hair. Most attain their food and resources by raiding southern lands, then return north in the winter.

Many gods, spirits, and demons haunt this region, possessing those who live here. Once, in the days before Hracc was built, a human army marched into the land to bring forth a lost ancestral god, but never returned.

Environmental Type Uninhabitable (Salamander, Undine) Ample (Giant) Harsh (All others)/ **Prominent Seasons** (winter)

RHOK-DRUNNOR

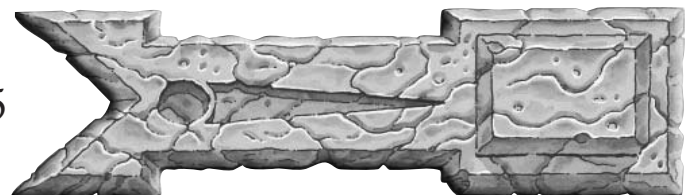
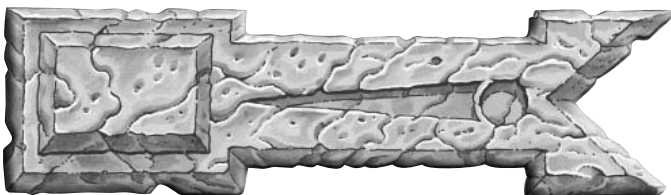
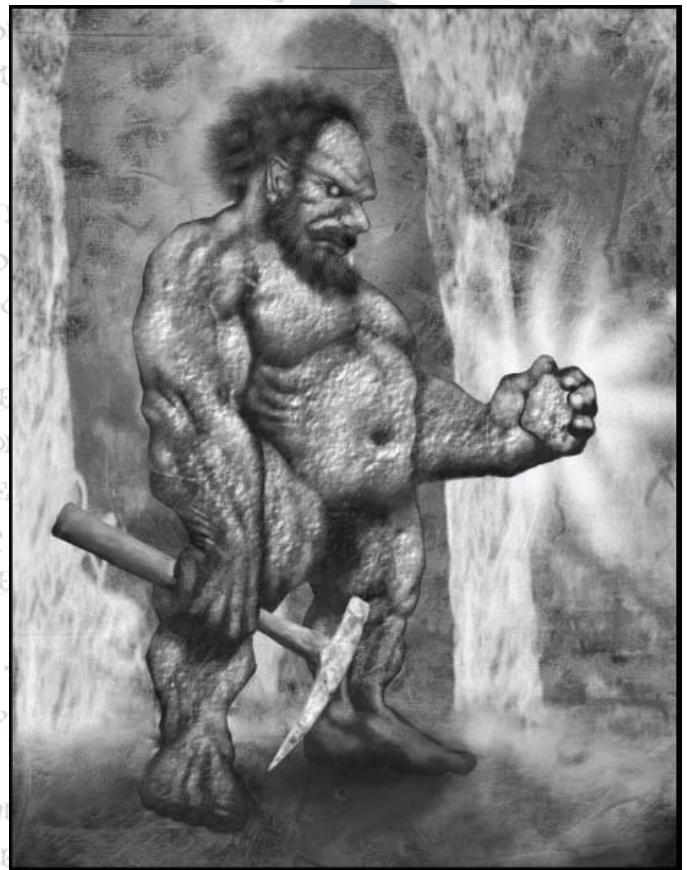
Gems from this region possess strange qualities. Each one has a unique vibration, which grows and fades in proximity to a person's touch. Scholars have many theories on the vibrations, but we sylphs believe them to describe an affinity to the gnome gods—or other gods of the earth. Many gnome priests and heroes carry special gems with inscriptions cut into the surface.

Rhok-Drunnor is a cold mountain realm, home to the largest population of gnomes in the Known World. The mountains vary from purple to gray to brown, with white snow-capped peaks that are the tallest in all the realms. North of the mountain range is a multitude of lakes called Gnorrr's Lakes, after the gnomish god Gnorrr, God of Mountain and Stone. Each lake is rich in the same minerals, gems, and ores that hide within the mountains. Gnorrr's

Lakes are also called the Night Sky Lakes, for at dusk or dawn one can see the wealth of uncut gems and precious metals shining in the depths like the stars at night.

To the south of the lakes is the main gnome city, Rhovma. At the tip of the eastern mountain range is a stone temple facing north; it is Fallen Hero Temple, and it is dedicated to the gnomes who fell during the war between salamanders and gnomes. The Great Temple of Gnorrr stands inside a hollowed-out mountain near Rhovma.

Only gnomes line here, along with a few humans learning the craft of metal, stone, and gem working. This is the home of the Stoneborn an elite society which creates the laws for all gnomes. Gnomes here have golden hair and





crusty light-gray or light-brown granite skin.

Gnorr rules this land with an iron fist, allowing no interlopers to defile it. Ancestral gods also have influence in this region, but it is limited.

Environmental Type Lush (Gnomes, Sylphs) Harsh (All others)/Prominent Seasons (winter)

RHOK-GALENTH

Walking this battle-scarred land, littered with the graves of thousands, is a haunting experience. Some of the gnome passes are lined with the skulls and bones of salamander warriors, improperly buried, sticking to the mud walls. I never ventured into the keeps of Rhok-Galenth due to the gnomes' paranoid nature.

South of Rhok-Drunnor is the gnomish kingdom of Rhok-Galenth, a land under the constant threat of war. Its mountains and passes are easier to navigate than those in the north, with less snow and troubling storms, but the milder climate allows salamander and human armies to march into the realm unhindered.

Two towers, the East and West Ward Towers, fortify the land. Each tower hosts a small army of gnomes fully armed and ready to defend the passes. The mountains are not as high as those of Rhok-Drunnor, allowing scouts to maintain outposts near the peaks. Rhok-Galenth contains several iron and gold deposits and is nearly as wealthy in minerals and ore as Rhok-Drunnor.

Another Gnome city, Gaaldor, lies in the mountains' center. It is a city dedicated to metalsmithing, including weapon and armor smithing. Unlike their northern kin, Gaaldor's gnomes are battle-hardened and tough. Salamanders have laid siege to the area several times, more recently with the help of human tribes, but Gaaldor remains inviolate. In the past, a Hracian human army invaded the land, but the gnomes defeated and decimated the force. Other creatures, such as Jurelian giants, try to traverse the wide passes, but gnome defenders slay them quickly.

Temples to several ancestral gods stand deep within the

mountains near Gaaldor. Rumors say that magical weapons and armor hide within Gaaldor's halls.

Gnomes here differ from their northern cousins, with copper-colored wiry hair and reddish-brown skin. Some of the northern gnomes also live here. Humans and salamanders are unwelcome in Rhok-Galenth; the gnomes eliminate all those who threaten their realm.

Gnorr, God of Mountain and Stone lays claim to this region, but so do the salamander gods who wage war for this land.

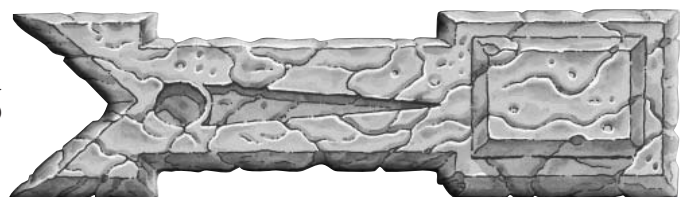
Environmental Type Lush (Gnomes, Sylphs) Harsh (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (winter)

RHOK-KANMOR

This land is perilous, my queen. I made a trek through the mountains with a caravan of free-born human scum. Several savage wood nymphs accosted us in the outlying forest and made unusual demands: They demanded that each of us give up our belief in the gods or our life. I was outraged and showed my contempt by flying out of harm's way. I do not know what happened to the traders.

West of the Celestial Lakes is Rhok-Kanmor, a gnome-controlled mountain realm filled with minerals. It is a nearly impassable mountain range smaller and more secluded than Rhok-Galenth and Rhok-Drunnor. The Frost and Sea Ward Forests act as natural barriers to those wishing to conquer the gnomish kingdom, though only a single city, Pothma, sits at the heart of this realm. Near the city is Firewater Lake, known for the searing temperatures it draws from an underground hot spring. Tapping the lake's rich deposits, Pothma's crafters create fantastical furnishings, jewelry, and other items from diamond, jade, amethyst, ruby, emerald, and sapphire as well as the granite veins within the mountains. The mountains contain little else, and Pothma imports iron, copper, gold, and silver from the other gnome kingdoms.

Nymphs live in the forests surrounding the mountains





and are avid defenders of their home. On occasion, Jurelian giants emerge from the north to raid in the mountains. Humans and salamanders speak of a jade city rich in gems hidden deep within the mountains.

Rhok-Kanmor's gnomes here have long, shaggy bronze hair and crusty purplish-brown skin.

Besides Gnor, several ancestral gods call this land home—mostly those associated with minerals.

Environmental Type Lush (Gnomes, Sylphs) Harsh (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (winter)

SAMONA Starting Area

Do not be fooled by the civilized men of Samona. Many of these humans are just one step away from barbarism. I observed a group of farmers fight to the death over a woman! By Lugos (blessed is His name)! They have little respect for each other or the land they till. I would not be surprised to see mankind and their new gods degenerate into packs of frothing animals.

Samona is a long rolling grassland dotted with several human tribes and the human city of Hrace. It is a fertile plain, with rich soil and the large Silverline River running through it. Humans cultivate the land, with many farms and grazing pastures enabling civilization to spring forth. Seasons are normal, with many large coastal storms raging inland from the gulf of Ar-Feslynn. A large spring-fed lake, Silver Lake, lies to the north. Samona also plays host to the largest human city in Naalgrom; Hrace. Hrace is home to the only civilized nation of southern Samona and sits at the mouth of the Silverline River. The city is only two hundred summers old, but it is one of the richest cities in the Known World.

Humans inhabit the land along with a few odd creatures. Before the land became civilized, a large gathering of tribes made war upon the gnomes of Rhok-Galenth and the undines of Ar-Naluun. Three hundred years ago an army of humans, gathered from all the tribes of southern Samona, marched into Rhok-Galenth; the gnomes defeated the army

after several seasons of battle. Afterwards the undines, gnomes, and humans signed a peace treaty, and trade now flourishes among the three races.

The humans here are tall and well-built, with fair skin and black, blue-tinted hair.

Several gods inhabit the land, including the Hracian gods Baesop, God of Storms and the Sea; Anelmar, God of the Sun and the Hunt; and Shenna, Goddess of Home and Harvest.

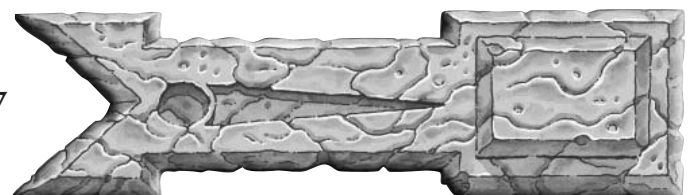
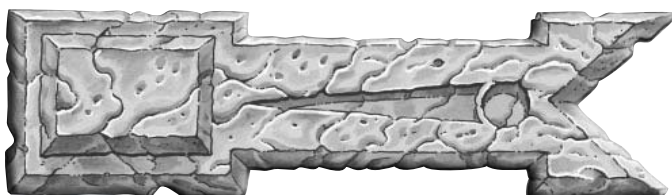
Environmental Type Lush (Humans only) Ample (Salamander, Gnome, Sylph, Giant) Harsh (Undine, Nymph)/ Prominent Seasons (None)

SSSNAMON Starting Area

One of the staple foods in this land is a cactus called kluc, which can have hallucinogenic properties on humans. Human priests and shamans use it in raw form to converse with spirits and their gods. Other humans boil and eat it without these effects. Kluc does not affect your people, the Xthalamadi, and they often eat it raw during scouting missions into the desert. I find it bland and chewy, even when boiled.

The easternmost edge of Naalgrom is a bleak wasteland called Sssnamon. It is filled with rocky soil, salamander outposts, and struggling human tribes. Wedged between the eastern sea and the cold land of Kybel, Sssnamon is an isolated area with little life in its dusty soil. The weather is harsh, with fierce rainstorms in the summer and blizzards in the winter. Few trees grow in this rocky land due to sparse soil and high winds.

Two salamander outposts, Xila and Qann, stand in this land. Also in Sssnamon is the main temple to Draax; Qann is dominated by Draax warriors, traders, and craftsmen who build the salamander fleets. The salamanders here have white to tan-colored scales and deep red eyes. They are unsure of the threat that demands their presence, but legend says that an army from the east once came to the lands of Naalgrom and destroyed everything in its path.





Salamanders here are colored dark brown and red with yellow eyes.

The salamanders worship all their dragon gods in this land, but Moorhanos of the Melting Ore and Maathenos of the Burning Moon rule. Xethalchoate and Xtheni, both Dragon Gods of War, also have a presence here, for this land is filled with salamanders looking to wage war on the hated gnomes.

Sssnamon's humans are primitive nomads who struggle to survive on fish and starving herd animals. Their features include light bronzed skin and sandy-colored hair, with thick ruddy features and heavy-set bodies.

Several spirits have wander to this land from Kybel. Temples to the dragon gods stand in the salamander outposts: one dedicated to Maathenos in Xila and to Draax in Qann.

Environmental Type Ample (Salamander, Gnome, Giant) Harsh (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (winter, summer)

Environmental Type Ample (Salamander, Gnome, Giant) Harsh (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (winter, summer)

ZZZALON

The warriors of your people, my queen, are some of the most intimidating and ferocious fighters in all the lands. In this region dedicated to war and death, the salamander soldier thrives. The fires of the Moorhanos Forges (blessed be His name) create weapons and armor for them; House Maathenos slaves prepare the war engines for battle. Here in the heart of the war between Fire and Earth, these fine warriors are the front line against the gnomish scourge.

In the eastern lands beyond Rhok-Galenth is the rocky region of Zzzalon, a barren land that the salamanders of Shha-narath call home. The land gets little rain except in the fall and winter, when the weather turns to drenching downpours and icy sleet and hail. Snow falls in the deep of winter. Vegetation is sparse: mostly low-growing plants adapted to the semi-annual rainfall. The Hills of Fhha-rath stand near the mountains of Rhok-Galenth. Also known as the Blood Hills, they have seen many gnome and salamander armies clash in their constant war.

Two salamander outposts, Phaa and Shaa, stand in this region; the salamanders also have a single city here, Shha-narath, in the middle of the land beyond the hills. Deep within the hills near the mountains are the slave mines of Maathenos, where human and gnome slaves dig for ore to supply the blacksmith priests of House Moorhanos. Besides the Salamanders, the only people to live in this land are human and gnome slaves.

CITIES

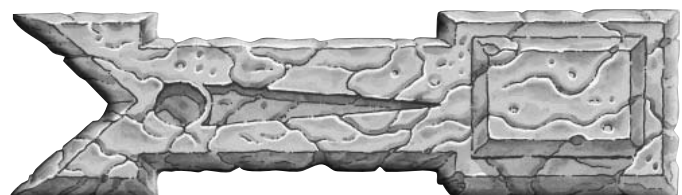
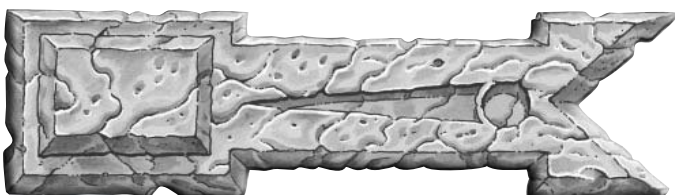
THE HUMAN CITY OF ATAN *Starting City*

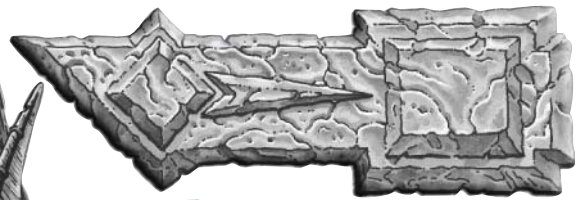
There is nothing more revolting than a horde of unwashed humans.

Sitting on the banks of the western shoreline of Atanastan is the human city of Atan, an amoral society in the midst of broken temples and ruins. Surrounded by swampland, Atan is a foggy, humid place. Its filth draws many creatures and insects. The modern buildings are wooden shacks and houses built over ancient ruins. The poor live on the outskirts, in several districts where they farm and fish the swamp. No one goes too far into the swamps as the legend of the Laaistru frightens both children and adults. In the central areas where the temples once stood sit the merchant prince houses. Atan is a dirty city where even the harbor waters are stained.

Known for its unscrupulous citizens and uncaring attitudes, Atan is the City of Iniquity where everything, including its citizens, are bought and sold on a daily basis. The city has an oligarchy consisting of merchant princes who run ships all over the Known World in search of opportunities to enrich themselves. The town has an official mayor, but he is a figurehead for the merchant houses.

Atan's people emulate their leaders by buying or selling anything of value, with no holds barred. The lowest person in Atan is the farmer or shepherd, a slave or indebted





serf of one of the merchant princes or their relatives. Many citizens act as guides to Seer Lake, for many travelers come to the city to begin treks through the marshes, hoping to discover portents of the future. Seer Lake is a local attraction for prophets and priests of all faiths. Often those same priests return changed, or never make it back at all. Locals laugh at those who try to make the journey to Seer Lake, for few return with their sanity intact.

Temple ruins lie in the city's center, which the merchant princes built upon and covered. Some believe centuries ago this place was home to several human gods, but tales say some unknown force killed every priest and follower who did not throw away his faith. Some of the temples are now homes to the merchant princes and their families. Legend also tells of the Laaistru, a demon host who turns men insane or captures people wandering the foggy swamps outside the city.

A few relics, such as an object called the Sword of Ith'na, are hidden in the vaults of the merchant houses, collecting dust.

Some of the swamp dwellers hold onto the faith of their old gods, looking for the day in which they may once more come into power.

THE GNOME CITY OF GAALDOR

I respect the warriors of Gaaldor. Never have I seen an enemy more resolute. Smaller than salamander warriors, they make up for this disparity with great stamina, strength, and ingenuity.

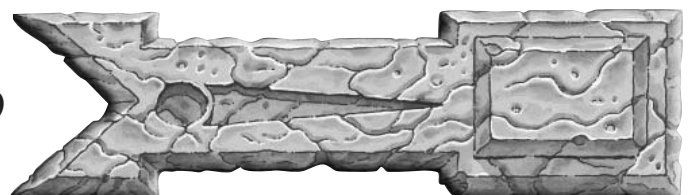
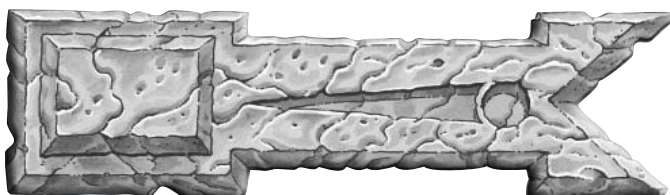
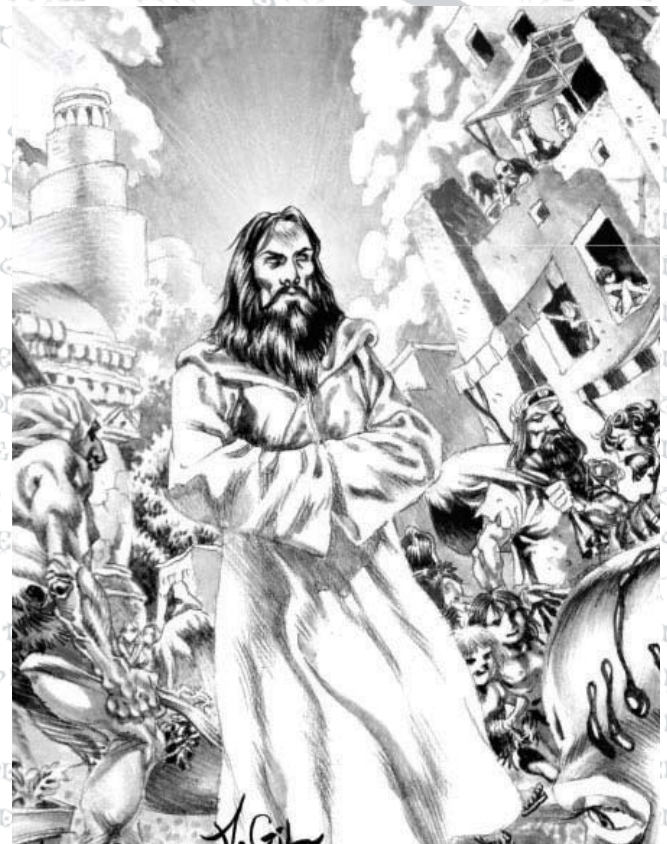
Gaaldor, City of Warriors and Smiths, is a large fortress built of black granite. Steep mountainsides surround the city, and the main gate perches on a road that leads halfway up the mountainside. An underground entrance is also available, but the gnomes seal it off for most of the year.

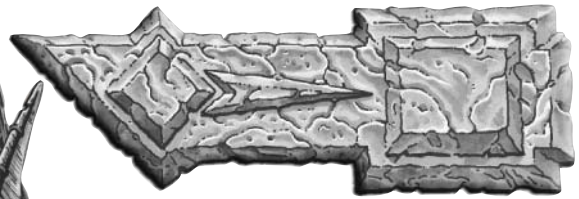
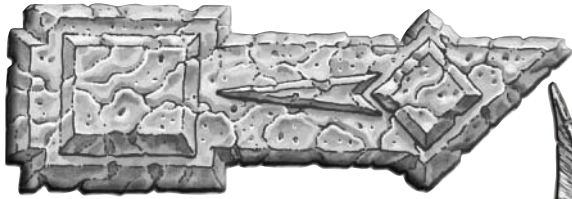
Architecture in the city consists of sharp edges and intricate angles with carvings along the walls. Metal, including precious metal, primarily appears in gnomes' weapons and armor. The city is always under the threat of

siege, and salamanders harass the two towers guarding the passes every day. Gaaldor is a busy city filled with many souls bent on the protection of their beloved home.

Gnomes in the City of Warriors and Smiths are more practical than their northern cousins who enjoy the peace bought by Gaaldor's daily sacrifices. Freedom is a term that does not come cheap in this city. Everyone has a relative the salamanders have slain or enslaved.

Gaaldor's leaders are drawn from the Stoneborn, which maintains vigilance over city structures and tunnels. Among the leaders, one, the Clan Lord, leads the other clans and armies into battle and organizes Gaaldor's defenses. This great warlord also ensures the East Ward and West Ward Towers are well defended.





Several temples lie within Gaaldor. Besides the large temple of Gnor, the city includes temples to Pothesmo, God of Warfare and Strife; Rethan, God of Iron; Baroth, God of Blacksmiths; and Gethos, God of Engineers and Mechanics. Many relics lie within the temples, including the Bellows of Rethan, the Scrolls of Gethos, the Axes of Pothesmo, and the Bars of Rethan.

THE HUMAN CITY OF HRACE

The humans here are little better than their countryside counterparts. Honor and tradition envelop their society, along with a healthy respect for their new gods.

In the land of Samona at the mouth of the mighty Silverline River sits the great city of Hrace, one of the richest human cities in the Known World. Its gray stone walls and fortified harbors are some of the most recognized landmarks in the Known World. People from all lands come here to trade in. The many gray granite towers, armed with catapults, protect the city from invading ships. The buildings decorating Hrace's gray cobblestone streets are solid oak and maple with few decorations. It is a somber city full of traditions and vengeful gods.

Hrace's citizens are honorable, proud, and traditional. They tolerate visiting merchants, but have no patience for sightseers. A king rules Hrace, with fellow nobles who are all warriors and tradesmen. After the war with Rhok-Galenth, a new peace settled into the land, and gnomes came to the city teaching humans business, law, and order. Thus, new laws introduced two hundred years ago form the backbone of this new and thriving society.

Temples to three human Gods appear in several areas of the city and throughout Samona. The main temples for Baesop, God of Storms and the Sea; Andelmar, God of the Sun and the Hunt; and Shenna, Goddess of the Home and Harvest stand in the city's temple district. Relics lie in the temples, stirring the righteous to greater deeds. The Trident of Baesop, the Arrows of Andelmar, and the Sickle of Shenna are here, and see their share of worshippers.

THE UNDINE CITY OF JAASH

Jaash's architecture is unique and disturbing. I traveled here once on a mission to speak with one of the elders. I could never keep an eye on anyone or anything other than the strange swirling carvings and odd angled buildings.

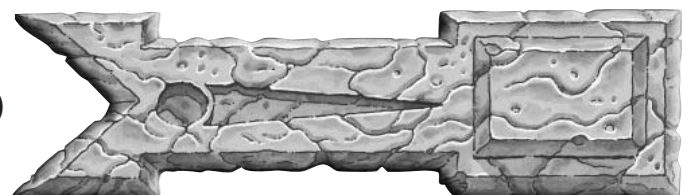
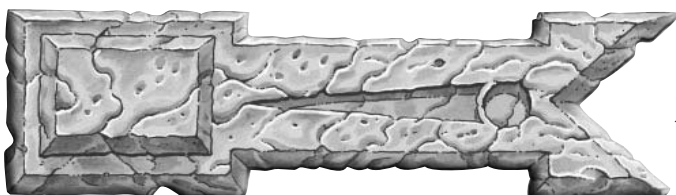
Nestled in the western cliffs of Ar-Feslynn is Jaash, a carved city of rock. Known as the Gray City, Jaash is the second oldest city in the Known World. Undines settled it after the Great War of the Invaders, and several thousand undines now call it home. The city buildings are carved into the granite stone in intricate swirling patterns catching the eye. Many steps lead up from the water to the cliff-face city. At the steps, the undines transform from ocean creatures to their land-walking forms. A small harbor and wharf area with a marketplace exists for other races to come and trade. The undines do not allow other races—other than a few select Sylphs—into the Gray City itself.

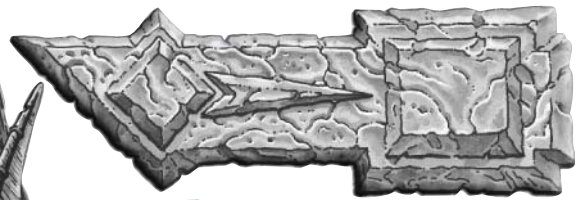
Undines in the Gray City live a normal life dedicated to disciplines of the mind. Each undine chooses a discipline and studies it for years, until he achieves mastery. Most Jaash citizens are reserved, quiet folk who communicate little with each other. The undines have but one celebration, which they hold in the spring to signal a new beginning to the year. Undines spend most of their active time underwater and rest on the land.

Most of Jaash's citizens live in small schools of several families under the leadership of a school elder. The family elders elect the school elder, and each family elects its own family elder. The family elders also serve as the priests of Celundynn, and the school elders serve as high priests. In Jaash, a total of ten school elders exist.

Two houses of government rule Jaash: a council of temple priests dedicated to Celundynn, and the ten school elders who form a law-making council. The two houses perform checks and balances on each other. This form of social democracy is one of a kind.

Celundynn has five temples carved into the cliff areas near the Stairs of Transformation. The undines hold ceremonies here where they transform into humanoid form, then pray





and fast for several days in dedication to Celundynn. In each temple lies a holy relic know as a Tear of Celundynn. Legend says the goddess shed five tears after the Battle of Dragons; in this battle, the armies of the dragon gods defeated the Jaash Undines and destroyed the city, but the undines recaptured the city three years later and rebuilt.

THE HUMAN CITY OF LAANAD *Starting City*

Humans overrun this once-proud city of the Sylphs. Before humans came, we held this place, calling it Nephon after one of our gods who went to the Abyss and was never heard again. We still hold secrets here, my queen, and if you wish, I will share them with you.

East of the Starry Lakes lies the small city of Laanad. It is a humble place with mud brick walls and buildings capped by timber rooftops. Few buildings rise taller than a single story, except Lord Planard's Palace: a structure lavish for a mud dwelling, which rises to a height of three stories. Laanad's fishing markets are some of the best in the world, with all sorts of prized delicacies from the sea bought and sold here.

Slums comprise a large portion of the city, and humans occupy most of the city. A small sylph community also lives here, trading information and hosting smoke houses where one can find all sorts of entertainment. A few undines also make their homes here, in a quiet district by the sea, guarded from human observers.

Rule of the city falls to an overlord named Bosh Planard, a pompous man who holds many riches and secrets. Lord Planard is a busy man, for he deals with the undines from Jaash, sylphs of the Crater of Lugos, and many humans from the cities of Atan and Hrace.

The ruins of several temples lie outside of the fish market, where Laanad's slave market lies. Some of Laanad's merchants and rogues worship Lugos, God of Wind, Whispers, and Thoughts. Rumors in the city abound, hinting at the locations of several ancient relics within the city.

THE CRATER OF LUGOS

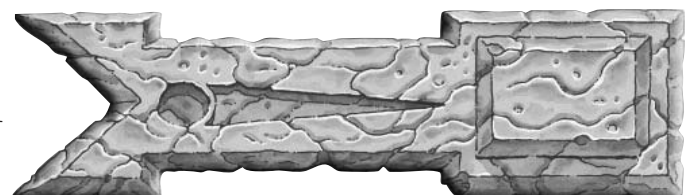
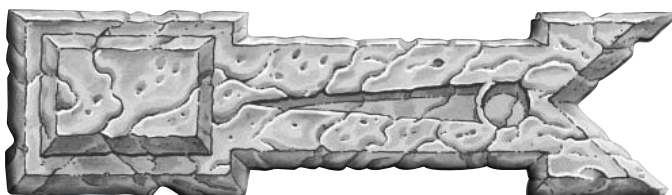
My home city is the jewel of the world, my queen. Here you can find all sorts of knowledge in the many libraries and schools of thought. The markets are filled every day with many curios from across the land. I recommend everyone—including you, my queen—should visit this wonderful city at least once in his lifetime.

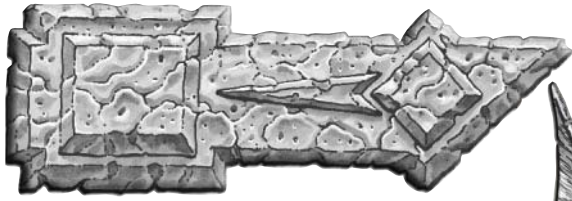
Deep within the realm of Jasinu, among the sandy flat brushland, is the Crater of Lugos—a great depression in the earth created of glassy, black volcanic rock. Measuring a half-day's journey on foot across, it is the largest crater in the Known World. Inside lies a city, also called the Crater of Lugos. It is one of the only sylph constructions in existence. The city consists of holes in the sides of the crater, with wooden ladders and bridges connecting the cave dwellings. On the cavern floor is a great temple of clear, rounded, smoky glass made from refined volcanic stone. The building holds a vast number of rooms, all connected to the main tower: the Pinnacle of Whispers. Sylphs inhabit the city, though they maintain a few servants from other races.

Only one road leads to the crater, and the sylphs shut it down for most of the year. Only during the summer solstice is the temple road open so that other races may come to trade. Sylphs, however, fly to the crater with ease and have access to the crater all year round.

The sylph city's informal government is a loose confederacy of clans whose elders and great gatherers lead them. The Council of the Crater decides what needs to be law and what needs to be left to individual discretion. It makes few laws, as sylphs prize individuality.

The temple in the crater's center is the main temple of Lugos, a sprawling crystalline structure hailed as of the wonders of the world. Each wall is inscribed with many secrets and tales in the strange sylph hieroglyphs—aside from sylphs, only a few scholars can read these symbols. Many say that the story of the whole Known World appears in these hieroglyphs. Like other races, the sylphs hold holy relics—theirs are the legends and lore written on the walls. Rumors state if you learn on of these tales and





write it down, you now possess a powerful relic—but the rumors do not specify what sort of powers such an item might grant.

THE UNDINE CITY OF NESH

I have a nephew who saw the Green Fortress up close and personal. The undines captured and imprisoned him for serving as a scout for one of Your Majesty's ships. He escaped and now lives in the wastes of Kybel with my cousin—but he has become a muttering idiot. He still does not tell me a thing, but once when I asked he muttered under his breath about "the water... cold, cold water, and the hand that bites." I do not know what his ravings mean, and I stopped asking awhile back.

Carved into the Green Cliffs in the region of Ar-Naluun is the city of Nesh. It is known as the Green Fortress, as it has numerous defenses: towering walls of hardened jade and dark-green agate; jagged rock formations that lie in just below the water's surface to disrupt ships; and great war machines in the squat towers near the entrance—the devices stand ready to hurl sharpened shells and rocks. Temple guards armed with shock sticks and barbed javelins guard the steps leading to Nesh.

Life in the Green Fortress is harsh, with most citizens learning the disciplines of war. The rulers allow few celebrations, as the city's defense takes precedence. Some undines complain about the austere lifestyle and leave for calmer seas. A few even suggest the Nesh undines are becoming a lot like the followers of Plthunlos. They say such things in secret, of course; the high priest of Celundynn here allows for little dissent. The undines do not allow outsiders within the city, not even sylphs.

Nesh's government is more rigid than any other undine city. Most elders hold their position for life; for most offices, voting is a once-in-a-lifetime event. The militant temple guards hold great power within the city.

Three temples remain intact in Nesh. In each temple is a powerful artifact known as the Claws of the Green Towers. Long ago, three sets were created for the champions of the city during the dividing wars with Plthunlos' followers. They their give the wielders powers to turn the tide of



battle in combat, and the undines are not shy about employing them.

Three other temples lie in ruins and lie outside the city's walls, where they serve as battlegrounds for the undines and their enemies.

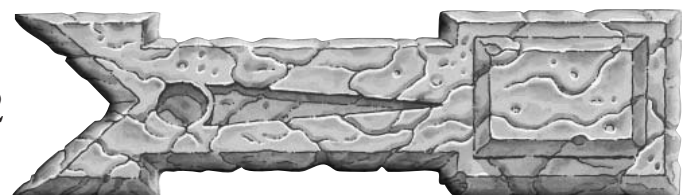
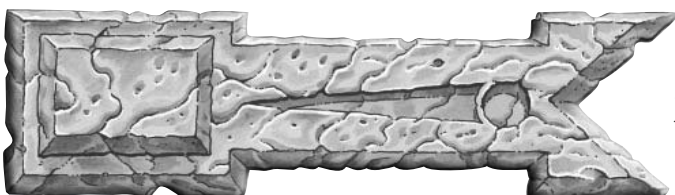
THE GNOME CITY OF POTHMA

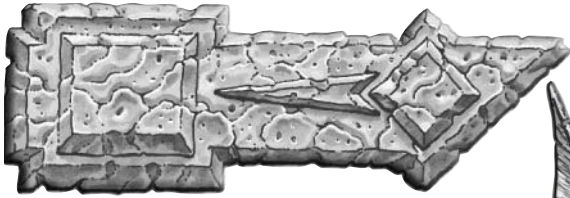
My sister works in Pothma as a jewel crafter of some renown. She shacks up with a prosperous gnome who is a priest for some trivial gnomish god of rubies. That was the last I heard from her. She stopped corresponding with me after I joined your service, my queen. Do not be offended; she is an odd person who believes in civil rights for every sentient being and all that rubbish.

The isolated city of Pothma is a finely sculpted work of art decorated with gems and lavish carvings. Gnomes call it the City of Treasures, for it holds a great number of valuable items and artifacts—many on public display. The city is indeed a wonder, for jewels and precious stones encrust it. Diamonds and blue sapphires decorate towers of lapis lazuli. The city's doors are finely carved of translucent, milky quartz, and onyx walls surround them. When the sun shines on the buildings at certain angles, the city becomes alive with sparkles and fires that can blind a human. It is an impressive city, but one that creates envy in the other races. Many human and salamander armies have tried to take this jeweled city, but they get lost in the surrounding mountains and suffer devastating gnome attacks.

Pothma holds more artisans and craftsmen than any other city in the Known World. Some say the guildhalls and ancestral gods here rival the powers of the Stoneborn. The best craftsmen often stay aloof from the political intrigue that daily threatens the status quo.

The Stoneborn have great influence here, as it does in every gnome city, but it is not dominant here as it is in Gaaldor. Many factions have made alliances to challenge the age-old rule of the Stoneborn priest of Gnorr. For example, Pothma's guildhalls hold alliances of craft and artisan guilds that wield secular power. No one crafts anything unless the guildhalls approve it. The city include other





alliances as well, including some among the ancestral gods' priests who hold sway over many temples here.

Pothma includes a number of temples, dedicated not only to Gnorr but the gnomes' other ancestral gods as well. The largest temple belongs to Methussa, Goddess of Diamonds; the largest diamond mine in the Known World lies here in the tunnels below the jeweled city. Gnorr, God of Mountain and Stone has the second largest temple here. Ponn, God of Onyx and Gesul, God of Lapis Lazuli also have large temples within the city. Arran, Goddess of Artisans and Craftsmen has a large following here, and several small temples in the local markets are dedicated to her. Various and wonderful relics are scattered throughout Pothma's many temples.

THE GNOME CITY OF RHOVMA

Rumors from my sources tell me the gnomes stopped mining ore a long time ago at the command of their god Gnorr. Some believe that they are now building an army now to push out your armies, my queen. Be vigilant.

High north near the top of the world sits Rhovma, the capital of the gnome city-states and the high temple to Gnorr. Rhovma is a place of wonder and raw power, for it is a giant hollow mountain with a bright furnace of lava at its heart. The gnomes of Rhovma live in this hollow mountain, with many stone passages and tunnels allowing them access to its different areas. Everything is carved into the stone and constructed solidly without much décor. It is a bland, sterile place but filled with power beyond mortal comprehension. The god Gnorr talks to his priests and heroes here in the mountain. The city itself serves as Gnorr's great temple—a large statue of Gnorr stands in the lava pit, unaffected by the flowing magma or the icy winds that blow down from the mountain's top. It is the only decoration allowed in the barren, hollow city. Rhovma's citizens know that Gnorr is first here, so they build only small, hidden altars and statues to the other ancestral gods.

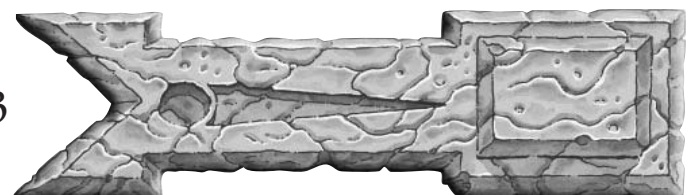
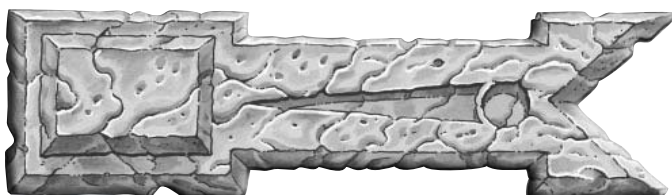
Rhovma's citizens are mostly miners and craftsmen who spend long hours in pursuit of the many minerals, gems, and ores that form veins throughout the region. Each

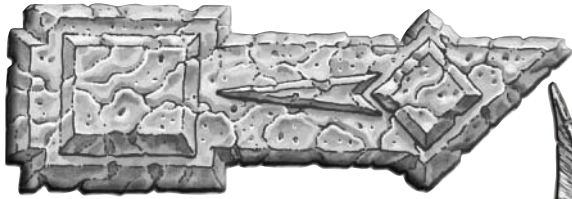


clan in the city deals with a specific type of material.

The city's people extract resources from the mountains, which they then ship via a large underground system to sister cities as far away as Kandalor in the southern continent of Raanon. It is a great industrial complex that focuses on one thing: extracting the wealth from below. When miners exhaust a vein has, an engineering team floods the tunnels from below with magma. In this practice the earth is renewed constantly.

The Stoneborn have absolute authority in this cavernous city; its members are the main lawmakers for gnome society. All other gnomes are subject to their rule, and





those who stray from their laws are banished to other cities or even exiled. The temple priest of Gnor has several high priests who act out their god's will.

Rhovma is the main temple to Gnor, God of Mountain and Stone. The city contains no individual temples, as the Stoneborn have ruled against this practice. However, in the tunnels below are a few small temples to the other ancestral gods; the Stoneborn ignores or overlooks these shrines.

On the Statue of Gnor in the lava lake at the city's center is the largest, most powerful relic in the known world: World Splitter, a god-forged hammer with the power to sunder the world, split land masses, and swallow oceans.

THE SALAMANDER CITY OF SHHA-NARATH

In the summer you can hear the cries of the slaves as they are worked to death in the forges. The city gives off a radiant heat flowing with the powers of the dragon gods (may they rule forever). My visits to this great industrial city in the summer always leave me breathless.

Shha-narath, the Burning Bronze City, sits in the vast cold desert of Zzzalon and is a bright beacon in the wilderness. It is a metallic city fashioned from bronze and iron, with thorny copper and tin towers clawing at the sky. A thick gray iron wall surrounds the city. A moat directly outside its outer wall is filled with burning black pitch that bubbles up from below. In the copper-fashioned streets stand the thorny buildings that mark places of trade and business. Most people live in great apartment-style buildings belonging to one of the salamanders' nine noble houses. These buildings are shaped like large thorn hedges, with many clawlike additions and branching tunnels.

Salamander society in the Burning Bronze City is complex, just as it is in any other salamander city. Each salamander belongs to one of the nine noble houses, but only three houses are strong in this city: Moorhanos, Maathenos, and Xethalchoate. Most citizens spend the days in their workplaces with little time for leisure. They are mostly blacksmiths and warriors. No other city has so many

smiths in employment, for they maintain the city and keep the weapons of war ready for the dragon gods' soldiers. Most of the non-salamander population consists of slaves, half of human descent and the rest comprised of gnomes, undines, and sylphs. Entertainment comes from the slaves, for the salamanders love to put their slaves in cruel, sadistic, and bloody games.

The queen high priest of Moorhanos rules over Shha-narath for now, but many other ladies vie for this position, as popular opinion of the Dragon Gods decides the city's queen. Politics in Shha-Narath are tricky, filled with poisonous friends and deadly enemies looking to put themselves above their peers in the dragon gods' eyes.

The Great Bronze Tabernacle of Moorhanos sits in the city's central square, towering over its rivals. The Black Citadel of Maathenos stands nearby, to the east, while the Fort of Xethalchoate flanks the Great Bronze Tabernacle. Many weapons and armor are fashioned become relics of the dragon gods, and each temple has well over a score of such items.

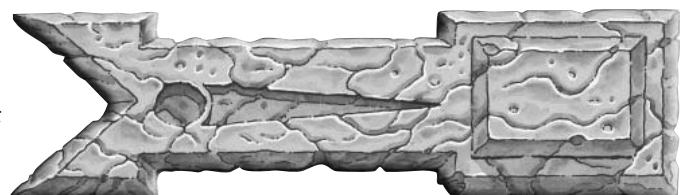
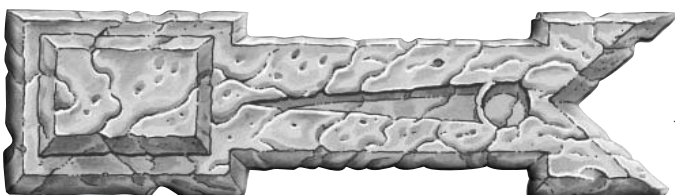
THE EASTERN LANDS OF FRINTH LANDS

AR-IANETH

Here stands one of the gates of power to the World Above, connected to the Well of Souls. Demons of all temperament come through here looking for their brethren. Twice a year, these waters are filled to the brim with demonic spirits looking for a purpose in life. If they ever find that purpose, may the gods help us all.

On the west side of Frinth lie the warm seas of Ar-Ianeth, filled with all sorts of life, from docile to monstrous. The waters of Ar-Ianeth are calm seas with the occasional storm during the winter and summer months.

One area of note is a coral reef known as Demon's Reef. All sorts of frightening nightmares of the deep live around Demon's Reef, including the infamous Nargos, a creature that knows no end to its insane appetite. The undines of Ar-





Ianeth fight a constant war with the creatures from Demon's Reef: a war of containment, for if the creatures ever get loose in the waters, they could spell an end to most aquatic life—including the undines. The city of Cuthe is the center of activity in this war.

The undines who live in these waters are a mistrusting lot, treating outsiders with suspicion and distrust. They wear armor made from the shells of large crustaceans, and their normal skin colors include silvery- to pale-blue skin tones with dark eyes. Another type of creature that inhabits these waters are known as Gaalunds—a fish-octopus-amphibian-demon hybrid that walks upright with borrowed intelligence from its demon spirit. Gaalunds regard the followers of Celundynn and Plthunlos with apprehension and spite.

Celundynn holds power in this region, but it is limited due

to the presence of Demon's Reef. Plthunlos also has some followers who roam these waters, but they are here only to hunt for demonic creatures and foul beasts the reef unleashes. The Gaalunds are demonic vessels, starting points for demons who never knew human form.

Some escape the waters and become Leviathans: terrible creatures of power that cause fear in all living things. Fortunately, demon spirits rise to become gods in their own right.

Environmental Type Lush (Undine only) Uninhabitable (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (summer)

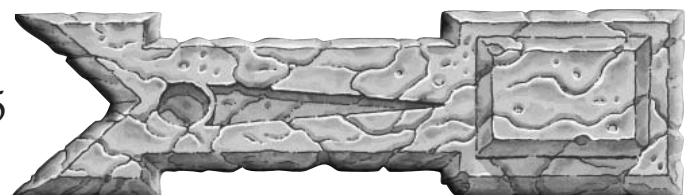
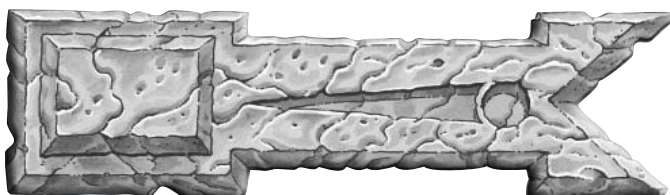
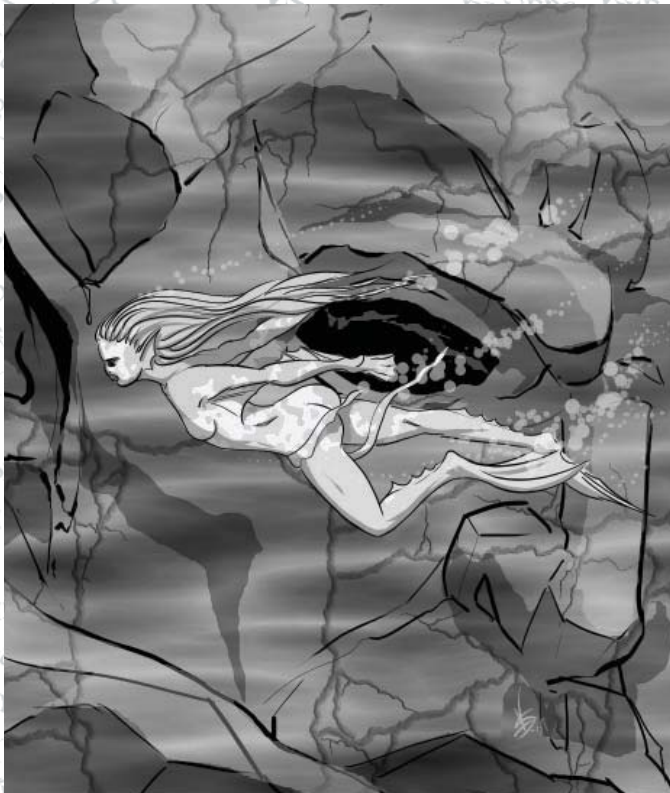
GUTHENOTH

My disgust for humans is rivaled by my loathing for all nymphs. In Your Majesty's service, I have volunteered to scout for several salamander expeditions to the Guthenoth forest area. Sometimes we have been lucky and killed a few nymphs during these trips. More often they get the better of us, decimating our numbers until we need to retreat. No, that is not a good option, my queen, but what other option do we have when half of our war-band "disappears" in the night?

The Guthenoth Forest located at Frinth's northern tip is a wild area teeming with all sorts of creatures, both mundane and fantastical. The wooded area is composed mostly of oak and maple, with pine near the mountains. The region has moderate temperatures and a full four seasons. In the midst of these woods are several sacred groves holy to the wood nymphs who live here.

All manner of creatures dwell in the woods, from the sly fox to the chaotic forest giants made of wood and flesh. No mortals except the wood nymphs dare to live in Guthenoth, as most of the forest creatures are hostile to outsiders. The wood nymphs here are long-limbed creatures similar to humans in appearance, but thinner and with green-and-brown mottled skin and multi-colored leaves for hair.

In addition, several forest spirits and demons roam Guthenoth, possessing those few mortals who dare to venture alone. The wood nymphs do not worship these





entities nor do they worship gods, as they believe themselves to be higher beings developing into gods. Wood nymphs worship themselves and each other, bowing to each other's inner deities waiting to be born.

Environmental Type Ample (Humans, Salamander, Sylph, Giant) Uninhabitable (Undine, Nymph)/ Prominent Seasons (summer)

Environmental Type Lush (Nymphs only) Ample (Human, Sylph) Harsh (Giant, Salamander) Uninhabitable (Undine)/ Prominent Seasons (spring, fall)

RHOK-NIRITH

Some of our scouts report strange activity in the mountain passes of late. Large wagons with covered, heavy loads travel the roads leading south; small detachments of Frinth warriors accompany these wagons. Some of the cargo gives off a faint yellow glow in the night. Whatever is in these carts must be of some importance.

LASHON Starting Area

Even though Your Majesty's armies have laid claim to this region, it still includes many savages and false idols. It would behoove my queen to establish a permanent stronghold here so that everyone will come to worship the true gods of this land (blessed are Their names).

Rhok-Nirith, Frinth's northernmost mountain range, is home to Frinth gnomes, who differ from their northern cousins. The mountains enjoy moderate temperatures, unlike the northern mountains of Naalgrom, allowing for more outside dwellings. Rhok-Nirith is also known as the Alabaster Mountains—the snow-capped peaks combine with the white slate and marble within the mountainsides give a pristine white effect. Among the mountain peaks sits the only gnome city open to the sky: Arador. The gnomes also hold several small but well-fortified mining and forging villages in the mountains and nearby lands. Rhok-Nirith has several gem mines, from which the gnomes mine diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. Salamanders clash with the gnomes; they once conquered the region, but the gnomes reclaimed it.

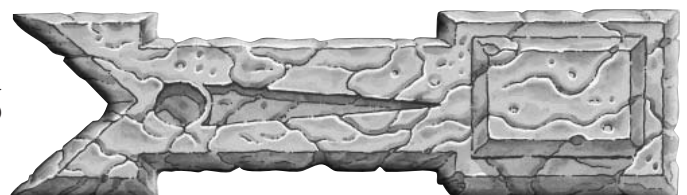
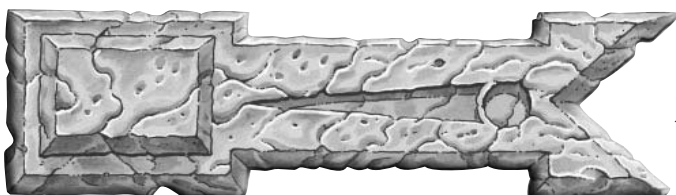
The plains of Lashon, named after a large herd beast (the lashon), stretch across central Frinth. It is a flat area with little to break up the expanse. It gets a good amount of rainfall, which feeds the large grasslands and bush fields. Nomadic humans live on the plains and coastal areas, hunting the lashon, a creature well over three men tall and shaped like a cross between a bison and an elk. The hunting in this region is good for those interested in lashon, as humans prize their meat. Other plains creatures such as gazelles and giraffes also live in the area. Natural predators include a vicious winged beast called the kyphaw, which looks to be a cross between a lion and an eagle. Salamanders hunt this area as well, and use it as a staging point for campaigns against the gnomes in Rhok-Nirith. Gnome scouts also hunt here, and gnome peddlers sell wares to humans who would rise up against the salamanders.

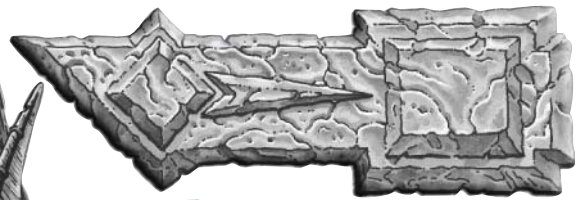
Frinth gnomes are a study in contrast, as they exhibit traits quite different from their Naalgrom cousins. Frinth gnomes are silver to black haired, with short, well groomed manes. Their skin is smooth marble-white, with black, red, and blue streaks running throughout. They are fastidiously clean and take great pride in staying so, unlike their crusty northern cousins who let their rocky skin build up in grimy layers. Frinth gnomes are well known for their love of the outdoors, and they spend equal time out in the open as well as in the mines. They are even hospitable to humans, teaching them weapon and armor craft. They do so to gain capable allies against the salamanders as well as to advance the human tribes.

Primitive nomadic humans thrive in this wild area, living off the fat of the land. Men from this region are yellow or brown skinned, with slanting brown eyes and dark hair. The lashon riders are some of the best riders in this part of the world, able to shoot their prey with great accuracy even while mounted.

A few minor gods lay claim to this land, but no major deity rules here.

The gnomes here worship Gnorr, God of Mountain and





Stone, but they consider him only slightly greater than the other gnome ancestral gods. Pothesimo, God of Warfare and Strife, is popular among the Frinth gnomes, as is Methussa, Goddess of Diamonds.

Environmental Type Lush (Humans) Ample (Gnome, Salamander, Undine) Harsh (Undine, Giant) / Prominent Seasons (summer)

Environmental Type Lush (Gnome, Sylph) Ample (Sylphs, Humans, Salamander) Harsh (Nymph, Giant) Uninhabitable (Undine) / Prominent Seasons (winter)

SSSTHRA

This land is beloved by the dragon gods of the Xalamandi. Long live the dragon gods and their people.

ROTHENA Starting Area

The fruitful lands of Rothena would be a boon to your empire, my queen. After the human scum are enslaved, of course.

In the southern tip of Frinth's desert region lies Sssthra, a barren, hot land filled with salamanders. Also known as the Red Desert, Sssthra is covered by red sand, finely granulated to a powder that spreads everywhere. The days are long, the nights short and cold.

The fertile land of Rothena is home to several human and gnome settlements. The region has moderate to warm temperatures and heavy rainfall. Two main rivers, Noreth and Sathu, and several lakes lie in the region, and Rothena plays home to many types of flora and fauna. The natives hold one lake in special reverence —Rothena Lake—as its shores make excellent farmland for a large selection of herbs and fruits that grow naturally in the area. Rothena's human city-states constantly battle over this lake.

Two salamander trading outposts lay at the region's southern tip: Aahhnn and Syytt. The salamanders in this region are the famous of all their kind. They excel at tactics, and at one time ruled all of Frinth and part of Raanon. They are dark brown to deep brownish-black, with yellow to green eyes.

Two human cities stand in eastern Rothena, Vohens and Phatul. Vohens is a fishing community, and several farming villages surround it. Phatul is similar but practices slavery; many Vohenians winding up on Phatul's auction block, sold to salamander slave-masters.

The salamanders dominate several human tribes: those in Quazel and those in Oanni. Quazel, a small region near the mountains' southern tip, is fertile. In the northern areas is another fertile land, Oanni. Both areas contain human tribes subjugated to salamander rule from their main city of Naara-beesh—one of the richest and most powerful cities in the Known World. The humans here have yellowish-brown skin, with some olive-brown to golden-brown skin tones. Most humans are primitive villagers with little technology.

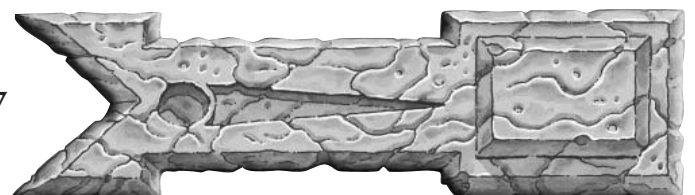
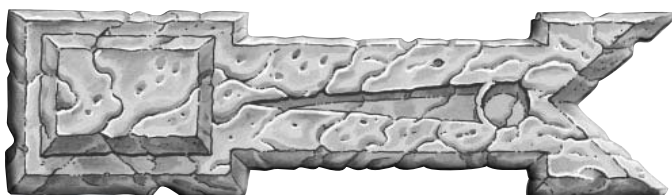
Rothena's humans are light, having pale-yellow skin with little to no facial hair. Small almond-colored eyes are set in a round, finely featured face with dark black hair.

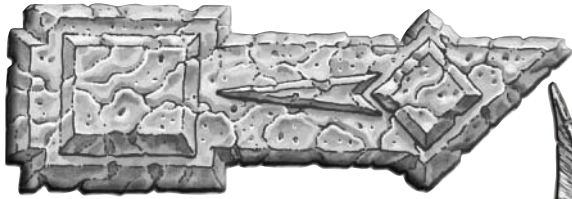
Of all the Dragon Gods the salamanders worship, those here pay the most regard to Thaminx and Xtheni. The presence of each is felt in the well-defended city of Naara-beesh, and both have influence in this region. Humans here sometimes pay fealty to the dragon gods, but most worship old spirits that still roam the land.

Gnomes and undines sometimes visit this land, as do salamanders from the region of Sssthra.

Rothena is a place of many human spirits and demons, as each tribe worships a wide assortment of gods. A few human tribes worship gnomish ancestral gods. In Vohens, no gods have made an impact on the local population. Phatul once had gods, but their temples and followers fell several years ago in an act of uprising.

Environmental Type Lush (Salamander) Ample (Gnome) Harsh (Human, Giant) Uninhabitable (Nymph, Undine) / Prominent Seasons (summer)





CITIES

THE GNOME CITY OF ARADOR

Here live the traitorous Silver Scroll Gatherers who suckle to Frinthinan gnome interests and have intercourse with villainous humanity. Treacherous backstabbers, all of them! I entrusted my life to you, Ferin! I have removed myself and my children from your influences. Once you made up your mind, Ferin, you doomed yourself and the other Gatherers. My vengeance will be swift and sudden.

Arador, the City of White, is a pristine mountain city with a prosperous populous and temples to many ancestral gods. The city is partially buried in the side of a gently sloping white mountain. White, square towers point skyward from the mountainside. Roads weave in and out of the city, traveling from the upper to the lower levels in a maze. The city's buildings are crafted from reinforced marble and a crushed stone known as concrete. Three main roads lead in and out of the city: an upper eastern master highway, a lower eastern caravan road, and a southern trade road.

The half-engulfed city of Arador is a strange city even by gnome standards. The reason is due to the War of the Sea and Earth, when undine sappers destroyed the city's foundation and partially collapsed the mountain onto the city. The rockslide destroyed some towers, while others survived. After years of toil attempting to rebuild the mountainside, the gnomes declared it a waste of time and too inefficient. Gnome engineers changed their tactics and eventually produced the winding, partially buried city of Arador. There's an advantage to this, as the maze prevents any direct line of attack and is filled with perfect places for ambushes.

Arador's citizens are a clean, well-kept lot who live life to the fullest. They enjoy many social games and activities. Playhouses are popular among the people, with gnome, human, sylph, and undine actors. Sports are also popular, as is a game of chance called loorque, involving several silver and golden balls on a maze-like chessboard.

Many markets and small specialty shops exist in the city, catering to all sorts of needs. Arador is a city where ideas stand out and knowledge is respected. The king elect surrounds himself with members of the scientific and arcane communities.

Arador's gnomes are a more liberal breed than their Naalgrom and Raanon cousins. The City of White is tolerant of outsiders, and humans, sylphs, and undines live within. Also, the elected officials here dare to debate the Stoneborn laws. Therefore, the laws of Arador are a mix of the Stoneborn law and progressive Arador law. A king rules Arador, and popular vote elects a new king every ten winters to ensure a fresh line of ideas in the kingdom.

The gods of gnomekind are worshipped here, but many interpretations and creeds float about. The city contains several temples to Gnor, and every temple allows worship in various ways. Pothesmo and Methussa also have worshippers here. Ponn, Gethos, and Arran are also popular, and many craftsmen dedicate their shops to Arran and Gethos for good luck.

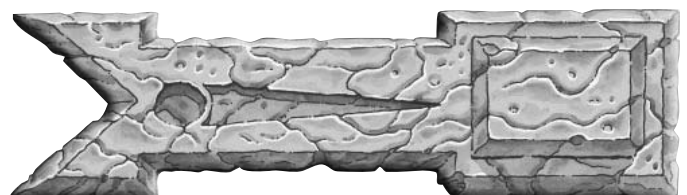
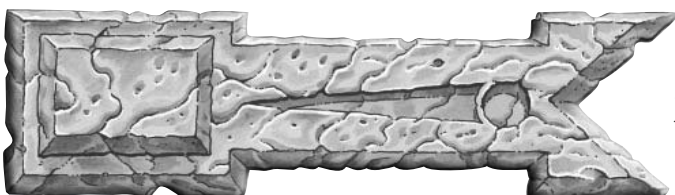
Many small relics with various attributes are scattered among the temples. In addition, the Diamond Necklace of Methussa is a powerful item which gives the wearer the ability to avert fate.

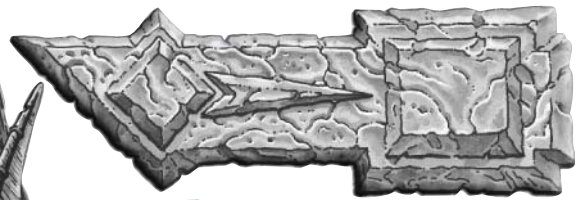
THE UNDINE CITY OF CUTHE

Apologies for my earlier speech, my queen.

Here in this undine city of fools we find an ample number of gnomish sympathizers. It would benefit us, my queen, to eliminate this threat to salamander hegemony. My few visits to this city of fish-men as a Silver Scroll Gatherer did not impress me. If we do not conquer them, the demon spirits will one day rule this place.

The besieged city of Cuthe is the front line for the undine's constant war with the Gaalunds and the creatures from Demon's Reef. It is a fortified city built into the cliffs, surrounded by coral reefs filled with deadly jellyfish and eels. The city's cliffs are a mixture of blue-gray and off-white colors built into hardened limestone and granite.





Small towers armed with great war machines surround the lower areas where the steps lead to the ocean. In the upper cliffs are the temples where Celundynn's followers worship their Goddess. Cuthe's citizens are like those from Nesh in their warlike attitudes, but a respect for other races such as the gnomes and humans tempers their harsh natures—unlike the Neshians.

An inhabitant of Cuthe must be ready for war at all times, so, like their Neshian cousins, a strong temple guard is ready to defend or attack those who would destroy their great city. Some of the more peaceful citizens live in city's upper regions or in the city of Arador, which is not constantly under siege.

Celundynn's temple priests and priestesses rule Cuthe with a moderate hand, keeping hold of their traditions (barely) so that they do not become like the Neshians: always ready to mistrust and alienate their allies.

Four main temples to Celundynn are carved into the upper cliffs, which reach up and out to mark the land above as undine-controlled. The temples allow access to the upper plateau, where the citizens may retreat in dire times. Most relics of the temples are in use by the city's heroes and priests, who use them to defend its sacred boundaries from intruders.

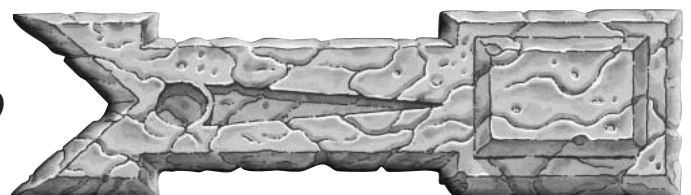
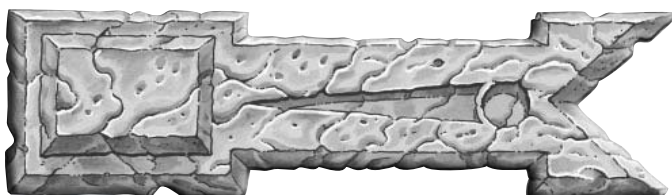
THE SALAMANDER CITY OF NAARA-BEESH

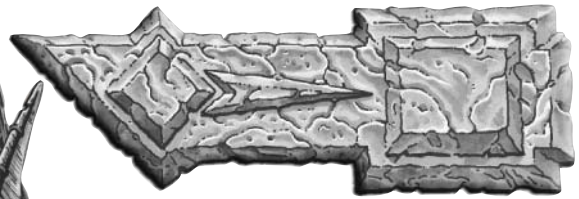
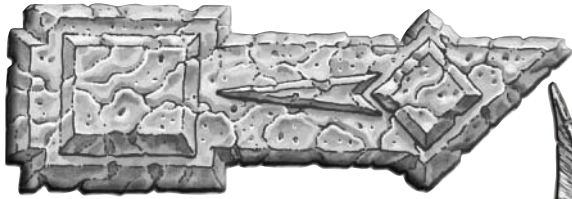
Naara-Beesh is my new home, and what a blessed place it is. I have hovered many a night in the dimly lit bazaars, entertained by the gladiatorial combat, enthralled by a dying human's screams and mesmerized by the slave girls who perform exotic ritual dances to stir the blood of even the coldest Jurelian giant. It is a shame the firekin have to eat them after they perform their dances.

The vast city of Naara-Beesh is one of the largest and most heavily populated cities in the Known World. It is an isolated community, and each dragon god is represented here. Large and complex buildings sprawl across the landscape, made mostly of metal compounds of iron, brass, and the rare dark iron. The buildings are shaped like thorns or licks of flames

captured in ice, creating lattice-like towers and elongated hedges. Great gladiatorial arenas made of mud bricks and skeletal remains are scattered throughout the city, in every quarter, for everyone's participation.

Salamander citizens of Naara-Beesh enjoy privileges few others can even comprehend. They never stoop to menial task because the captured slaves outnumber the citizen by a large margin. Slave labor makes the city function, and every salamander here is expected to own at least two slaves. The salamanders expect every citizen to express themselves in competition, which they assume every proper salamander to be competitive. The salamanders control the arts of war, government, priesthood, and metal craftsmanship, and each firekin is expected to compete in these areas at some point in his life.





Currently, the lady of House Xtheni is queen over Naara-Beesh. Her house and court are in favor of not only their god, but all the Dragon Gods. This position is precarious, however, as many plot her downfall. Salamander politics are quick and often violent, but at any given time, the most powerful lady of the noble houses rules. Now, the lady of House Thaminx is powerful in Naara-Beesh, and she schemes for control of the Royal Seat.

the backing of salamanders from House Maathenos and the dragon goddess of the burning moon. Xion has recently declared martial law, and everyone in this city, including visitors, is subject to his rule.

The ruins of several temples mark an area east town. No temples or relics lie in this city, as no gods rules it. Only the dragon goddess of the burning moon has any influence here.

Each Dragon God is represented in this city, and every temple undergoes constant upgrades and additions. The temples take up an enormous area in the city and boast fantastic decorations and statues dedicated to their gods. Most temples are shaped in the forms of single flames, with the image of the appropriate god housed within. These temples contain relics that the salamanders use only on blessed occasions.

THE HUMAN CITY OF VOHENS *Starting City*

This city is filled with gnomish sympathizers, my queen. My spies note new temples being built in the city. I do not know what blasphemous new gods of mankind will be worshipped, but soon they will know the searing light of the Dragon Gods (blessed be Their names).

THE HUMAN CITY OF PHATUL *Starting City*

Our agents have infiltrated this city, my queen. We own over half the populous and will have the other half soon. It is only a matter of time before this city is officially yours.

The human city of Vohens is filled with a grace and beauty under constant threat. It is a place of cultural melding, with Frinth gnome architecture mixing with the Vohens' own style. Visitors from other realms look to Vohens architects for inspiration. The streets are paved with dark gray granite that leads to beautiful blue-and-silver painted homes made from stone and wood. It is a wealthy city where traders and fishermen stand side-by-side. An army wields gnomish technology to defend the city. Vohens devotes resources to protecting its harbor as well, since raids from the southern town of Phatul are frequent. In the past, battles were fierce, with guards and ships falling to raiders. Now the southern wall is complete. Vohens is nearly impregnable.

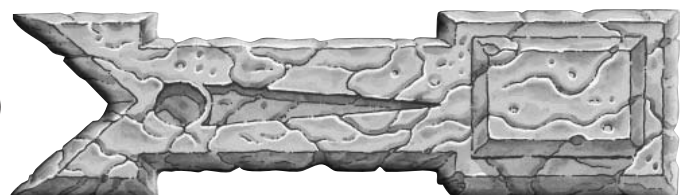
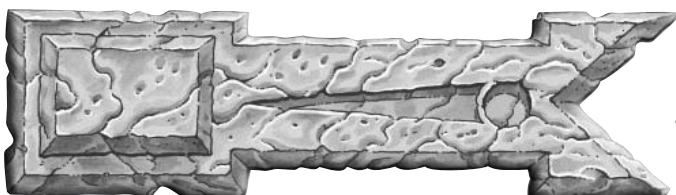
In the southeast corner of Rothena sits the city of Phatul, a dirty city filled with humans and salamander slavers and raiders. It is a dusty city with no paved streets, and the buildings have but wooden walls. A large wooden wall protects the city; cutthroats and murderers man the wall and work for the city's tribal boss. One large building houses the local ruler, and a small market near the sea sells mostly slaves. A smaller market on the city's opposite side sells groceries.

The people of Vohens are smart, well-educated, and properly dressed. They take pride in their homes and believe in their society. With fair yellow skin, dark silky hairs, and almond eyes, most find them attractive. Salamander slavers prize them as they already have many skills and need little training. The city of Vohens has allied itself with the gnomes of Arador, and with that alliance the fortunes of both improve.

Phatul's humans have brownish-yellow skin with almond eyes and high cheekbones. They are darker skinned than their northern cousins. Most of them have dour dispositions and accept whatever life throws at them. Few have the will to stand up for their beliefs. They are poorly educated and know little, except how to fight. The one thing that unites the citizens of Phatul is their hatred for people of Vohens. They often attempt raids against the northern city.

Vohens is ruled by a nobility of handpicked successors to the throne. Currently a woman named Li Huano rules in the palace.

A vicious raider named Xion Liin rules the city and has





Vohens has few temples, and most of those that exist are dedicated to forgotten gods and are turning to dust and age. One temple to the gnome god Pothesmo is popular among the warriors who have no other god at this time.

THE WESTERN ISLANDS OF CELDYNN LANDS

AR-CELDYNN

When I was a young Gatherer, this island made a deep impression on me. Its sheer beauty is not fit for words, my queen. Yet the undines allow few to visit this place of enchantment. I was one of the fortunate ones allowed in, as the Silver Scroll Gatherers traded with everyone, including the undines at Ar-Celdynn—at least, we traded with them before the Frinthinan War. Back then life was clearer, and there was no need to take sides.

The island of Ar-Celdynn is home to the largest undine population in the Known World. Surrounded by coral reefs and underwater caverns, Ar-Celdynn has many natural, underwater habitats fit for undines. On land a host of temples sprouts across the island, with a large concentration lying near the main city of Celune. Celune is dedicated to the undines' primary goddess, Celundynn. Some say that Ar-Celdynn was the first place where Celundynn touched land, creating a break from her husband, who never set foot on solid ground.

Ar-Celdynn has a sub-tropical climate. Swaying palm trees fill the land, and the island experiences but two seasons: one dry and one wet.

A large abandoned city stands on the island on the opposite side of Celune; temple guards of Celundynn guard this place. It was once the city of Celundynn's husband, Plthunlos, and was called Fanos. Now in ruins and secured, it is home mostly to priestly ghosts and shadows, for no one is allowed to go inside.

The undines who inhabit this island trace their lineage back to the earliest undines and the First War with the Invaders. Undines from other colonies send representatives

here, seeking the many oracles and temples on the island.

Undines in this area come in a wide variety of colors, ranging from silver white to deep sea-blue. Hair styles vary among the males and females, resembling the many types of plant life throughout the region.

Only one god is worshipped on this island—Celundynn—and the worship of Plthunlos and the Dragon God Draax outlawed on punishment of death.

Environmental Type Lush (Undine, Human) Ample (Sylph) Harsh (Gnome, Salamander, Nymph, Giant)/ Prominent Seasons (summer)

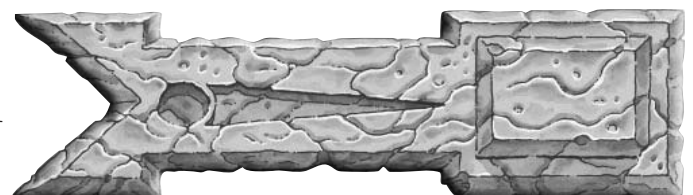
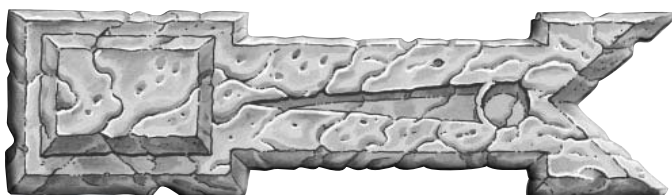
BRUN *Starting Area*

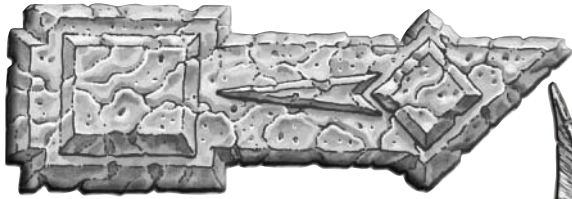
Primitive yet powerful, the humans of this island make for great slaves. A ship of House Draax (blessed be Her name) risks the undine-infested seas to bring back just a dozen slaves. Unlike other humans who wilt under hard labor, these beasts hold up under the most enduring circumstances.

Brun is the largest island in the Celdynn chain. It is a lush, tropical island with idyllic weather and fertile soil. Many humans call this island home; several tribes hunt and fish in the coastal waters, much to the annoyance of the undines who live on nearby land and in the water. Brun has only two seasons, much like Ar-Celdynn: a wet and a dry season. The island hosts few remarkable places, as most of its inhabitants are primitive and limited in knowledge.

Brun's people are human, but differ from the humans elsewhere. They are thick-boned and are more heavy-set than the average human. Their body hair is coarse, thick, and black growing all over their bodies. Prominent foreheads and thick jaws protrude from their chiseled features and dark, hidden eyes. Undine historians traveling to this island remark upon how much the humans look like the Invaders of old who once walked upon the earth.

Some of the human tribes have begun worshipping gods and goddesses, but none have reached any prominence.





Environmental Type Lush (Undine, Human) Ample (Sylph) Harsh (Gnome, Salamander, Nymph, Giant)/ **Prominent Seasons** (summer)

the Leviathans began because a merchant fleet docked here for one day, then ventured forth to other cities.

HAARATH Starting Area

Unbeknownst to most travelers, this island contains not one but several panic-inducing creatures called Leviathans. The natives live in constant fear, for the Leviathans know no mercy. This inherent risk increases the market value of a particular substance, blackwater, that is unique to this region.

In the south seas of Celdynn is the reviled and shunned island of Kukulcan. Ash covers the landscape; little vegetation grows here. The ruins of several major cities of unusual design dot the landscape, sticking out like clawing black fingers against a cold blue sky. Scholars from every race know these ruins are the last remains of an ancient and nearly forgotten race from the stars that are now called only "the Invaders." Few people or even gods dare to venture here, for hidden in the ruins are demons and ghosts of the Invaders. A few brave heroes seek powerful relics among the ruins, and fewer still come back alive. The island is also known as the Isle of Madness, as the visitors who do return are always mentally unhinged.

The island of Haarath is a hot and tropical rainforest filled with savage tribes and deadly creatures. Its seasons are much like its southern neighbors, except hotter. Haarath is rich in that it holds the world's only known lake made of blackwater, a fiery substance that ignites quickly under flame. This rare lake is called, naturally, Blackwater Lake, and all races hold it in high regard. Also, the island's mountains are filled with gems and ores that wait to be mined.

No sane person would live on this forsaken island, but whispers say that several erudite hermits do indeed dwell here: mostly Sylphs whom their society has exiled due to malicious acts.

Humans who inhabit this island are dark-skinned and thin, unlike the people of Brun. Their skin is smooth, and they have dark curly hair that grows in few places. Several Haarath tribes wander the island, fighting exotic creatures outsiders who dare to set foot here, including some undines and salamanders. Some of the people make expeditions to Brun to raid and make war.

No gods inhabit this island. Spirits and Invader ghosts roam the blackened land, whispering despair and ruin to those who would listen.

No gods or goddesses call this island home, but some locals worship a gigantic beast that lies hidden in the jungles.

Environmental Type Ample (Sylph) Harsh (Gnome, Salamander, Nymph, Giant, Undine, Human)/ **Prominent Seasons** (summer)

Environmental Type Lush (Undine, Human) Ample (Sylph) Harsh (Gnome, Salamander, Nymph, Giant)/ **Prominent Seasons** (summer)

CITIES

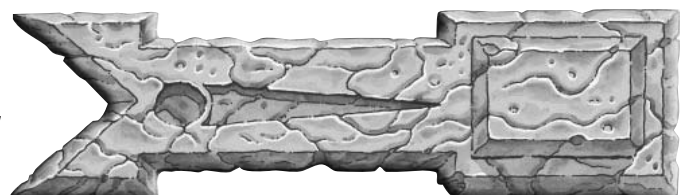
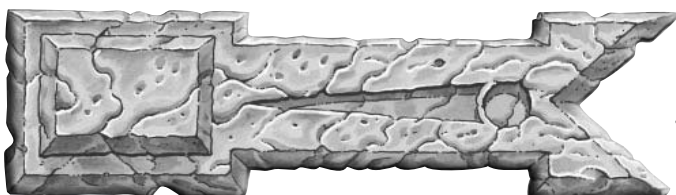
KUKULCAN

THE UNDINE CITY OF CELUNE

When a ship makes landfall on this unholy land, it takes a huge risk. Spirits and demons looking to make contact with society once again might tag along when the ship sails for other lands. This land has birthed many foul Leviathans and evil gods. Many people believe the War of

The undine courts of Celune rival that of the most heavenly palaces. Here architecture meets the inspired artist, my queen. Someday I hope to go back there and visit, not as a lackey, but as a conqueror in your army.

Shimmering blue and displaying curved and twisted buildings, Celune is the oldest and most famous of all the cities in the Known World. The architecture is unlike anything else on the planet; in fact, many say the Invaders somehow influenced it. The blue, shimmering buildings





are made from a substance similar to water but with the rigidity of brass. Every building stands its own pier and faces the water. Each structure has steps leading into the water, so every undine has access to the ocean. Temple guards patrol the waters, ever vigilant for demons or the followers of Plthunlos. Several large undine armies call this city home, as undines recognize it as the capital of their society.

The southern waters and coastline of Ar-Nadull are infamous for being hostile and cursed. Temperatures here are mild to hot. Cool fronts from the northwest meet the warm ocean waters, creating violent storms that travel east to plague coastlines all over the Known World. Many ships come to these waters only to disappear. It is a cursed place that most sailors know better than to visit.

The people of Celune are a politically mixed breed. Half of the citizenry is conservative, sticking with traditional values, while the rest are more progressive with several factions in each area. Most progressives sponsor the council of elders, while traditionalists hold true to Celune's high priestesses. Celune's citizens vary in skin colors and their shapeshifting abilities, as they come from all parts of the ocean.

The small undine colony living in the city of Pithe are followers of Celundynn; they protect what little ocean they can, for their kinfolk who worship Plthunlos call these waters home, fighting Celundynn worshippers and anyone else who comes here. The Plthunlos-worshippers live in the caves of underwater mountains called Plthunlos' Grip.

Several high priestesses and a council of elders govern Celune—and, therefore, all of undine society. The society is based on a democratic set of checks and balances between the elders of each school (a school is a group of families) and the high priestesses. The social democracy is usually fair to most individuals but, but society is still stratified.

The undines here, of both varieties, have gray-blue skin tones with dark kelp for hair. The undines who worship Plthunlos take the forms of dangerous aquatic animals such as giant squids, sharks, and other predatory creatures. Followers of Celundynn change into other, less ferocious creatures such as porpoises and whales.

Celune's main temple, in the shape of a massive frozen wave, towers over all other buildings. It is here that all of Celundynn's followers come for their once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimages to Her holiest of temples. The temple contains several holy relics only that only the high priestesses and heroes can use.

Rumors of hidden treasures from the First War circulate throughout the lands of humans and the elder races. Fortune hunters from all races regularly head to these waters, but few return.

THE SOUTHERN CONTINENT OF RAANON

Both Celundynn and Plthunlos have a lot of influence in this area. Their followers clash often, vying for territory.

LANDS

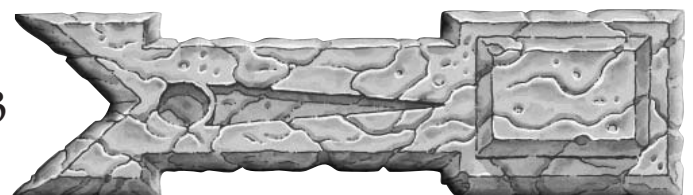
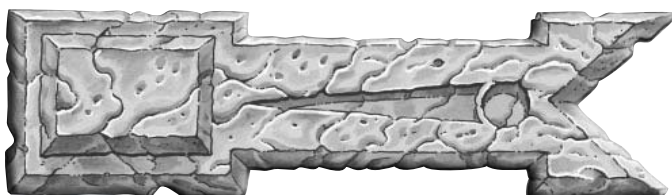
Environmental Type Lush (Undine) Uninhabitable (Sylph, Human, Gnome, Salamander, Nymph, Giant)/ Prominent Seasons (summer)

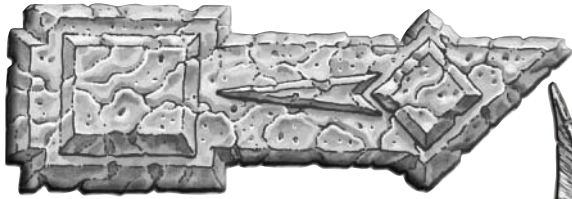
AR-NADULL

BAATHUN

As a young member of the Silver Scroll Gatherers, I ventured into these waters to find lost treasures. It is a hazardous duty with little reward, but I discovered some wondrous artifacts to dazzle even the most opulent tyrant. If Your Highness wishes, I will undertake another expedition into these hostile waters.

Many rare fungi and mosses grow within this hellish forest. If someone brave enough to travel here returns with a yellow, florescent mushroom that grows on the south side of oak trees, I can use it to make a tea that can reverse aging.





The haunted forest of Baathun, lying in southwest Raanon, is home to the dark wood nymphs: a gruesome, vicious, and keenly intelligent race. The woods are thick and filled with decaying or dying trees. Moss hangs limply from lichen-covered branches and blocks the days' sunlight. Wild, black-skinned fungus grows as tall as a man. The forest is colder than the surrounding region, and icy winds and snow storms are frequent here—even in the middle of summer. No noticeable structures stand in this forest, as the dark wood nymphs build nothing.

The wood nymphs who live in these woods are pale, slender creatures with wicked teeth, long black hair, and coal-black eyes. They are savage creatures who use their bare claws and teeth to fight and kill. The dark wood nymphs here are cannibalistic—they eat their own kind, unlike their kin in other forests. The human villages that huddle the area live in fear of the beasts that inhabit the foul woods.

Rumors say the dark wood nymphs here believe they are all gods and can master evil sorceries.

Environmental Type Lush (Dark Nymph only) Uninhabitable (All others)/ Prominent Seasons (fall)

CROESUS Starting Area

This savage land holds little besides swift death. Vicious human tribes are prominent in this region, with several nomadic tribes and a few “civilized” groups to the south. Our brothers in the city of Ssshna-rabath raid these lands for slaves.

The western plains of Croesus are home to several human tribes who live as nomads or farmers in small villages. The region is temperate, with mild summers and heavy winters in the south and warmer summers and mild winters in the north. Flat grasslands cover most of the region, although forests and mountains stand to the east and coasts lie to the west and south. A small human city called Damarsun stands to the south, containing most of the country's riches. Salamander armies have besieged Damarsun several times, and have taken it twice.

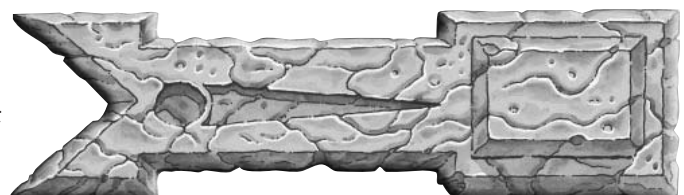
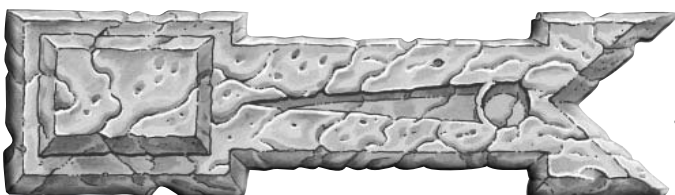
The humans of Croesus are tall and slender, with medium- to light-brown skin, fine features, and curly black hair. Salamanders hunt and enslave them.

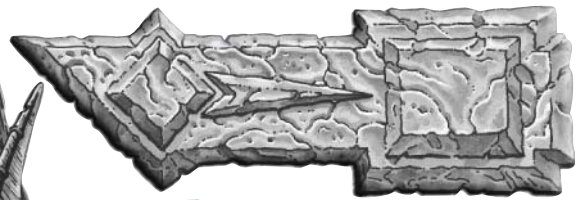
Croesus is a land almost barren of Gods, although the humans look for someone to lead them against the invading elder armies.

Environmental Type Ample (Human, Sylph) Harsh (Giant, Nymph, Salamander, Gnome) Uninhabitable (Undine)/ Prominent Seasons (spring, fall, winter)

DULUTH Starting Area

As I traveled across this region to the undine city of Pithe, I found the barbaric tribes to be most inventive with their riding techniques. Men and women spend days in





the saddle, riding odd creatures most people hunt and kill. I believe the deranged gods of this land have gifted these people.

Duluth is a long stretch of grasslands at Raanon's northeast corner. The weather is mild and temperate, though frequent thunderstorms come from the volatile region of Ar-Nadull. The large game animals that roam this area are an off-breed of the lashon known as horned lashon. Smaller than their northern cousins, a horned lashon has many horns sprouting from its head and shoulders.

Some few legends exist about this area, but the previous human inhabitants mysteriously disappeared—along with their city—leaving little about which to make stories. Rumors say the humans who now roam the landscape are the survivors of a strange catastrophe that befell their forebears.

Men of the Duluth grasslands are golden-skinned nomads with aquiline features and dark hair. The women are more rounded than the men but share the same slightly almond-shaped eyes. Both men and women live off fresh game and wear silk cloths in many colors, reminiscent of the annual flowers that bloom on the grassy meadows after the rains. Undines also visit this region, and Celundynn's followers inhabit the coastlines. Interaction and trade exists between the undines and the human natives.

Duluth is a land devoid of gods, but the humans here are superstitious. The nomads have that a man born to godhood will find their long lost city.

Environmental Type Ample (Human, Sylph) Harsh (Giant, Nymph, Salamander, Gnome) Uninhabitable (Undine) // Prominent Seasons (None)

FETH

The damned race of nymphs does not believe in gods at all. Such blasphemy is an affront to the natural order of things and the powers that be. It is my wish to see this race eliminated from the Known World.

The forest land of Feth is an enchanted wood filled with

wood nymphs who guard their land with jealous hearts. Perched at the northwest corner of the continent, Feth is a natural buffer from the harsh ocean storms and cold winds that blow from the north. The region is temperate, with warming trends that make even in the depths of winter mild.

The wood nymphs here are a secretive people who allow few outsiders into their realm. Some of them have taught humans their strange religion, with mixed results. Dark wood nymphs sometimes make forays into this realm, seeking to despoil the habitat. Fierce battles ensue as nymph and nymph fight to the death, as dark nymphs are flesh-eaters. On occasion salamander or gnome woodsmen enter the area, looking to clear land for new buildings. More often they not, they must call in military support to combat the angry wood nymphs.

Wood nymphs are an arrogant breed, as they worship each other as gods. Some scholars believe that, while they are not necessarily gods, they may be on the path to becoming gods—a goal they will reach if given enough time.

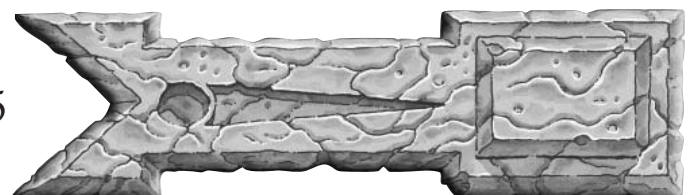
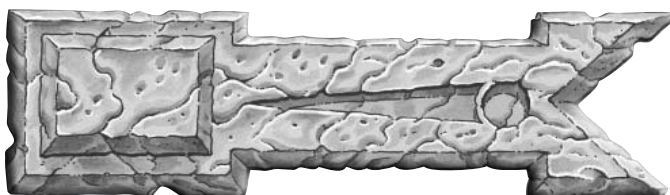
Environmental Type Lush (Nymph only) Ample (Human, Sylph) Harsh (Salamander, Gnome, Giant) Uninhabitable (Undine) // Prominent Seasons (spring, fall)

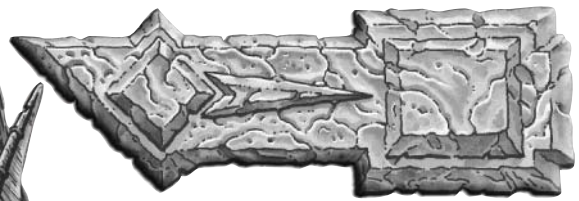
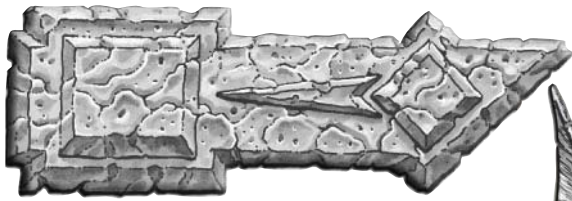
GAMATH

Fear lives in these woods. I will never step foot in this place, where even gods fear to tread.

Gamath is a strange forest area that the wood nymphs avoid, for it is a condemned place. Sitting at Raanon's far northeast corner, Gamath is an intimidating, cold wood with wild seasons that change with each passing storm. The area is shrouded in perpetual mist and thorn patches that twist among the large pine trees, creating a complex and dangerous maze. Few people who venture into the forest ever make it out.

No one lives in these woods except the trees, a few small animals, and reptiles.





Rumor says that several demons looking for godhood live within the mists and enchant those who pass through, converting the travelers' to their worship. Salamander legend states that an army of ten thousand warriors once marched into Gamath, looking to clear the woods, and disappeared from history.

Environmental Type (Uninhabitable)/ Prominent Seasons (winter)

HONOXIA Starting Area

Here lies the largest human threat to all life in the Known World. Morgis, the main god of this region, is a bloody tyrant, bent on destroying all nonhumans.

Honoxia, named after the largest human civilization in Raanon, Honox, is a fertile land consisting of large prairies, the forest of Araxis, and the fertile riverbanks along the Ginn Lakes. Temperatures are moderate to warm with summer storms and mild winters. The port city of Amar, the largest human city in the Known World, is here, where every civilized human comes to trade, barter, or find a new life, wife, or slave.

The majority of the population is human, and they have lightly tanned skin, crisp, lanky brown hair, and sharp, fine features. Salamander slave traders sometimes roam these areas, but meet fierce opposition from human armies and patrols.

Honoxia is a land protected by the gods of Honox. The most renowned of these gods is Morgis, God of the Sun, Warriors, and the City of Amar. His statues are prevalent throughout the realm of Honoxia, even in small towns and villages.

Environmental Type Lush (Human, Salamander) Ample (Gnome, Sylph) Harsh (Giant, Nymph) Uninhabitable (Undine)/ Prominent Seasons (summer)

PASHON Starting Area

Several ancient scrolls speak of the horned men of Pashon. Such tales say that when humanity came to these swampy

lands, demons came to possess them, twisting their forms.

The marshes of Pashon, in Raanon's southeast region, are home to several strange human tribes. Pashon is a foggy place with humid summers and cold, wet winters. Most of the marshlands are uninhabited, though peculiar beasts roam the fog-land with impunity. Locals live off of the swamp's bounty, which includes exotic herbs, crayfish, and wild rice fields. A few human villages are scattered about the area near the human city of Elio. Once a thriving port city, Elio has fallen to disease and famine over the last hundred years.

Humans here are different from most of humankind in both look and temperament. Inhabitants of this land have dark, reddish skin that contrasts well with the large, curling bone-white horns that protrude from their skulls. Also of note: Every other person has a prehensile tail, long and sinuous, stretching over half of their body length. Despite their strange traits, some of the locals venture forth to other realms, sometimes cutting off their horns and tails and darkening their skins with dye so they look more Croesian.

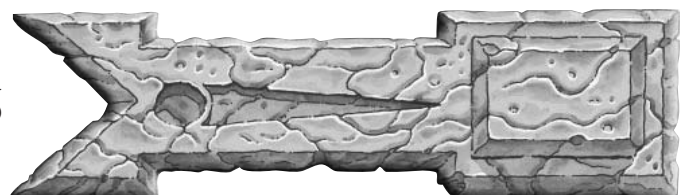
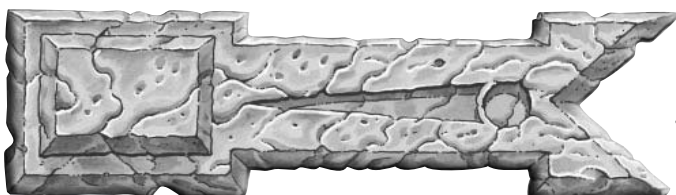
The city and local inhabitants are godless. Every temple and statue has been torn down or destroyed by fire.

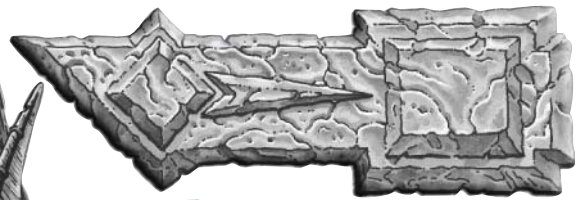
Environmental Type Ample (Human, Undine, Sylphs) Harsh (Salamander, Nymphs) Uninhabitable (Giant)/ Prominent Seasons (summer, winter)

RHOK-KUDEN

Gnome presence in this land is the biggest insult to salamanders, my queen. As you know, the gnomes wiped out the salamander outpost in this mountain area. We shall continue to support our brethren in their struggle to destroy these interlopers.

Rhok-Kuden is the longest mountain range in the Known World. It is a large expanse filled with high mountains that surround vast woodlands collectively known as the Woddan Forest. The climate here ranges from warm winds





and fog in the lowlands to cold winds and freezing rain in the highlands.

Gnomes populate—and guard—most of the area. Gnomes and salamanders fight constant battles for control of these precious lands, for they contain minerals and ores that rival even the great northern kingdom of Rhok-Drunnor. The mountains also hold the city fortresses of Dulanor, to the northwest, and the fallen city of Kandalor in the southeast. Two salamander outposts lie to the west of Rhok-Kuden: Hiith and Raah.

The gnomes of Rhok-Kuden are a mixture of Frinth and Naalgrom gnomes, as this area is the newest gnome settlement in the Known World. Most gnomes here take on a darker skin tone than their cousins. The hues vary from dark brown or dark blue to onyx.

Gnorr, God of Mountain and Stone makes his presence felt in this region, as do the other gnome ancestral gods. Several relics lie in the ruins of Kandalor, locked in a vault buried beneath stone. Many explorers have tried and failed to extract the treasures within the stronghold.

Environmental Type Lush (Gnome only) Ample (Sylph, Salamander) Harsh (Human, Giant, Nymph) Uninhabitable (Nymph)/ Prominent Seasons (winter)

SSSNOTH

Salamander priests from this land are marked in special ways by the Dragon Gods (blessed be Their names). Depending on their gods, some salamander priests even receive powers that elevate them above normal salamanders. Priests of Xtheni can walk through fire and bathe in molten lava. Servants of Thaminx are incredibly strong, able to rip holes in stone with their fists.

In the western lands of Raanon, Sssnoth's glowing fires illuminate the skies. Sssnoth is the most active mountain range in the Known World, with volcanic displays shooting tons of rock across the pocked-marked land. The air is choked with dust most of the year, causing torrential rains and dark-gray snow storms. Rivers of ash choke the water

flow from the mountain springs nestled deep within. Streams of molten rock flow down many mountainsides, sometimes forming massive tides of lava that destroy everything in their paths. In this hellish land, salamanders rule from the isolated holy city of Ffaah-binath, known as the City of Dark Fires. Next to this horrid place is a small desert region called the Ocean of Ash. It is an uninhabitable place filled with deposits of ash, soot, and volcanic rocks thrown from the volcanoes of the Sssnoth Mountains.

Salamanders from Sssnoth are warm-colored, with mottled skin tones varying from bright red to flame yellow and sunburst orange. Their eyes are usually the color of flowing lava: a hellish red. Humans also live in these lands, but a vast majority of them are salamander slaves.

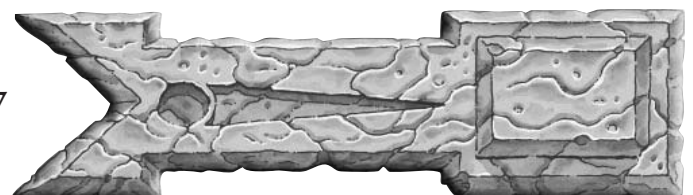
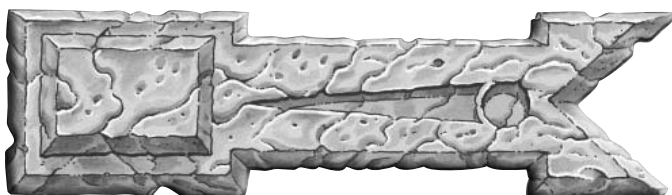
This land is holy to the salamander race; some of the salamanders' most powerful relics were forged in the fires of the Sssnoth Mountains. The main temple to Xethalchoate, Dragon God of the Fires Below, is here, along with his warrior priest. The other dragon gods also have a presence here, but only Xethalchoate, Tukonos, and Thaminx, Dragon God of the Burning Earth hold true power in this region.

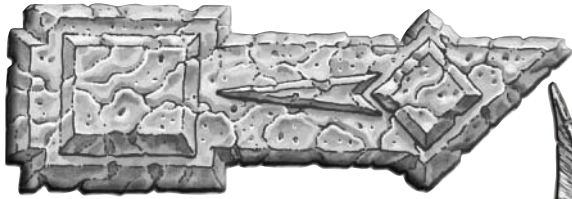
Environmental Type Lush (Salamander, Gnome) Harsh (Human, Sylph) Uninhabitable (Nymph, Giant, Undine)/ Prominent Seasons (None)

YANNAWY *Starting Area*

An elusive creature native to this land is the horgsholloth, a demonically-influenced beast with strange powers. Few see the creature in daylight, for it is a nocturnal creature that lives in the shadows. It is a massive creature that runs on all fours, yet can hide in the smallest of shadows. It has the power of cold—able to freeze any man or beast solid for days at a time.

Yannawy, the land of endless plains, is a fertile area with scrublands to the south and grasslands to the north. It is a land of hot summers and cool winters that bring mild snows. Many creatures graze on the lands, including lashon,





gazelle, zebra, and rhinoceros. Humankind is the most prevalent creature in these lands, with many raiders and small armies making war among each other and those who dare pass. The port city of Calaba sits on Yannawy's northeast edge and serves as a minor trading city. Invading armies—both human and otherwise—have conquered the city many times. Its most recent dominators are from Amar, who hold sway in the city and control the shipping lanes.

Most humans here are dark blue or black skinned, with almond eyes and hair the color of straw or gold. They tame zebras for riding and domestic use. Local inhabitants are nomadic, though a few settle in Calaba or in nearby towns.

A few minor gods hold sway in this land, but only the human god Morgis and his lion-headed statues have a substantial following.

Environmental Type Lush (Human) Ample (Salamander, Sylph, Giant) Harsh (Nymph, Undine) / **Prominent Seasons** (summer, winter)

ZZZFAA

The desert sands of this region are a painted mix of blush red, pale blue, and yellow white. When the wind blows, the sands mix and rise into the air, creating a brilliant pastel show. Some of the slaves are former artists, and they use these sands to create temporary works of art in the skies.

The hot desert of Zzzfaa is home to few people and beasts; only salamanders can find any comfort in this desolate region. The land is a barren, rocky place of sand dunes and gusty winds. Temperatures are cool at night, even in the summer, as the white sands and rocks release the heat of the day. Winter is sure death for anyone traveling in the region unprotected.

The salamanders of Zzzfaa live in and around their capital city of Ssshna-rabath, or the First City. Salamanders dominate the region, but humans are also prevalent—all slaves with their salamander masters. Zzzfaa has one of the

largest populations of salamanders in the Known World.

The armies of Ssshna-rabath make war with the gnomes of Rhok-Kuden, even in the middle of winter. The two salamander fortresses of Raah and Hiith stand at the northern border, with troops ready to battle the Gnomes and guard the paths to Ssshna-rabath. Trade is primarily limited to land caravans as the region has no northern coast or waterway access. Ships from House Draax do travel to a small port on the southern coast, but still must travel inland for several leagues to reach Ssshna-rabath.

The salamanders here have neutral, flat colors for scales. Most of them are ivory white, coal black, graphite gray, or midnight blue with a white frosty outline to each scale's edge. All other sentient creatures here are slaves or runaways.

Every one of the salamanders' gods has a temple in Zzzfaa, and each is represented in the city of Ssshna-rabath. The main temples to Kanos, Dragon Goddess of the Fire Above; Thaminx, Dragon Goddess of the Burning Earth; Kalamandi, Dragon Goddess of the Burning Spirit; and Maathenos, Dragon Goddess of the Burning Moon, stand in the First City. No god is dominant; each vies for power through their representative Houses.

Environmental Type Lush (Salamander only) Ample (Giant) Harsh (Gnome, Human, Sylph) Uninhabitable (Undine) / **Prominent Seasons** (summer, winter)

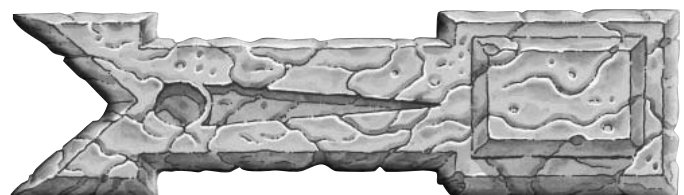
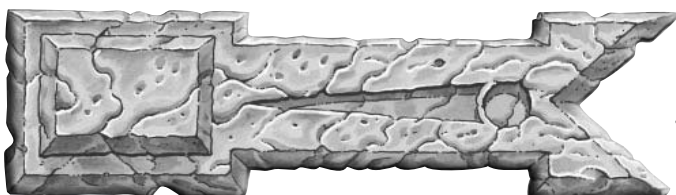
CITIES

THE HUMAN CITY OF AMAR

I have visited this city three times. Every moment during those visits, I smelled the reeking offal of the city's open sewers.

Bring incense.

The largest city of humanity in the Known World is Amar, the Golden City. Amar sits on both sides of the Ginn





River, which pours from the Ginn Lakes. Surrounding the city on both sides is a vast wall of mud bricks and flakes of pyrite—fools' gold—giving the walls the look of a gold nugget. Several large platforms made of yellow pine held together by gold-colored hemp rope lie on the docks at the river's mouth, as well as further upstream. On the river's east side is a vast temple to the largest and most well-known god of humanity, Morgis, the Lion-headed God of the Sun and Warriors. It is an enormous half-ziggurat made from mud brick and fools' gold, like the wall, but with a coat of gold paint to create the illusion of a golden temple. One side of the temple is stepped, like a ziggurat, while the other is smooth and flat. Neat this great golden wall stands a giant statue of Morgis: a man with a lion's head, wielding sword and shield, fully armored.

Amar's shipyards and docks are full year round, as every human tribe and elder race comes to this city for trade. The city has many sub-districts and two main districts: the east Temple District and the west Mountain District.

Amar's common citizens are a downtrodden type, used to being kicked around by the city's nobility. Traders and those with wealth or power dominate the rest of the people, who are poor and generally considered second-class citizens. Slaves are common here; indeed, the Amarians are second only to the salamanders in the slave trade. In fact, Amarians view salamanders with disdain because they are direct competitors for resources; therefore, few salamanders live in the Golden City. Gnomes and undines do live here, and a large sylph sub-district is dedicated to sylph pleasures and pastimes.

Amar's government is a priestly monarchy, and most of the priests belong to the temple of Morgis. The priests anoint a high priest-king to rule the city in Morgis' stead. The high priest-king's relatives are in line for the throne and fill other important titles and roles. The king's relatives hold every important office, from general to minister of public health, and he appoints them when he takes the throne. The government of Amar is corrupt, and the commoners' pleas for help go unnoticed.

Morgis' large temple is not the only temple dedicated to him in this land. Many smaller temples are scattered throughout the city, and lion-headed statues adorn many places of business. A few small shrines dedicated to other gods also stand within the city, but the priests do not allow these to become full temples: only Morgis may have temples here.

The vaults of Morgis' main temple hold a vast treasury of relics. They come from many lands and many gods. Tales say that this treasury is responsible for the vast following Morgis now commands. Supposedly any human who gazes upon the holy treasures is smitten with the urge to follow Morgis until his dying days.

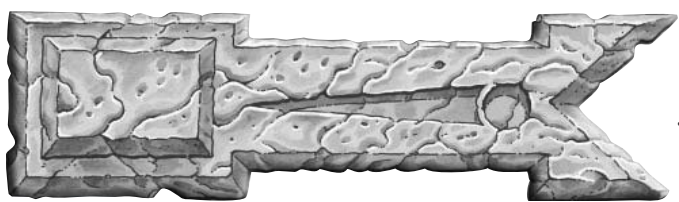
THE HUMAN CITY OF CALABA *Starting City*

The invasion of Calaba was the turning point for the Amarians and their god Morgis. However, my informants tell me that only half the treasures belonging to this land's gods and king are in Morgis' vaults. My queen, we should consider the fact some of the treasures are still hidden in the catacombs and grottos.

Calaba, the City of Hunters, is a recently conquered city under the rulers of Amar. Once, Calaba had several gods of its own, but no longer.

Calaba is a small commercial city where fur traders and hunters sell their pelts on the open market. The city, once the pride of its citizens, is in shambles; the warriors and priests of Morgis patrol the streets and force conversions upon the unwilling masses. Half of the once-stout buildings are now in ruins. Most of the bricked streets are in disrepair. The only new building is the temple to Morgis, which stands atop the ruins of another temple—one once dedicated to one of Calaba's gods. Statues of the lion-headed god also stand throughout the city.

The Calabaians are a proud lot. Rumors of an underground rebellion fly about, keeping alive the citizens' hopes. No one likes the conquerors or their god, and the Calabians desecrate the statues and temple when they can get away with it.





Currently, the Second Army of Amar rules Calaba. A general runs the city, along with a high priest in the temple. The tensions brew as the citizens chafe under the yoke of the Amarians. Recently, some force has been raiding supply wagons heading to the city. Both the Calabians and the Amarians attribute these attacks to an underground resistance.

The only temple standing in the town is that dedicated to Morgis, God of the Sun and Warriors. Every priest for any other religion has been either converted or killed.

Rumors circulate of several relics, once within the old gods' temples, that the Calabians secreted away before the army of Morgis arrived.

THE HUMAN CITY OF DAMARSUN
Starting City

This place is hardly worth the time and effort. I suggest we never visit this city or deal with anyone from here.

The city of Damarsun on the edge of Croesus is a ravaged place on the mend. The town has suffered many attacks—salamanders and Amarians—though each army failed to capture it. The walls that repelled the invaders are now broken by the siege engines. The port smolders with burnt buildings, and destroyed ships clog the harbor. Despite the destruction, a small, brisk trade exists between this city and a few other human cities. Undines helped Damarsun repel many of the invaders, and they have a great deal of influence here. However, Damarsun is fragile now, and if another army attacked, it would surely fall.

Damarsun's people strive to create a living among the ruins of this city. Every person contributes what he can. What the city lacks in amenities it more than makes up for in hospitality. War has brought the survivors together in a way that a demagogue or hierophant never could. The citizens have recruited some of the plains nomads to help rebuild the city, and they have become part of the population. With the plentiful shellfish in the sea and help from the undines, the inhabitants of this once proud city survive and look forward to a time when their city is once again great.

Currently the Damarsun has no formal government, just a town council. Elders and people who once held high offices strive to create a form of order once again.

Damarsun's people have lost their faith in gods, as their prayers went unanswered for years. Celundynn, Undine Goddess of the Seas and Ocean Cliffs, has a presence here. Most of the relics once held by Damarsun's priests are now in Amarian hands.

THE GNOME CITY OF DULANOR

May the dragon gods of the Xalamandi wipe these scums from the face of the world. If it were not for their new trade pact with Arador, the Silver Scroll Gatherers would still be neutral.

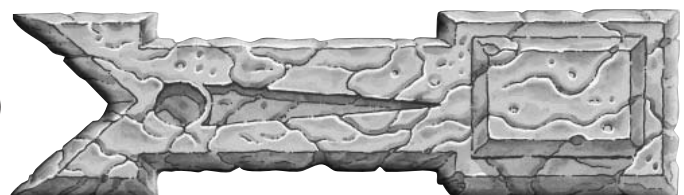
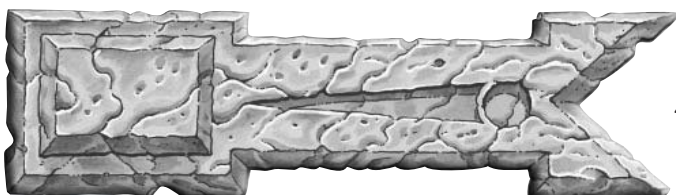
Dulanor, City of New Beginnings, is the only gnome stronghold in Raanon. Less than two hundred years old, it is newer than most human cities here. The gnomes built it after another of their cities, Kandalor, fell. Dulanor is built of dark stone and iron and squat, iron towers protrude from the mountain on all sides. The city lies within the mountain, and gnomes guard every pass. A combined army of human and salamanders still besieges the lands around Dulanor.

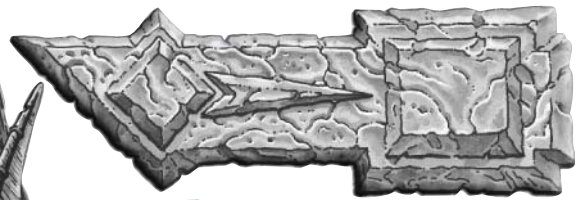
Under this constant threat of invasion, the gnomes of Dulanor are isolated from their kinfolk. They strive to improve the City of New Beginnings, as Dulanor is the only prospect the gnomes of Raanon have. They live on hope and dream of a peaceful land free from the threat of invasion.

The Stoneborn of Dulanor control the city council and the priest elders. Dulanor society is united, as the threat of war hangs over every person's head every day.

One temple to Gnorr stands in the city, carved into the eastern side of the hollow mountain. A large carved hallway in the western side holds the Hall of Ancestors, with many shrines dedicated to the gnomes' ancestor gods.

Several heroes and heroines carry relics from the temple of Gnorr and the ancestral halls. These items range from the





Horn of Thunder to the Blazing Hammers of Gnorr.

THE HUMAN CITY OF ELIO *Starting City*

Like Calaba, Elio has many hidden treasures. I have never ventured here, but my spies tell me of relics in the clutches of demons and wandering spirits. It seems the city is undergoing a transformation, as new deities have recently asserted themselves among the ailing human populous.

The cursed city of Elio festers in the swampy region of Pashon, afflicted with a diseased populous and a decaying foundation. Once a bright port city filled with traders, the gods who founded the city abandoned it for an unknown reason. Buildings once painted blue and gold now crumble; moss and lichen grows on the stones alongside creeper vines, and unruly trees choke the pathways. The port rots; the old boards slowly fall into the black waters of the harbor.

Elio's people live off whatever they can find, robbing and stealing from travelers who pass through the area. Several local bandits dwell in the city but slowly succumb to the Rot, a wasting disease that kills over several years' time, eating flesh and turning victims into mindless zombies. The swamp surrounding the city is filled with such hopeless creature, slowly dying, their flesh ruined long before.

Elio has no government to speak of.

Once, several buildings in the city's center housed Elio's gods and goddesses, but the locals tore these temples apart and used the materials to construct shelters. When it came, the Rot killed the priests first. Rumors of relics in the hands of Elio's bandit leaders spread throughout the world, and the occasional hero seeks the city for such tokens of power.

THE SALAMANDER CITY OF FFAAH-BINATH

Every time I walk into this city, my hair stands on end. You can feel the power of the dragon gods in the City of Dark Fires. Blessed are their names above all other gods.

Surrounded by volcanic mountains and lava rivers, Ffaah-binath, the City of Dark Fires, is one of the holiest cities in salamander society.

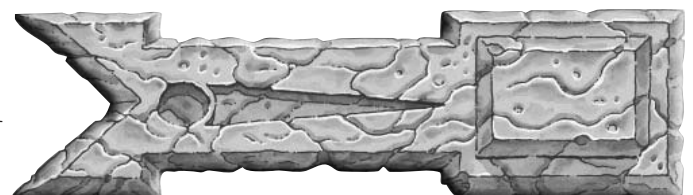
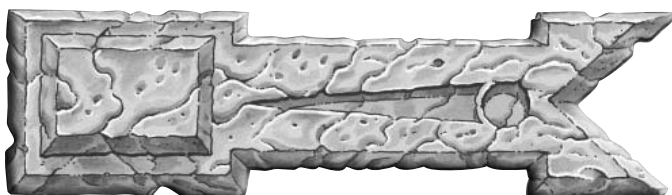
It is located at the base of a large volcano, and it is heavily entrenched and fortified. Salamanders direct channels of lava from the ever-active volcanoes, allowing the streams to bleed throughout the land and create a maze of protection around the city. A moat filled with magma flows around the city's black volcanic glass walls. The walls stand several lengths tall and bristle with troops. Buildings within the city reach upward like black flames of volcanic rock. The thorny structures have small illuminated windows that create the illusions of small flames within black fires that reach toward the heavens. The streets are lined with black rock and are well paved.

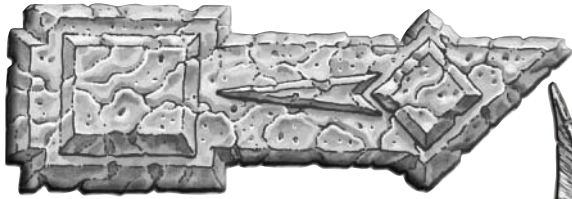
The salamanders here live in a guarded state of reverence and duty. House Xethalchoate and House Thaminx rule the citizens with an iron fist, allowing little room for dissent. Every salamander has a duty and no one, not even the queen, is allowed to idle. Slaves work in the mines below the city, and their tunnels stretch into several mountains. Games and other sports are forbidden here—the ruling houses forbid such frivolous activity to desecrate the sacred grounds. Though powerful, the salamanders are now on edge, for recent raids from the human city of Amar have shaken this once-quiet place.

The current ruling house of the City of Dark Fires is House Thaminx, but Thaminx has the support of House Xethalchoate, which commands the city's armies. House Tukonos also has some support here, but the other houses are represented in name only and have with few members.

The large temple of Xethalchoate lies near the city's center, and its great walls make it a fortress-temple. Thaminx also has a temple, this one near the city's southern entrance. The temple to Moorhanos is near the mountains, and although it is small it is one of the most revered—it plays home to several smiths who create relics exclusively for the gods.

Several treasuries in each temple hold relics of magnificent





power. The salamanders rarely use these relics unless a dire need becomes apparent.

THE GNOME CITY OF KANDALOR

This is another reason to hate the gnomes in Raanon. The plague demon Gorlos was supposed to dissipate after it spread the disease. Priests of Gnorr, the gnome god, turned our spell upon us, empowering the Leviathan by mistake. When the salamander warriors entered the city, the beast and his new minions overwhelmed them.

Known throughout gnome society as the Fallen City, Kandalor is a ruined fortress lying near the Woddan forest. The gnomes have abandoned the city to a dark curse. Salamander magic now claims the city, killing all those who would enter. Once a towering city made of yellow and white granite, Kandalor now lies broken, with crumbled walls and buildings.

During the Wars of Raanon, a coven of salamander priestesses from House Maathenos sought to unleash a deadly plague upon the city. After extensive preparation, the salamanders catapulted a rock into the city—a rock that contained a captive Leviathan. Not even Gnorr, God of Mountain and Stone could dislodge the rock. Now the rock festers with potent magic, spreading its dark power throughout the city. The malevolent Leviathan Gorlos rules the city; the dead gnome and salamander spirits are enslaved guardians bound within golem skins of rock and bone.

The twisted souls attempt to form some sort of undead monarchy. As the years have passed, gnome and salamander scouts have fallen to the forces in the city and joined the undead, expanding the army of the Plague God.

No temples exist here—except for the diseased rock that the salamanders hurled into the city. This dark stone holds the spirit of the Plague God—if some god could remove it, the Leviathan would revert to a mere demon.

THE UNDINE CITY OF PITHE

The cave system within the rocks behind Pithe is extensive. Our scouts have discovered many paths leading into the city. Unfortunately, the darkness holds many enchantments and strange jelly-like creatures. I lost half my scouts to the dangers in these caves.

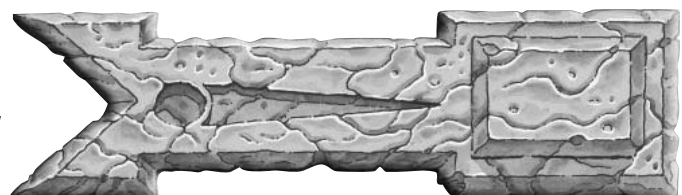
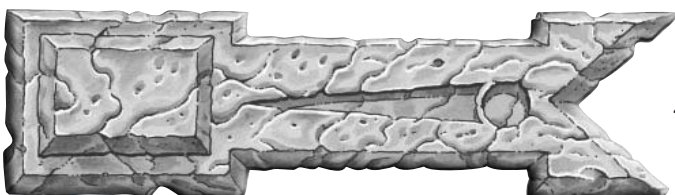
Near the underwater mountains called the Grip of Plthunlos, in the gnome region of Rhok-Kuden is Pithe, an isolated city in a hostile land. Its dark-green seawalls made of green granite. Green-streaked marble columns are embedded in the ocean floor, rising up from the sea to tower several spans above the water. Within Pithe's walls and a storm-break is a small area where undines swim with relative safety. Steps carved from the dark green stones are embedded in the cliffs and lead up to six temple towers. These temple towers serve as watchtowers, as most ships or creatures they might spot are actively hostile. Pithe's buildings are carved into the rock above the steps, and hidden tunnels and paths lead into the mountain range.

Pithe's people lead sheltered lives, knowing little of freedom or joy. The undines here greet travelers with warmth edged with suspicion. Gnomes from Dulanor once traded with the Pithians, but this trade has fallen off due to a dispute between the priests of Gnorr and of Celundynn.

The priests and priestesses of Celundynn rule the city, and a high priestess is in charge of governing affairs. The society has little time or luxury for voting or listening to elders from the various schools. In effect the city's government is a priestly aristocracy, and marshal law descends upon the citizens every day. The temple guards are swift to punish anyone who steps outside the law.

The six temple towers dedicated to Celundynn hold most of Pithe's priests and population. The towers merge with the cliffs, where the undines have also carved rooms.

In each temple tower sits a relic of enormous power, a jewel inside a wooden box filled with pearls. The jewels hold the powers of Plthunlos and others at bay, giving the city its calm air and disease-free atmosphere.





THE SALAMANDER CITY OF SSSHNA-RABATH

There is not much to discuss here, my queen. You have visited this city yourself, taking in the splendors that await any traveler here. May your future visits to this jewel of a city be filled with many blessings from the Dragon Gods.

Nestled in the vast desert of Zzzfaa, atop of a huge underground spring, is the First City of the salamanders, Ssshna-rabath. Only Naara-Beesh in Frinth can rival Ssshna-rabath in size and wealth, and it is central city for salamander society. Every house is represented here in one of the vast, copper-hued structures. Buildings in the city are shaped like fiery vines that reach high into the sky and far throughout the city, spreading out and interconnecting with other buildings. Each structure is made of refined sand blown into shape, much like glass, although the final product is more resilient than mud brick.

Within the vast vine-like city are many areas for entertainment. Sporting events are popular, with slaves and their masters competing in lively matches, some to the death. Trade is steady for such an isolated community; many caravans from House Draax come from the southern coastal port. Legends speak of this city as the first salamander settlement in the Known World.

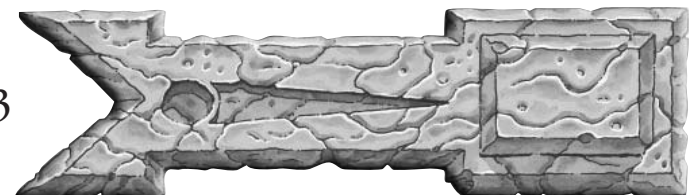
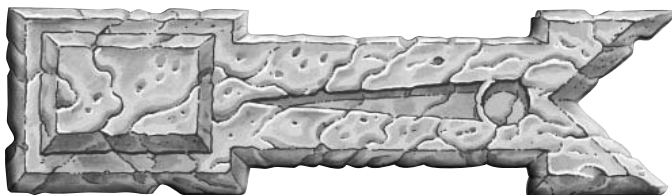
Life within the First City is very good for a salamander and very bad for everyone else. Slaves arrive here by the caravan load; salamanders use them for entertainment, war, labor, and occasionally food during a feast. Every salamander citizen is expected to own at least two slaves, for undertaking hard labor one's self is in poor taste. Most salamanders are involved in trade or war enterprises, with entertainment a third popular profession and construction after that. Of course, salamanders don't construct buildings themselves, but they may oversee teams of slaves. During periods of idleness the citizens enjoy basking in the sun in the city's many rock gardens or watching the many sport entertainments.

The governing queen of Ssshna-rabath is a hotly contested seat, as each house vies for the throne through politics,



assassinations, and subterfuge. The current queen of Ssshna-rabath is of House Thaminx; she holds power and prestige throughout all the salamander cities in the Known World. Houses Kalamandi, Kanos, and Maathenos also hold power here.

The city holds many temples and relics. Houses Kalamandi, Kanos, Maathenos, and Thaminx all have their main temples here. Other gods, including Xethalchoate, Tukonos, Moorhanos, Xtheni, and even Draax, have lavishly-decorated temples here. Relics appear in all sizes and forms, from a lowly charm to ward a warrior from the evil eye to great two-handed weapons blessed by the Dragons Gods. Many warriors and priests in this city possess such relics.



CHAPTER 3: LORE OF THE SPIRIT WORLD



The village's two streets were dark, even though the moon was full. Clouds cloaked the moon and the stars, leaving only a white smear in the sky to give some small feeling of safety to the villagers. The people here were superstitious of the dark.

And with good reason, thought the man who walked the streets.

Anyone outside would be hard-pressed to notice the man. He wore fine dark clothes, shoes, and gloves, and his feet made no

sound on the dirt road. His small walking stick struck the dirt soundlessly. At a quick glance, he seemed to only be a floating head.

He stopped and inhaled deeply the night air.

Ah. He had done the right thing coming out tonight, after all. He started walking again.

He rounded the corner of a simple wooden building. He heard the sounds he expected: breathing, kissing, and small moans, one male and one female.

He stopped to eye the couple. They stood, the male pressing the female against the wall. Their clothes were on, and actually neither of them looked eager to take them off. The woman opened her eyes and gasped at her latest sight. The male broke away and looked around, staring at the floating head not ten feet away. His eyes widened.

The man waited.

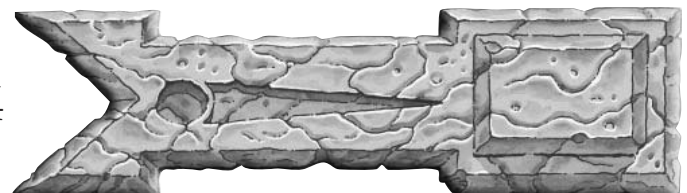
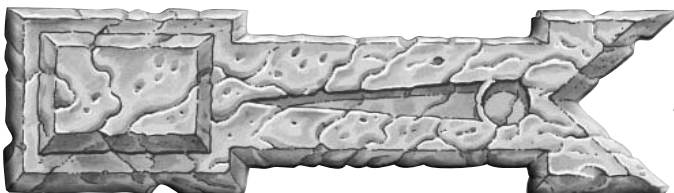
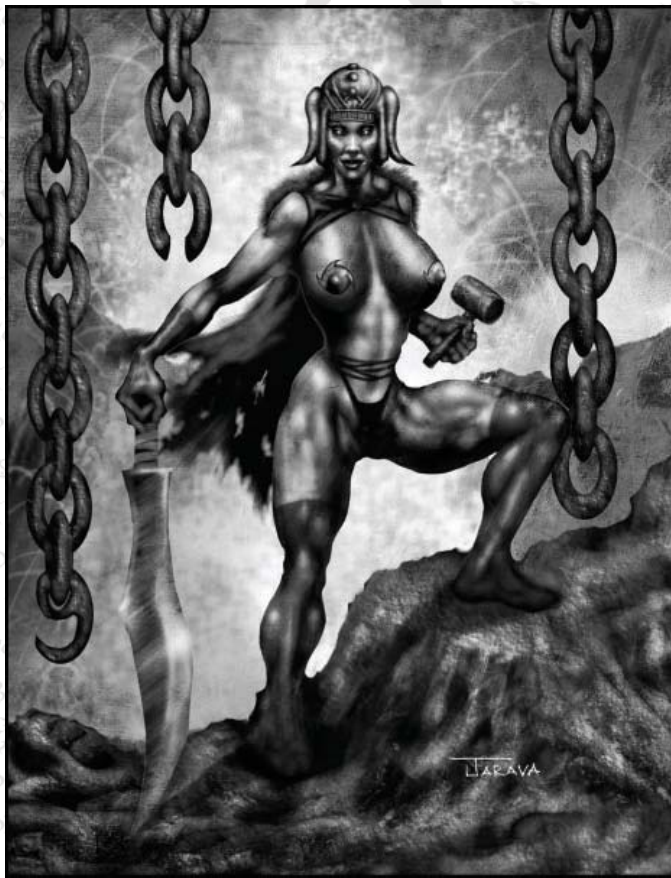
The male's mouth moved, but it was the female who spoke. "Haleth?" she gasped.

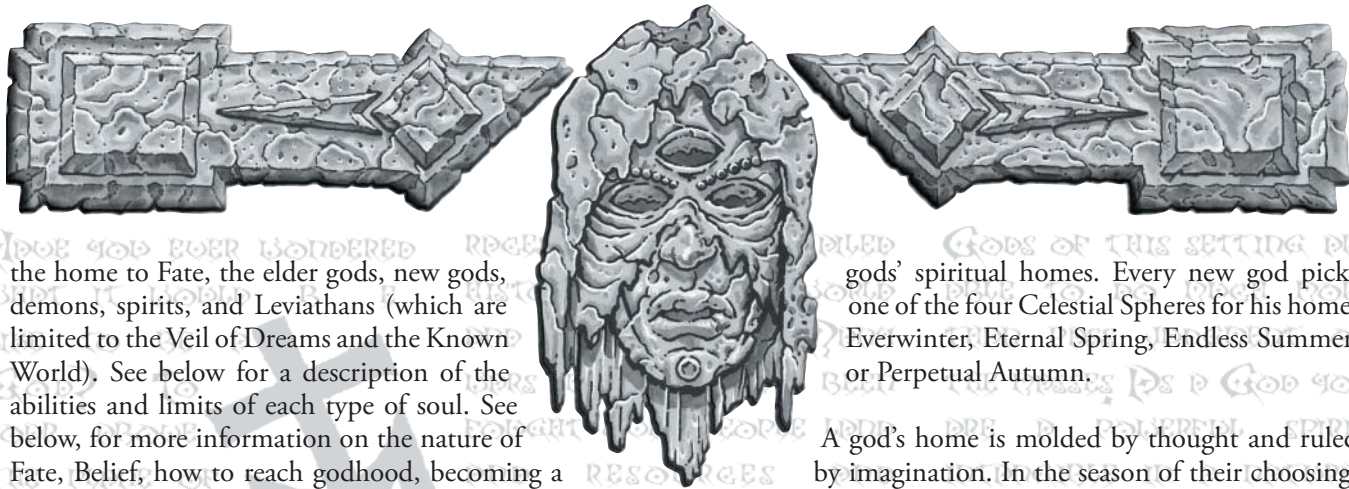
"Once," said the man, "that is who this body belonged to. It is mine now." He smiled, and kept smiling; his mouth stretched through his cheeks, through his temples; his teeth lengthening, sharpening.

They screamed as they died, just as he liked it..

Gods can perform miraculous effects in the heavens unheard of in the Known World. While the Belief of a god's followers limits his powers in the Known World, he has no limits as to what he may create in his heavenly abode. Even in other parts of the Spirit World, gods can create powerful magic with more freedom than they can in the Known World. The heavens, also called the Spirit World, is the natural environment for spirits—including gods—and it is where fantastical dreams come true.

The Spirit World is divided into several areas: the Celestial Spheres, the Celestial Gardens, the Veil of Dreams, the Abyss, the Well of Souls, and the Fires of Creation. It is





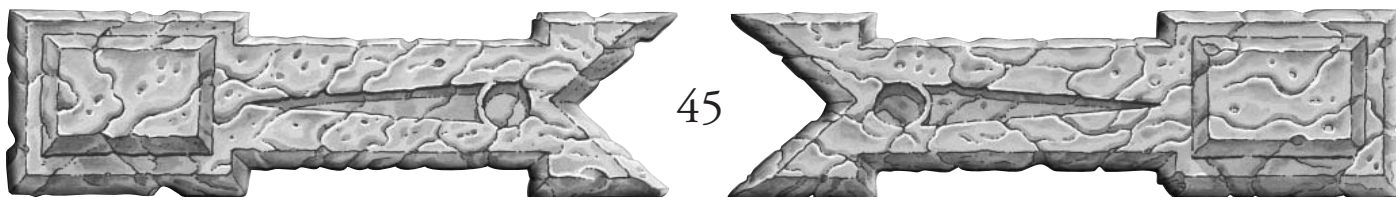
the home to Fate, the elder gods, new gods, demons, spirits, and Leviathans (which are limited to the Veil of Dreams and the Known World). See below for a description of the abilities and limits of each type of soul. See below, for more information on the nature of Fate, Belief, how to reach godhood, becoming a Leviathan, and a final note on the Creator.

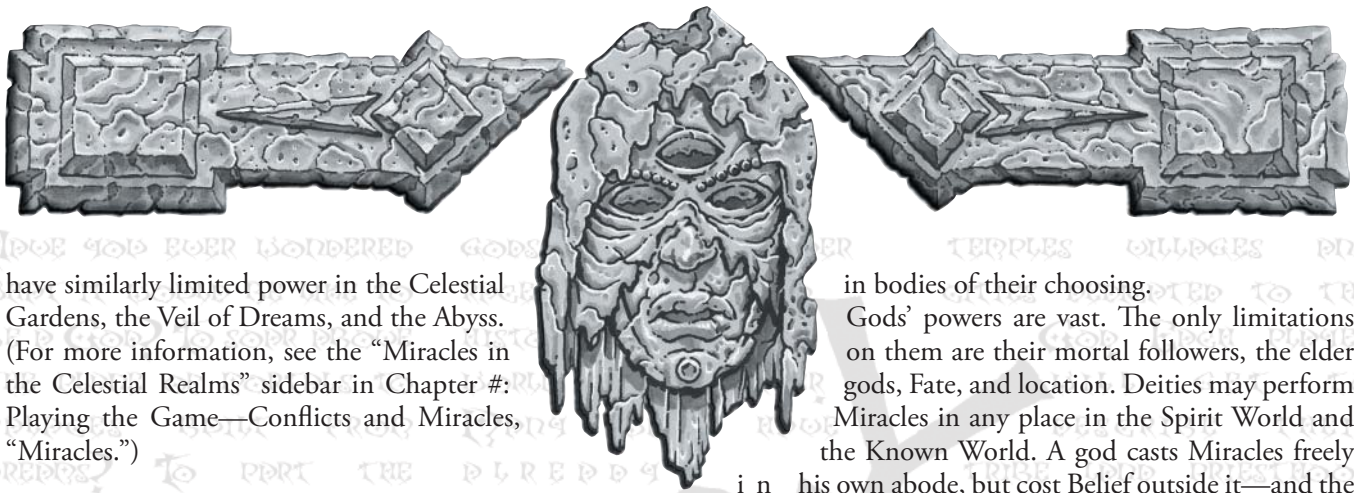
gods' spiritual homes. Every new god picks one of the four Celestial Spheres for his home: Everwinter, Eternal Spring, Endless Summer, or Perpetual Autumn.

A god's home is molded by thought and ruled by imagination. In the season of their choosing, deities shape their realms with Miracles they cast at no cost. In their homes, the effects are everlasting. Outside the gods' heavenly abodes, miraculous effects fade in time.

Deities: A god can go anywhere in the Spirit World. This freedom means gods can roam across the Celestial Spheres, the Celestial Gardens, the Veil of Dreams, the Abyss, the Well of Souls, and the Fires of Creation.

A god may move through all four realms, but holds absolute power in only one—his home realm. In another sphere, the god may cast Miracles, but he must spend Belief (though at half cost) to do so. Also, Miracles are less enduring in other spheres, as the god's influence is not as great. Gods





have similarly limited power in the Celestial Gardens, the Veil of Dreams, and the Abyss. (For more information, see the “Miracles in the Celestial Realms” sidebar in Chapter #: Playing the Game—Conflicts and Miracles, “Miracles.”)

Each god must create a home in one of the Celestial Spheres. In this sphere he picks one land feature in which to make his home, such as a valley, plain, desert, forest, or set of hills or mountains. This one terrain feature can be vast or limited (size does not matter in the Celestial Spheres), but it is one type of land (valley, mountain, or whatever) in a specific season. The deity may gain additional terrain features as his Belief grows and his realm spiritually expands. In this land, the deity sets his heavenly home, and the player creates this home in any fashion he likes. Usually, this home is a heaven for devout spirits dedicated to the god and a place of punishment for those who cross him. The god can do anything he wishes in his home, except create sentient beings. Souls are the one property that a deity cannot create. Therefore, most gods gather devout followers to serve them in their heavenly homes.

Gods may travel freely in spirit form through the rest of the Spirit World, thereby experiencing all its wonders. Some go to the Abyss, but few remain long; nothing exists there except for void demons and lost souls. Gods travel across the Abyss to reach other Fires of Creation—which are similar to the Sun, the Fire of Creation closest to the Known World. However, few elect to do so as, so far from the Known World, their worshippers are distant and their faith and Belief fades quickly.

Other areas to which gods travel include the Veil of Dreams, a subtle place where gods interact with their followers indirectly, planting thoughts in mortal minds. Gods also attend the Celestial Gardens, which is a neutral territory for deities to meet and interact as well as attain knowledge and heightened emotional states. The gardens are also a place to pick up recent souls who are en route to their god’s Celestial Sphere.

In addition to traveling throughout the Spirit World, gods visit the Known World their natural, incorporeal forms or



in bodies of their choosing. Gods’ powers are vast. The only limitations on them are their mortal followers, the elder gods, Fate, and location. Deities may perform Miracles in any place in the Spirit World and the Known World. A god casts Miracles freely in his own abode, but cost Belief outside it—and the further away the Miracle takes place, the more Belief it costs. As a deity gains more worshippers, he collects more Belief and power. The fewer followers a god has, the more he regresses to a spirit, non-godlike state.

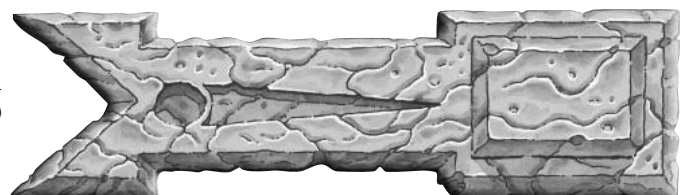
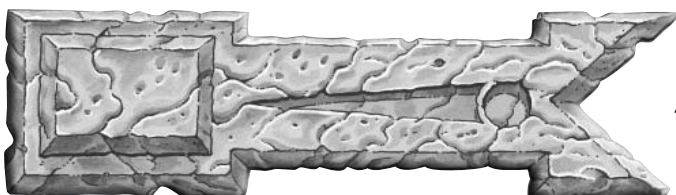
Elder gods watch the Known World and the Spirit World for new gods and their Miracles. If a new god is careless in the casting of Miracles, he might find an elder god countering or cancelling his Miracle. Such an event may cause a confrontation that can lead to escalating problems, divine struggles, flying Miracles, and dire consequences. If Miracles become too wild or unstable, Fate intervenes—canceling Miracles and, possibly, punishing the imprudent gods. Fate interferes in this way only in the direst of situations, but when it does so, the effects are profound. Even the elder gods are wary of upsetting Fate.

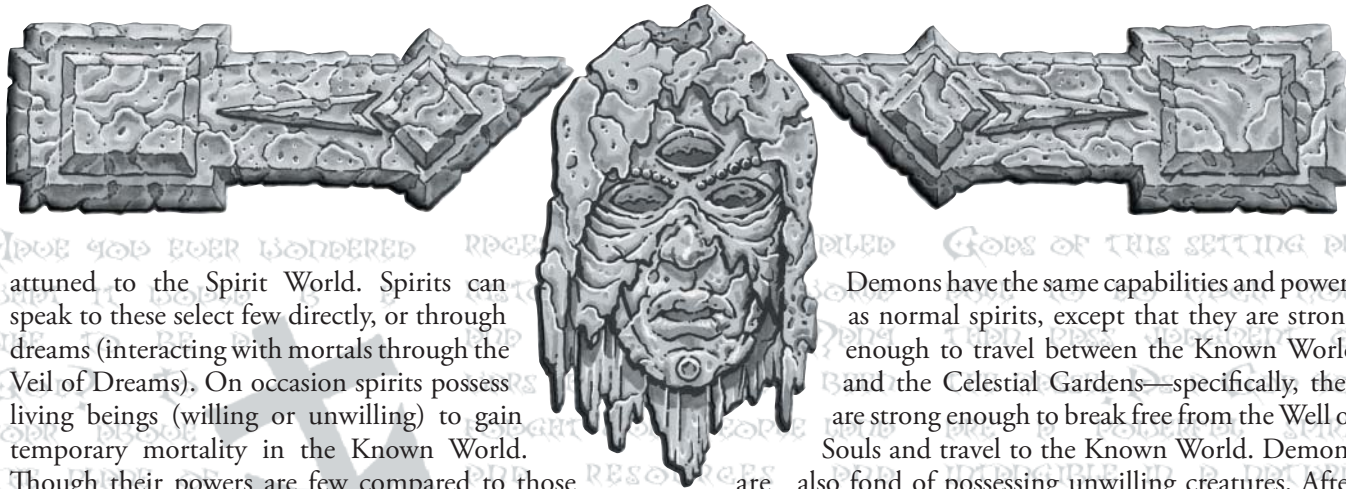
SPIRITS

A spirit is the soul of a mortal who dies in the Known World. Spirits are incorporeal thoughts of energy that can sometimes directly affect the Known World and the Veil of Dreams. They are mortal-born entities that now exist in the Spirit World. In the Spirit World, spirits are restricted, regulated, and herded to locations specifically for them.

Spirits naturally gravitate to the Celestial Gardens after death, seeking out places to call home. The Celestial Gardens, divided into seven sections, hosts the largest congregation of spirits outside of the Well of Souls. Here spirits dwell in these purgatory groves, awaiting Fate’s judgment. Fate sends most souls back to the Well of Souls, where they are reborn in the spirit streams.

A few wandering spirits remain in the Known World and escape Fate’s clutches. These rogue spirits might later become gods or Leviathans. Most spirits in the Known World are attracted to living relatives or those spiritually





attuned to the Spirit World. Spirits can speak to these select few directly, or through dreams (interacting with mortals through the Veil of Dreams). On occasion spirits possess living beings (willing or unwilling) to gain temporary mortality in the Known World. Though their powers are few compared to those of gods, spirits that are strong and savvy may eventually godhood or Leviathan status.

Fate sends celestial creatures called Grapplers after rogue spirits; Grapplers capture these spirits and return them to the Celestial Gardens and the Courtyard of Fate. In some cases, a god asks Fate to reserve specific rogue spirits for their proper divine judgment. When a Grappler captures such a spirit, Fate allows the god to retrieve it, whereupon it serves an eternity in the god's heaven or hell.

No spirit or demon can freely travel to the Celestial Spheres; they need assistance to do so. The Fires of Creation are off limits as well; the stars swallow souls, and they never return. Spirits can travel in the Abyss, but few do so, for it is a great gulf of nothingness that causes madness even in the hardest of spirits. Few spirits have any rights in the afterlife, though those who left their mark in the Known World might gain more recognition and freedom than others.

DEMONS

Demons are rogue spirits who slipped from the Well of Souls without traveling along one of the spirit streams to a terrestrial body. They are similar to other spirits, though they have a few important differences.

Fate wants demons returned to the Well by any means possible. The entity sends Grapplers to capture these spirits and return them to the Well and the cycle of death and rebirth. Only the strongest or most cunning demons escape.

Unlike common rogue spirits, demons can freely enter the Veil of Dreams, the Celestial Gardens, and the Known World. They usually hide among other spirits and the landscape, avoiding Grapplers and gods who hate their kind.

Demons may eventually become gods or Leviathans.

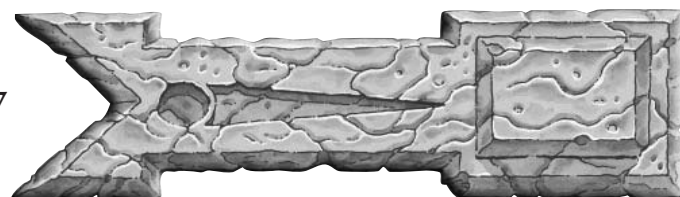
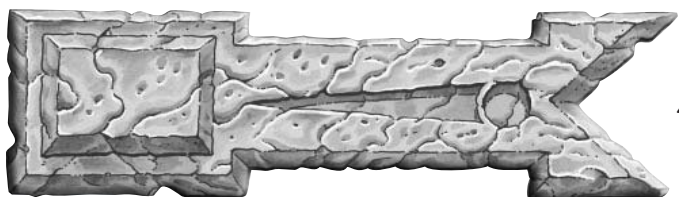
Demons have the same capabilities and powers as normal spirits, except that they are strong enough to travel between the Known World and the Celestial Gardens—specifically, they are strong enough to break free from the Well of Souls and travel to the Known World. Demons are also fond of possessing unwilling creatures. After a certain amount of time in a possessed body, a demon may bring about a physical change to that mortal shell, enhancing it for its pleasures.

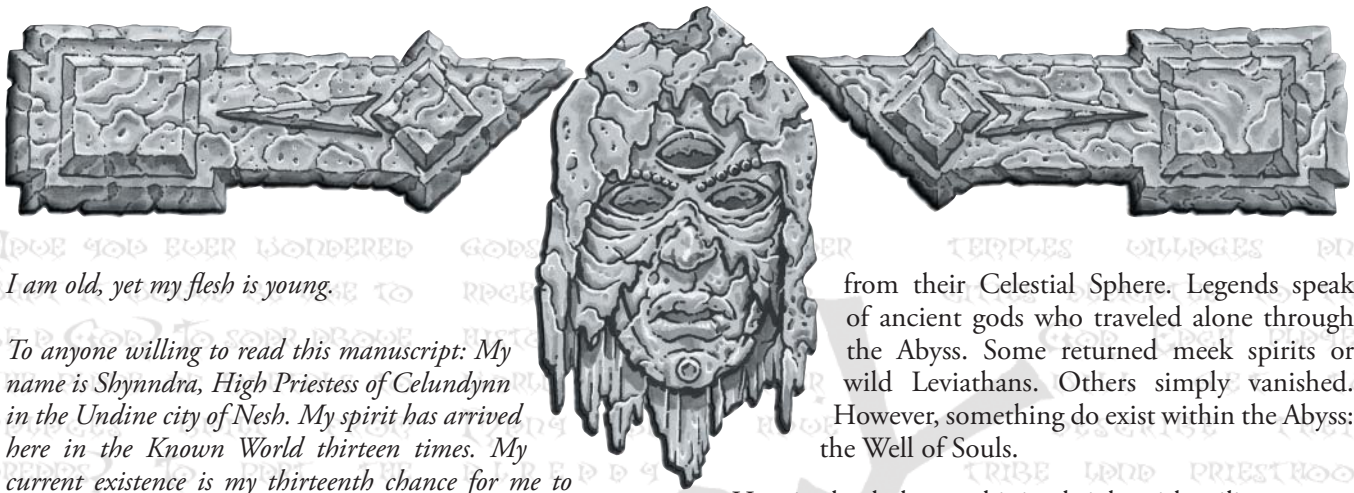
LEVIATHANS

These fear-mongers are powerful beasts that have miraculous powers similar to gods. Leviathans feed off mortals' terror—terror that they inspire. They can do this in the Known World and in the Spirit World. This terror—or Terror—acts like Belief, feeding energy to the creatures. Leviathans are addicted to this energy, drinking deep until the point of no return. A Leviathan has no peaceful afterlife. Even if it diminishes to spirit form, the need to return to its status as a Leviathan is so strong that almost none can resist it.

Leviathans are even more restricted than spirits or demons in where they can go. After the War of the Leviathans, these mad spirit-beasts were barred from the Celestial Gardens and Celestial Spheres. Instead, Leviathans travel the Known World and the Veil of Dreams, causing terror in many forms. Fate might send Grapplers after Leviathans, but most are too strong for Grapplers. Usually Fate recruits deities of the Known World to bring these interlopers to justice. All know that Leviathans cause far more harm than good; they give nothing and take fear from every living mortal they can.

The following is a compilation of several scrolls found in the ruins of a sea tower. The Silver Scroll Gatherers of Arador have transcribed the knowledge into a book called *Shyndra's Lore of the Spirit World*. It is widely published and known as a unique first-hand account of the Spirit World. Anyone with an interest in the Spirit World is encouraged to read it.





I am old, yet my flesh is young.

To anyone willing to read this manuscript: My name is Shyndra, High Priestess of Celundynn in the Undine city of Nesh. My spirit has arrived here in the Known World thirteen times. My current existence is my thirteenth chance for me to serve her, Goddess of the Waters, Guardian of the Cliffs, and Protector of our Homes. It was she who brought me forth from Ansyllar, our heaven in the shining oceans above. What follows is a guide based on my travels—not on earth below, but in the heavens above.

THE FIRES OF CREATION, THE ABYSS, AND THE WELL OF SOULS

In the beginning, after the First Thought, there was fire. Not an earthly sort of fire, but an all-consuming, omnipotent fire that created the heavens and the earth. It burns still, and in the end it will consume us. For now, these Fires of Creation burn in the Abyss that surrounds us, in heaven as on earth. Every star in the sky is a part of this fire. Between the Fires of Creation, worlds are scattered, spinning, creating life in myriad forms. Even our sun is linked to this primordial fire. Without this fire, there is the Abyss.

The Fires of Creation are remnants of the First Thought that shaped the universe. In each of these fires is a potent mix of chaotic energy that spans time and dimensions. Only the most powerful of sentient beings can harness these fires, for they consume much. A few deities who have an affinity with the sun travel to the fire near the Known World. Tales say the void demons and more powerful deities can use the Fires of Creation as traveling points or gates to other fires.

In darkness, between the Fires of Creation, is the Abyss, timeless. It is all-consuming. Nothing lives here in the flesh. Only the gibbering void demons—spirits that escaped the Well of Souls—dwell here. It is a vacuum, an ancient desert, and those wishing to travel from one fire to another must cross it. A journey through the void is filled with peril. It is possible for a deity, strong spirit, or demon to cross this place, but most succumb to the madness that lies in the eternal blackness. Even the mightiest of deities cannot sustain themselves in the Abyss for long, as the power of their follower's belief fades as they drift farther

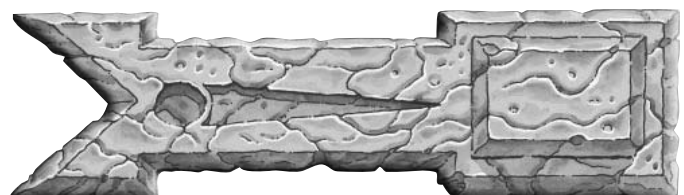
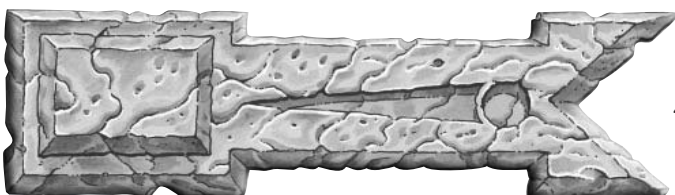
from their Celestial Sphere. Legends speak of ancient gods who traveled alone through the Abyss. Some returned meek spirits or wild Leviathans. Others simply vanished. However, something do exist within the Abyss: the Well of Souls.

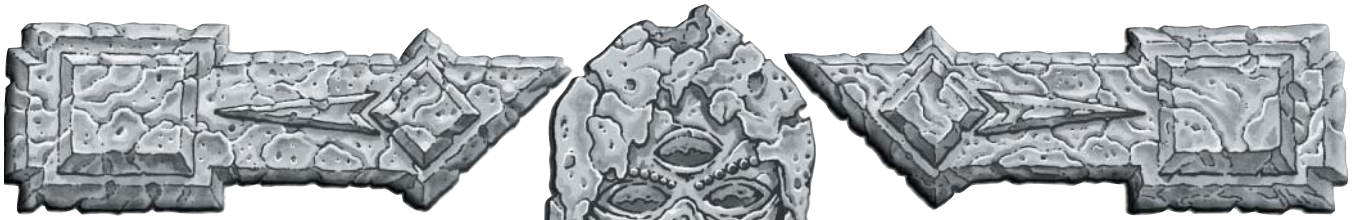
Here in the darkness, shining bright with roiling energy, is the Well of Souls: a powerful vortex filled with sentient energies forged at the dawn of time. The Well of Souls crosses space and time to imbue mortal bodies with spirits. Everything born with a soul takes its spirit from these eternal waters. Every species that thinks and speaks draws forth a specific stream of conscious energy from the Well. Unique spirit streams pour forth for each race. Humans, undines, gnomes, salamanders, nymphs, giants, and even demons come from this reservoir. The waters create every soul, each with a unique pattern. When a mortal with no patron god dies, she seeks this place, returning to replenish the Well of Souls.

As the seasons turn and time moves, so too does the Well of Souls. Balanced against the movement of the Fires of Creation, the Well swells and collapses much like the seas of the Known World. Every so often the Well overflows with souls, sending spirits crashing into the world. Some spirits do not follow the spirit streams and become unborn souls, lost to the true meaning of life. They are demons: spirits without a moral upbringing or the experiences of mortal flesh.

Inside the Well of Souls is a mass of raging, multicolored energy and thoughts, scattered and unformed. Within are many small, concentrated vortices of energy that hold sentient streams of consciousness. Among the spiritual whirlpools are the waters of the Well of Souls, unformed and filled with thought energy. A wall surrounds the Well—a wall created from concentrated void that is pure ink-black. Streams of formed thought flow from the whirlpools, beyond the wall, to the plethora of life forms in the universe. Only a deity who is fully aware of herself can hope to go into the Well of Souls without losing herself to the chaotic waters.

I have seen the Fires up close, I have risen from the Well many times, I have crossed the Abyss.





THE PATH OF THE LIVING

The soul within the flesh endures the pain of living, unconsciously looking for release. The spirit waters bathe every sentient mortal from conception to birth. Upon birth the soul is introduced in ignorance, eventually finding its way to understanding. The soul walks in flesh upon the Known World, maturing and awakening. Each experience gives substance to the soul, enriching it. Most people never live up to their potential, spending their days in idleness. Rarely does the soul mature to full enlightenment. The everyday person is born and dies, returning to the Well to be reborn again. Reincarnation is common among the living, though few are aware of it.

Mortals have many paths they might choose. They might walk the path of the hero; it is a lonely path, but one of ultimate reward. If a hero lives on in the memory of others, he may achieve immortality. His spirit remains on earth with his tribe or ascends to the Celestial Spheres. A few heroes even become gods.

A mortal might walk the path of the righteous, becoming a priest or holy being. Such a path has its rewards as well.

This individual is close to her god, who may reward her and invite her into the Celestial Spheres. In the Spheres, servants of the gods, whether priests or heroes, may find a heaven where they dwell in eternal bliss.

A mortal might walk the path of the damned: a cursed road. Fate and the gods recognize those who would thwart their will. As each god has a heaven, each may also have a hell: a place of eternal punishment set aside for nefarious and unruly souls. Malicious souls without a god to mete out punishment find Fate at their doors. Some few escape their destiny and become Leviathans.

What each mortal does in his life affects his afterlife.

I have walked the path of the living many times. After seven lives did I realize my path: I am to walk with my goddess, Celundynn.

THE PATH OF THE DEAD

Death is not the end; it is only the beginning of another journey.



Where a soul goes after death depends on the path it walked in life, though all paths lead in one of three directions: to the Well of Souls, to the Celestial Spheres, or back to the Known World, usually near the mortal's race or place of origin. A mortal path of idleness or incomplete maturity leads a soul back to the Well of Souls.

The righteous find homes in the kingdoms of their gods. Heroes and the damned might also travel to their gods, or they might remain in the Known World.

THE VEIL OF DREAMS

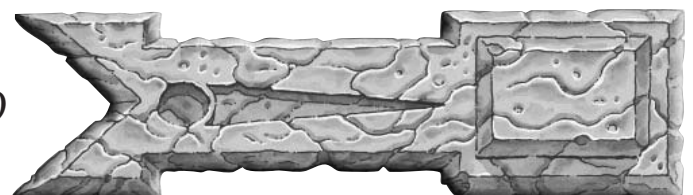
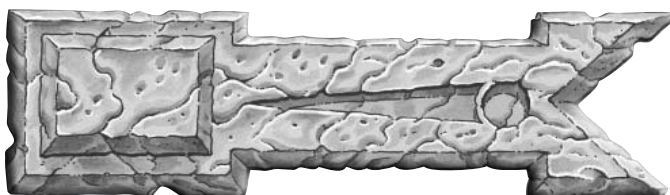
Before passing to the lands of the dead, spirits must break the barrier known as the Veil of Dreams. Here in the lands of mist and fertile imagination, sleeping humanity connects to the unknown. The dead quickly pass through this realm, save for a few hardy spirits and demons that haunt this place. Ancestral spirits, demons, Leviathans, and even gods use the Veil of Dreams to communicate with the living in subtle yet effective ways. Thoughts, messages, and ideas circulate here like the ocean's currents. Dreaming creatures enter the Veil of Dreams in a limited way. They cannot die here, but they can be frightened or inspired, fall in love or get a great idea.

THE CELESTIAL SPHERES: CELESTIAL GARDENS

All spirits pass through the Celestial Gardens, which are just beyond the Veil of Dreams. Here in the seven gardens of emotion, Fate rules supreme.

Upon death, every spirit from the Known World travels to one of the seven gardens: the Courtyard of Fate; the Orchard of Knowledge, Reason, and Madness; The Floral Garden of Vigilance, Paranoia, and Sloth; The Fungal Garden of Charity, Gluttony, and Greed; the Herbal Garden of Fate, Revenge, and Trust; the Tropical Gardens of Lust, Adoration, and Revulsion; or the Frost Gardens of Joy, Pain and Sorrow. To which garden a soul travels depends upon its actions and feelings in life. Some spirits simply pass through these gardens on their way elsewhere, while some linger.

Fate wanders the seven gardens on occasion, sending souls to their proper destinations. Fate's minions, the Grapplers, also gather souls and bring them to the Courtyard of Fate





for judgment. Gods may wander the gardens as well.

These gardens are very familiar to me. I have experienced each and every one.

THE COURTYARD OF FATE

The Courtyard of Fate is a solemn place, filled with muted sounds and slow, graceful actions. Rounded rectangular stones in gray tones line the walkways, which lead in a circular maze to the main courtyard. Flowers, trees, birds, and other small animals fill the landscape under a sunset sky. Here Fate resides in a golden chair at the center of a mottled gray pavilion. Benches made of stone and marble are evenly distributed around the courtyard. The gathered souls wait on these benches and upon the grounds, along with the gods who meet here. The Courtyard Garden is the center of all activity in the Celestial Spheres.

Often the spirits of the young who never reached maturity come directly to the Courtyard of Fate.

THE ORCHARD OF KNOWLEDGE, REASON, AND MADNESS

The orchard is a place of entry into the Celestial Realms for those who, in life, possessed astute reasoning skills or much knowledge. Each fruit in this garden is filled with wisdom and knowledge of different kinds. Tales say that the gods come here to think and plan, eating fruit from these trees. Souls that acquired much knowledge in life come to the orchard in death. They may remain for a time, losing their hard-won secrets to the trees and plants of this garden. Eventually these spirits move on to the Courtyard of Fate.

On rare occasions, gods come to the orchard to take souls to their realm to serve in their heavens or hells. Many sylph souls come here before going to the Well of Souls, if they did not serve their god fully. The orchard is the Orchard of Madness as well as of knowledge and reason, for those

who are on the brink of genius easily slide into dementia and other forms of mental derangement.

THE FLORAL GARDEN OF VIGILANCE, PARANOIA, AND SLOTH

In the Floral Gardens, heightened or deprived states of awareness are prevalent; the paranoid soul and the lethargic spirit walk hand-in-hand here. The flowers reflect the moods of the spirits and effect everything, including gods. For a change in mind, gods simply walk here to refresh themselves among the enchanted petals and trumpets.

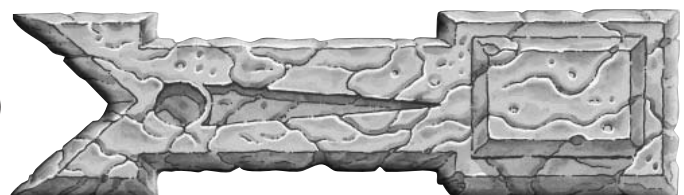
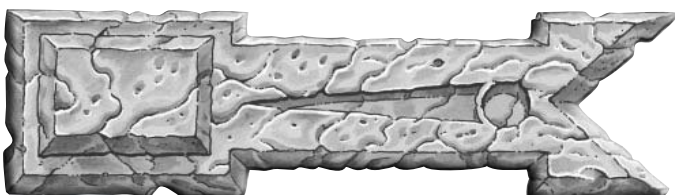
THE FUNGAL GARDEN OF CHARITY, GLUTTONY, AND GREED

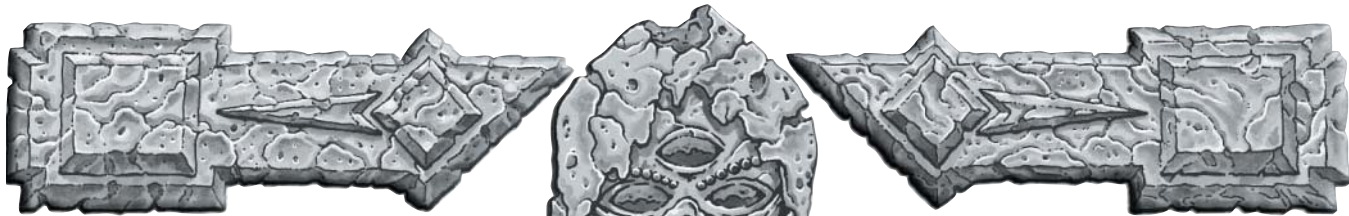
Spirits whose lives revolve around giving and taking come to the Fungal Garden. Ambitious, greedy, and gluttonous spirits walk here, taking advantage of charitable spirits. These spirits exchange ghostly objects, and the echoes of money clink in the mushroom alleyways. Moss-covered tents form a market area that spans the whole garden, housing money lenders and charitable souls. It is a darkly-lit parade of fools in a bartering merry-go-round that never ends, interrupted only by the occasional god, Grappler, or Fate.



THE HERBAL GARDEN OF HATE, REVENGE, AND TRUST

Hate-filled souls wander through the Herbal Garden's intoxicating scents. Here spirits who have life-long devotions and feelings of mistrust skulk in shadows, filled with hatred and loathing. Those who have been wrongfully murdered, if they do not stay in the Known World, sometimes come here to seethe in anger. Also in this garden are trusting souls, willing to take anyone's advice and trusting every word. These spirits are gullible and make for great servants of gods. Deities frequent this garden, avoiding the hateful and picking out the most faithful souls as companions.





THE TROPICAL GARDEN OF ADORATION, LUST, AND REVULSION

In the Tropical Garden, all sorts of physical urges are fulfilled. Passionate people, romantics, and others who adored or lusted after a person, thing, or idea come here to fulfill their dreams before moving on to the Well of Souls.

Even the gods may be found cavorting in this Celestial Eden with other spirits. Those who have found true love in objects or people here to relive their commitments. Also here are souls sick to their cores filled with revulsion, living out their nightmares in what could be a paradise.

THE FROST GARDENS OF JOY, PAIN, AND SORROW

Snow-covered pine trees shelter the holly bushes and evergreen bushes in the Frost Gardens. Spirits who wander here create deafening noises, some filled with pain, others with sorrow, and a few with joy at being released from live of misery. Many nymph souls make their way here to sing with the other ghosts. The spiritual noises resonate throughout the garden to create a symphony of sorrow and joy.

May you the reader find your path through the Celestial Gardens.

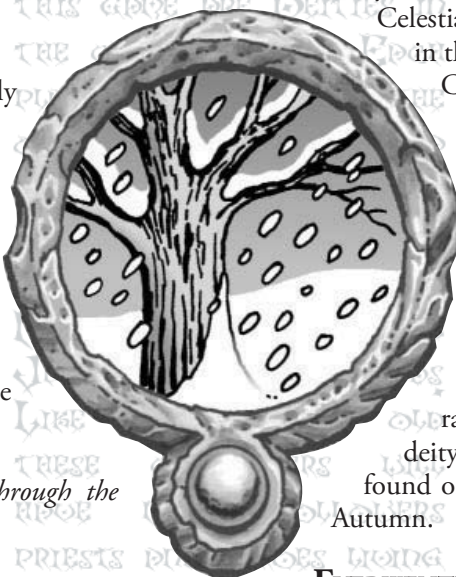
THE CELESTIAL SPHERES: THE FOUR SEASONS OF HEAVEN

Past the Celestial Gardens are four spheres circling the Known World: the Four Seasons of Heaven. Only the gods and their chosen souls know of the Celestial Spheres. No mortal being has ever set foot into these realms. Mortals cannot look up to the heavens and see the Spheres; they exist in a different space and time, and only a spirit may travel to them. The four seasons stretch through eternity, representing each of life's cycles on the mortal world: birth, maturity, decay, and death. The Celestial Spheres are places of wondrous magic and awe. Here the gods rule supreme—apart from Fate.



Each season has a name and unique aspects. Everwinter is the home of snow-capped valleys, large glacial rivers, destruction, and death. Eternal Spring is a meadow pasture dotted with evergreen forests, with birth and the powers of creation magnified. Endless Summer has rolling plains and sunny hills and holds powers of maturity and control. Perpetual Autumn is filled with colorful forests, winding rivers, and the powers of decay and transformation.

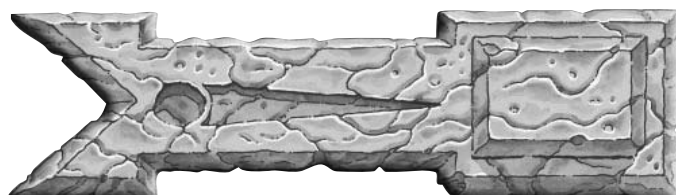
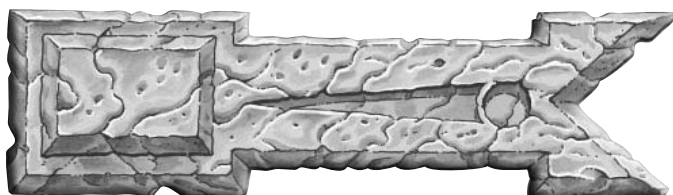
The creations of the elder gods inundate these seasons. Nearly all the elder gods have realms that span all Four Celestial Spheres. The undine gods hold sway in the eternal ocean known as Ansyllar, with Celundynn controlling the shallow waters while her estranged husband Plthunlos holds fast to the deep. The endless deserts of Jaa-naareth are home to the nine dragon gods of the salamanders, each fighting in heaven as they do on earth: for land and recreation. Rhok-Etheril is the heavenly mountain range of the gnome god, Gnorr, and his fellow gods. The sylphs, once a thriving race, are now diminished, and so is their deity's territory. Lugo's realm, Arablis, is found only in the Celestial Sphere of Perpetual Autumn.

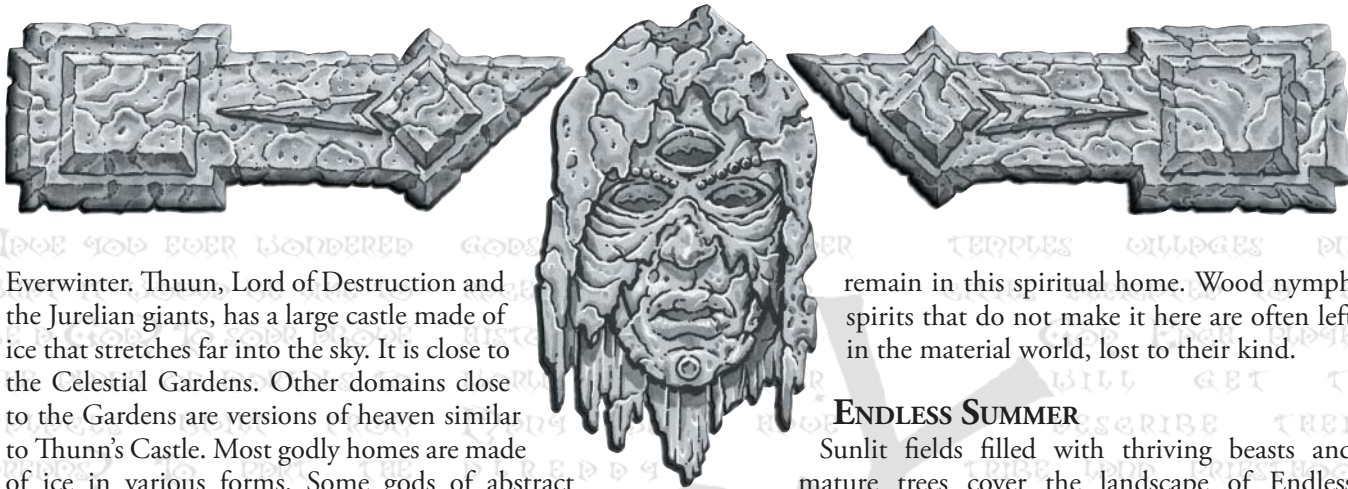


EVERWINTER

Everwinter is a heavenly sphere filled with unearthly sights and sounds reminiscent of the coldest season in the mortal year. Gods who make their homes in this realm have a harsh environment to control—an environment filled with frozen lakes, snow-covered hills, and icy forests. Few spirits roam these heavenly lands, as only god-chosen spirits can enter. Massive earthquakes occur often. Volcanoes erupt along the enormous white-capped mountain area of Rhok-Etheril. Snow blankets the desert regions of Jaa-naareth here, making for an endless plain of white. Ice fills the ocean waters of the eternal seas of Ansyllar.

Every elder god aside from Lugo's has a domain in





Everwinter. Thuun, Lord of Destruction and the Jurelian giants, has a large castle made of ice that stretches far into the sky. It is close to the Celestial Gardens. Other domains close to the Gardens are versions of heaven similar to Thunn's Castle. Most godly homes are made of ice in various forms. Some gods of abstract concepts live in the blizzard storms far from the Gardens, near the Abyss.

ETERNAL SPRING

New life perpetually comes forth from the ground here. In Eternal Spring, gods create many beasts and beings to the whim of fancies. However, only the gods have any true substance; the only other creatures that can exist in Eternal Spring are those that came into being here.

Rhok-Etheril has a small presence in Eternal Spring, with small mountain peaks and shallow green valleys. Jaa-naareth also has a small desert patch here, with a few rocky hills teeming with life and blooming desert flowers. The heavenly seas are bountiful, with many beaches and reefs.

The sunny estates of Eternal Spring hold many idyllic homes for the gods both near and far from the Celestial Gardens. Close to the Gardens, many gods have hillside abodes made of complex organic shapes with strange creatures floating to and fro. Further from the Gardens, most gods live in simple organic elements such as trees or large fields of grass.

A forest section near the Gardens is home to the dead spirits of the wood nymphs. Since no gods dwell here except for themselves, the wood nymphs hold the place by sheer numbers of spirits. This woodland is the wood nymphs' final home. Since wood nymph birth rates are low, their spirits do not crowd the heavenly forest. Fate asks some of the oldest spirits to return to the Well of Souls, but does so only if such a return is absolutely necessary. Only Fate knows the precise number of wood nymph spirits that may



remain in this spiritual home. Wood nymph spirits that do not make it here are often left in the material world, lost to their kind.

ENDLESS SUMMER

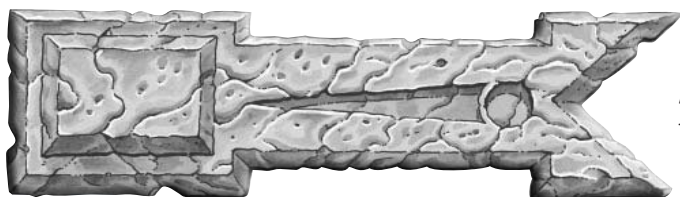
Sunlit fields filled with thriving beasts and mature trees cover the landscape of Endless Summer. Everything created here is full of life, wild and ready to be tamed. Gods of Endless Summer usually control the creatures and force them to carry out their will, rather than create new servants.

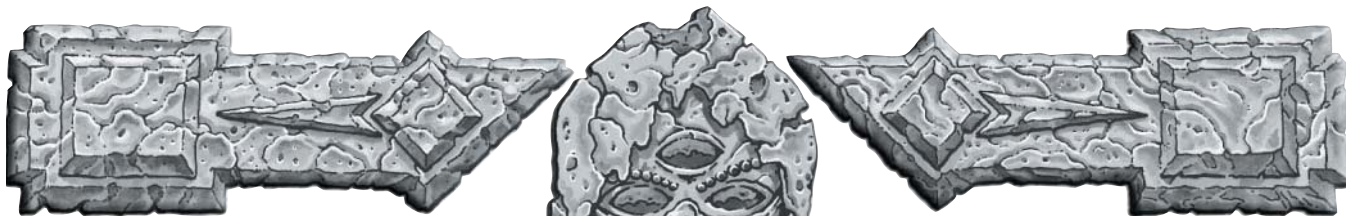
A huge section of this Celestial Sphere is filled with the desert region of Jaa-naareth, home to the dragon gods. Celundynn and Plthunlos even share their waters of Ansyllar with the dragon goddess Draax; her domain within the ocean appears in boiling waters, heat vents, and lava-covered volcanic islands. The mountains of Rhok-Etheril cross the mountains of the desert region of Jaa-naareth. Even here in the heavens the elder gods are at war, for the dragon gods stage mock battles at regular intervals in honor of their mortals' struggles on the Known World.

The gods' territories in Endless Summer are made of stone and earth. Close to the Gardens, gods make large cities and towers that reach the sky. The dragon gods have many such towers, which they make exclusively to fit their large bulks. Near the outskirts of the Celestial Sphere are ethereal structures made of sounds and light.

PERPETUAL AUTUMN

Perpetual Autumn hosts a landscape of colorful, decaying trees, ripe fields ready for harvest, and large funguses growing on mountainsides. In this realm of decay, gods prefer to transform the lands around them, making for a certain geographical discord: A grove of spring flowers may appear in the midst of a forest of ripe grain. Each place here is unique, as every god has her handprint in this sphere's scheme.





A deep part of the heavenly ocean of Ansyllar is here, where Plthunlos is stronger than Celundynn. Only a small patch of the desert region of Jaa-naareth runs through this sphere. The gnome kingdom of Rhok-Etheril in Perpetual Autumn is a large tract of mountains covered with deciduous forests.

Intersecting this realm are the sylph mountains of Arablis, where the sylph god Lugos holds court. The mountains of Arablis are composed entirely of paper and scrolls; myths say that every bit of knowledge in the Known World is recorded here, on the mountainsides and valleys.

In this Celestial Sphere of decay, gods have wild and fanciful homes made from every conceivable material. As with the other Celestial Spheres, gods close to the Celestial Gardens have homes made of substance, while territories far from the Gardens are made from strange concepts and unearthly ideas.

The lands of the Celestial Spheres resonate through each and every living being, for they are home.

ON BELIEF AND SPIRITS

Belief is one of the most powerful forces in the Known World. Living mortals wield this power, and it has far-reaching consequences in the afterlife. Only mortals who go through the trials and tribulations of earthly life can generate Belief. It can empower beings of spirit, who would just be ghosts or demons. Mortal tales say that belief can move mountains or turn water into wine. Immortals know that these tales are true, as every deity, from the highest elder god to a new god of mankind to Leviathans who prey on humanity, depend on such powers from mortals. After death, a mortal's powers of Belief fade. Without belief a person is dead.

Belief comes in two types. The first type is sometimes called faith, but usually just Belief. It is beneficial for everyone. Followers of any sort of god, whether he is a cruel and sadistic being or a benevolent and loving protector, expect



some sort of reward for their faith, and wise gods reward their followers with Miracles. Mortals can express faith in many ways, but all these ways stem from belief in a god who will take care of them in times of need. Indeed, the gods are *products* of the mortal need to have benefactors in the heavens who ensure their well-being. Belief creates gods, not the other way around.

The second type of Belief speaks of fear of pain and the unknown. It is called Terror. It is an irrational, reactionary belief that drives people insane. Like faith, spirits can feed on Terror. It is an intoxicating form of belief that eventually drives spirits and demons mad.

Leviathans feed off Terror exclusively. A god may feed from it as well, but risks madness and the possibility of becoming something monstrous and ungodly: a Leviathan.

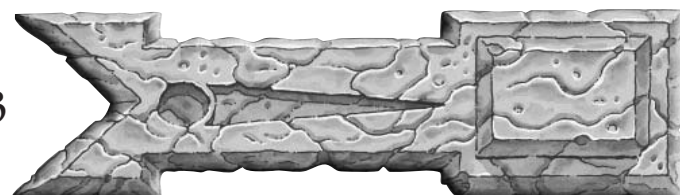
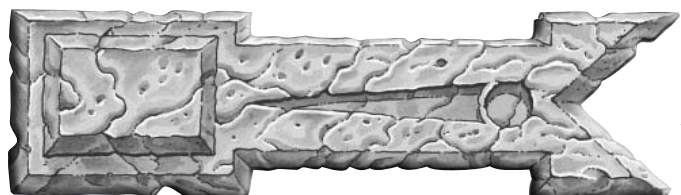


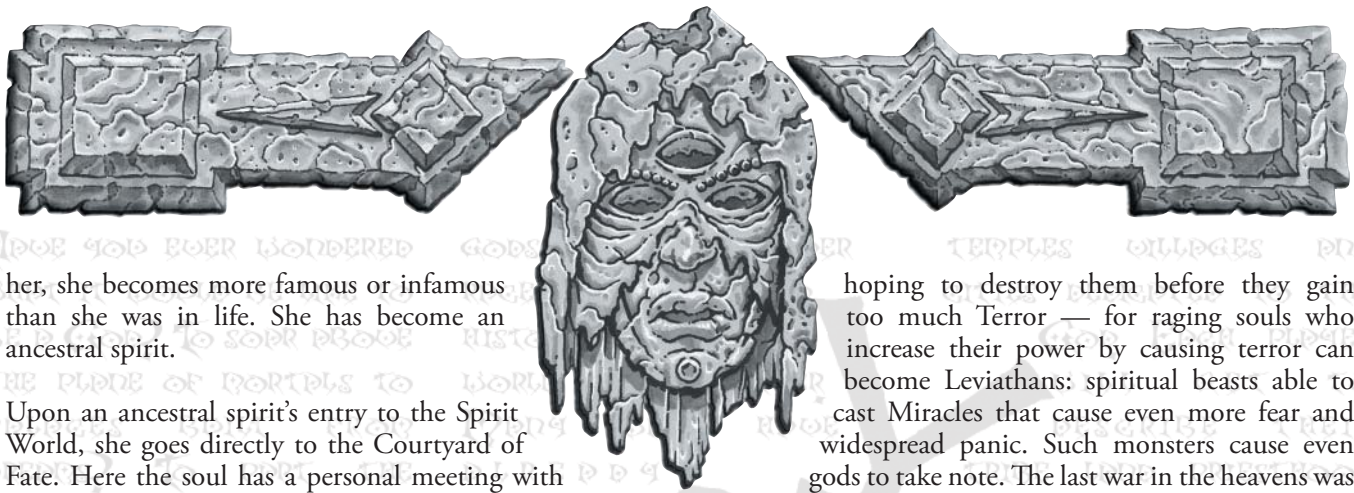
Spirits, demons, gods, and Leviathans receive Belief in various ways. Spirits and demons who are trapped on the Known World or have access to the Veil of Dreams may interact with humans directly, allowing them to create faith or terror. Gods gain faith from their priests, their followers' prayers, and the belief of people who worship in their temples. People wearing symbols of the god or marking areas with the god's symbol can also build faith for him. A god, spirit, or Leviathan generates Terror through direct contact or through dreams.

Belief is the most powerful force in existence. With it you can create universes and destroy many lives.

ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

One type of spirit that escapes the constant cycle of rebirth and the Well of Souls is called an ancestral spirit. This soul is a mature spirit that has spent many seasons on the Known World. Ancestral spirits can be of good or evil humor, but are typically larger-than-life figures that have made impacts on their tribes. People believed in a person in life, whether she was a hero, hierophant, shaman, scoundrel, outstanding citizen, or cutthroat. As legends grow about





her, she becomes more famous or infamous than she was in life. She has become an ancestral spirit.

Upon an ancestral spirit's entry to the Spirit World, she goes directly to the Courtyard of Fate. Here the soul has a personal meeting with Fate to discuss the afterlife. This meeting can last several days and is a crucial turning point for the spirit. The ancestral spirit has several options: she can return to the Known World as a guide for her people; she may pass on to her god's abode in heaven (or hell); she might return to the Well of Souls; or she might linger in the Celestial Gardens as a caretaker for Fate.

Ancestral spirits tend to be lawful in nature, but many break this rule. If they return to the Known World, they can talk directly to those in their tribes and can sometimes possess these people—especially their blood kin.

An ancestral spirit may attain yet greater power; as belief in her legends grows, as well as her influence from the grave, she can even attain godhood. These spirits can also become Leviathans; such a corruption of the soul is rare in people who have enjoyed blessed lives, but those whose lives were difficult may become more bestial in the afterlife.

RAGING SOULS

Another type of spirit to escape the path of the dead is the raging soul. A raging spirit arises from a person who has been wronged or has done wrong in life. Such a soul is a spirit looking for vengeance, looking to murder and cause pain and suffering to everyone it finds. These spirits terrify the living, making uncomfortable and fearsome environments wherever they may lurk.

A raging soul may speak to anyone near him and can possess people as well. A raging soul is trapped in one location but can break free by increasing his power, which he does by spreading terror.

Once these souls have tasted fear, the need for more is overwhelming. Like drug addicts, they continue to cause terror, gaining Terror (a form of both Belief and belief) much like an ancestral spirit gains Belief. Fate's Grapplers and most tribal gods deal harshly with raging souls,



hoping to destroy them before they gain too much Terror — for raging souls who increase their power by causing terror can become Leviathans: spiritual beasts able to cast Miracles that cause even more fear and widespread panic. Such monsters cause even gods to take note. The last war in the heavens was

fought over the increasing presence of the Leviathans in the Known World. Even though Fate and the gods are now allied against Leviathans and the raging souls that evolve into them, many damned spirits still gain enough power to become these beasts.

DEMONS

A third type of spirit—which most consider abominations, but some few consider pure spirits—is the demon. This creature is a spirit that escaped the Well of Souls without entering a spirit stream; some spirits who vanish into the Well return to the Known World as demons, having escaped Fate's cycle. Everything a demon knows is from the Well of Souls and some experiences in the Known World.

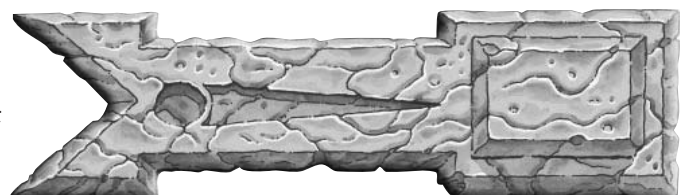
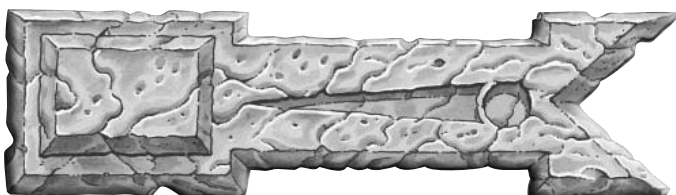
Demons hide in the Celestial Gardens and the Veil of Dreams. Fate considers them wanted souls, and if Fate or its Grapplers capture a demon, it returns to the Well of Souls.

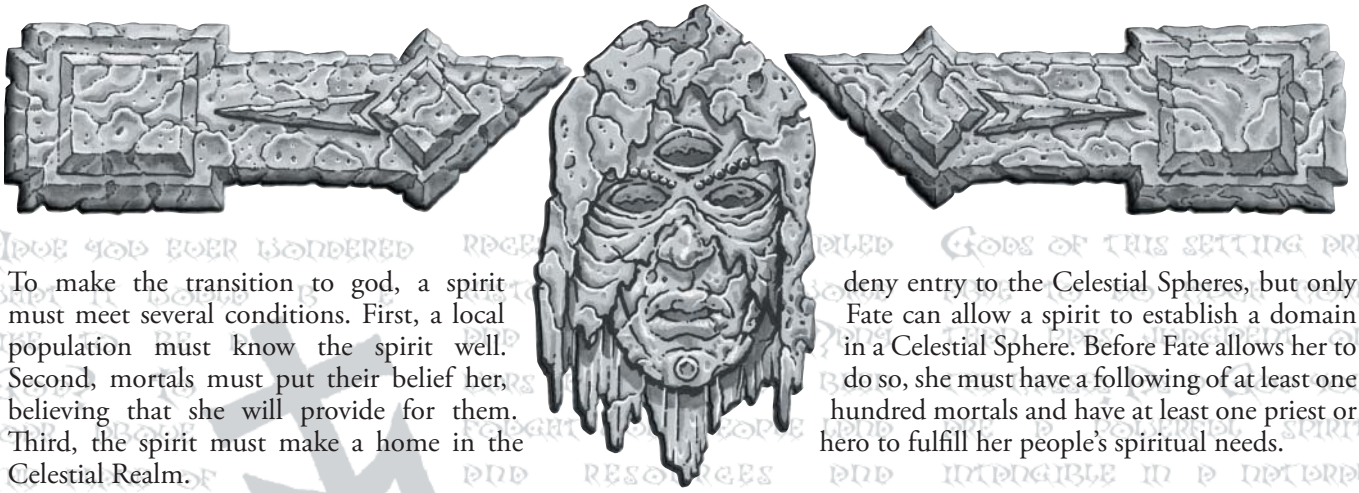
Demons take on many wild and various forms, conforming little to the world around them. They can choose their genders. They are chaotic in nature and temperament, with wild and ambivalent attitudes. Demons can possess weak-willed people and thereby taking on corporeal forms. If a demon spends enough time in a mortal body, it can transform it to its whims. Some demons have achieved godhood, become Leviathans, or serve gods as messengers or avatars.

Spirits are collections of thoughts and energies swirling around an identity.

ATTAINING DIVINITY

Spirits attempt to walk the path of godhood face a slow climb filled with many threats and perils. Few souls among the billions of spirits have the inner strength and charisma to become deities.





To make the transition to god, a spirit must meet several conditions. First, a local population must know the spirit well. Second, mortals must put their belief her, believing that she will provide for them. Third, the spirit must make a home in the Celestial Realm.

In the land of mortals, only the famous or infamous are remembered. What a person does in her mortal life has a direct relation on where she goes in the afterlife. Well-remembered people, whether they are shamans, heroes, bandits or rogues, receive adulation or derision in life—but in either case, they are memorable. After a famous mortal dies, she might remain in the Known World as an ancestral spirit, whispering words to her loved ones. Only mortals with a strong bond to the ancestral spirits—lovers, brothers, mothers, and the like—hear her. These people might become attached to the spirit and serve as her prophets and early priests, speaking her words. If the spirit attains godhood, her heroes and priests are often her descendants or relatives.

Unlike ancestral spirits, demons gain notoriety through whatever person or object they possess. They interact directly with the Known World and have no need for liaisons.

So to achieve godhood, an ancestral spirit or demon must first gain the belief, if not the trust, of her tribe. Ancestral spirits leave this task to who were nearest to the spirit in life. Through their loved ones, the dead reach out and guide mortals. An ancestral spirit or demon may also make herself heard through possession. Usually only the more infamous spirits and demons with few scruples use this method. In either case, through the power of persuasion and spiritual knowledge, ancestral spirits and demons might gain followings among the living. After some time and danger, the tribe's belief in the spirit grows. If the spirit reaches godhood, this belief translates directly into energy the new deity can use.

Spirits wishing to attain godhood must also establish homes in the Celestial Spheres. This process is fraught with peril.

First the spirit must pass through the Celestial Gardens to the Celestial Spheres. Fate and established deities permit or

deny entry to the Celestial Spheres, but only Fate can allow a spirit to establish a domain in a Celestial Sphere. Before Fate allows her to do so, she must have a following of at least one hundred mortals and have at least one priest or hero to fulfill her people's spiritual needs.

Spirits wishing to become gods usually do not enter into the Celestial Spheres unless they are ready for the transformation. After presenting herself to Fate and making a proper case made for godhood, Fate allows the spirit to enter one of the four seasonal realms. The apotheosis is then immediate, as the faith of the spirit's followers translates into miraculous energy and fills the once-humble spirit with the powers of universe. Fate never denies godhood to those who meet its criteria—at least, not yet.

After this initial entry, new deities usually establish heavens or hells (or both) for themselves and their followers' spirits.

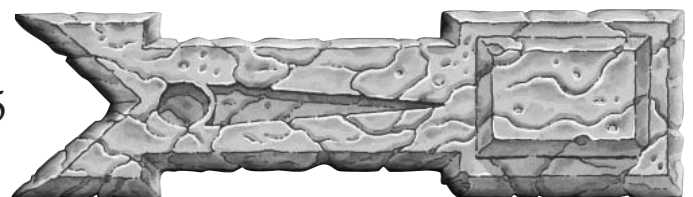
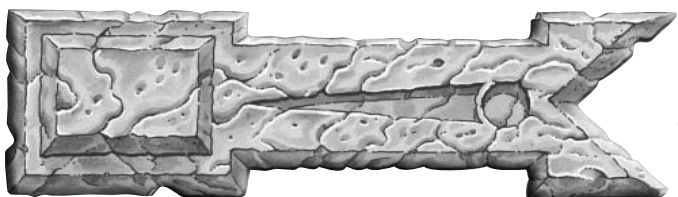
My goddess, you are a shining pearl among the dim jewels of the heavens.

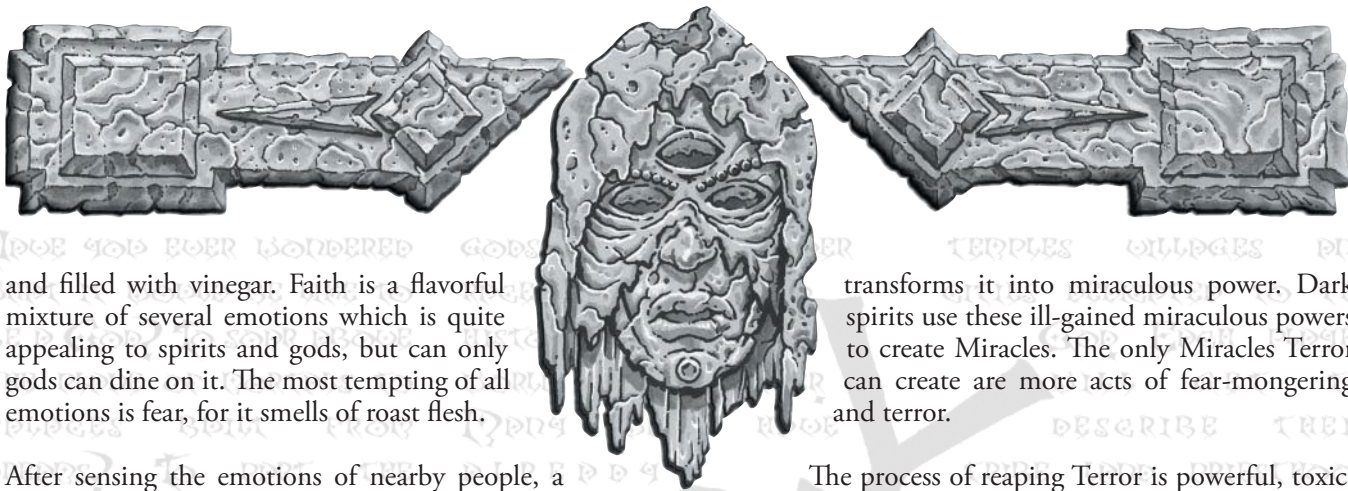
BECOMING A FEAR MONGER

The path to becoming a Leviathan is slow, intoxicating, and filled with peril. A spirit who inhabits the mortal plane may feed off mortal fears, empowering himself until he becomes an immense danger to the Known World. This process begins gradually as the spirit haunts the living. After he builds a formidable reputation and collects mortal terror, he becomes a horrible monstrosity: a Leviathan.

All types of spirits are susceptible to this process. Raging spirits automatically move down this path, while gods, demons and ancestral spirits may choose this form of power.

The process begins with a haunting presence: usually a spirit in incorporeal form who senses the living's emotional aversion to death or harm. All spirits can sense mortal emotions; it is an inherit gift to the dead. The sense works much like the sense of smell, and each emotion has a distinct aroma or flavor. Every living creature radiates these scents, which can lure or repulse spirits. To the dead, mortal love is bittersweet to sickly sweet. Hate is sharp and peppery. Joy is mint fresh. Hope is tangy and sweet. Greed is salty





and filled with vinegar. Faith is a flavorful mixture of several emotions which is quite appealing to spirits and gods, but can only gods can dine on it. The most tempting of all emotions is fear, for it smells of roast flesh.

After sensing the emotions of nearby people, a spirit might choose one to influence or possess. Knowing that power comes from the scent of fear, spirits choose people who emit this particular smell—especially if the smell is strong. The first victims of a fear-inducing spirit are usually weak-willed, skittish mortals who live life seeking security. The young and the elderly are susceptible to this state of mind, and evil spirits often prey upon them. Yet the emotions of fear and terror know no age, race, or religion, making everyone a potential target.

Once a spirit identifies potential prey, it attacks. The Known World and the Veil of Dreams are both areas in which the spirits may assail mortals, and the spirits have many possible tactics. Each tactic has one thing in common: It is direct. The spirit intends for the victim to recognize the spirit who torments her.

Some examples of attacking spirits are:

- A poltergeist of an elderly lady, now a raging spirit, haunts a farmhouse, throwing furniture or pottery at the victim at anyone who moves into the house. She feeds on the fear these attacks create.
- An old soothsayer who was executed while telling his king the truth now haunts the king's dreams and the dreams of others living in the castle. Flocks of crows appear repeatedly in their dreams, cawing incessantly, creating trepidation and sleepless nights.
- A trader who died a violent death at the hands of his brother haunts a roadside inn, appearing as a decapitated corpse.

This haunting stage is only the beginning.

Collecting the essence of fear is simple for a malign spirit. Every mortal has the capacity to give off Belief or Terror. When a spirit brings forth the essence of Terror by terrorizing a mortal, this essence leaves the mortal and travels to the spirit. A process of spiritual absorption then

transforms it into miraculous power. Dark spirits use these ill-gained miraculous powers to create Miracles. The only Miracles Terror can create are more acts of fear-mongering and terror.

The process of reaping Terror is powerful, toxic, and self-defeating. Once a spirit terrorizes a victim, the only way it can draw forth more Terror is to create an even more terrifying Miracle, until eventually the spirit has no recourse but to slay mortals for Terror—and they cannot produce more Terror when they're dead.

Once a spirit tastes fear and power, it rarely returns from this damned path, but doing so *is* possible. Redemption is a difficult process, filled with violent struggle. A Leviathan must first fall to the spirit level, reduced in power before it may try to walk another path. Gods or Fate are usually involved in aggressively taking down such hostile entities. All sides hurl Miracles, and mortals are trapped in the middle.

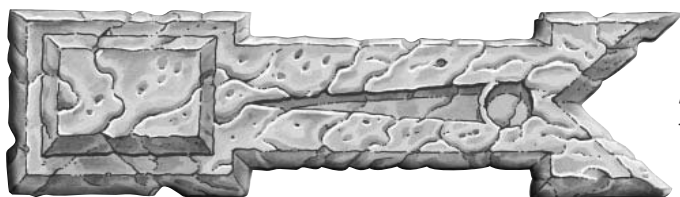
Though a spirit can attempt redemption, few avoid their destiny of destruction. All Leviathans—or spirits that were formerly Leviathans—stand before Fate to receive judgment. The final path of such spirits is a return to the Well of Souls from where they are reborn again, forgetting their old existence. A few souls who swear binding oaths to Fate might avoid the Well of Souls for a time, attempting to reclaim their former glory of godhood or simply reach their god's heaven.

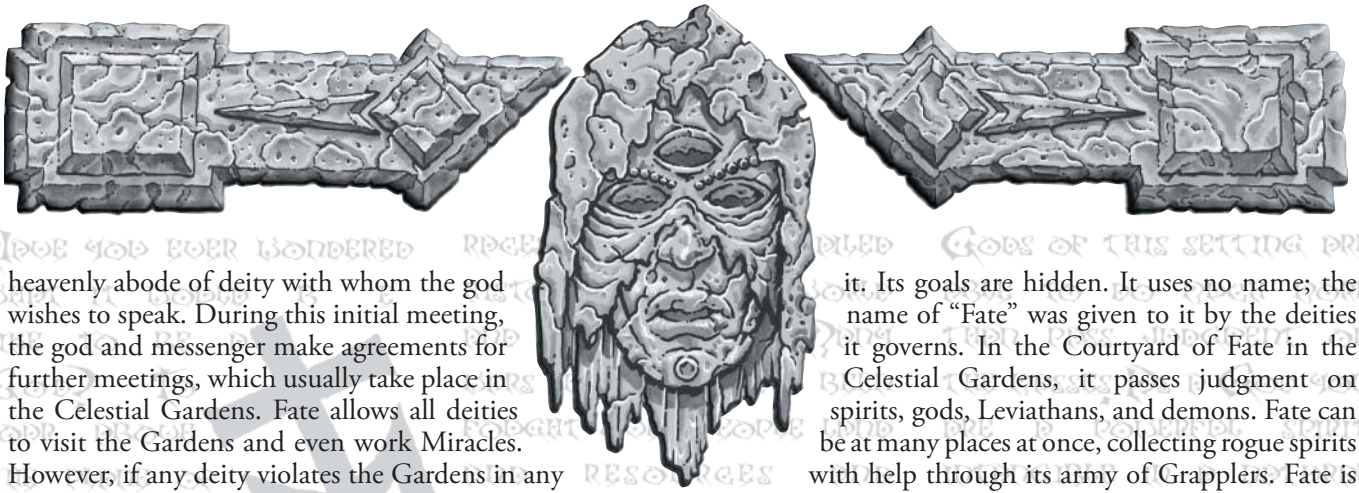
Fearful predators abound. Mortals and gods beware!

DIPLOMACY OF THE GODS

All know that war is not the only avenue to a desired end. All spirits use diplomacy, from the eldest of gods to wily demons, stately spirits to new deities. Only Leviathans refuse to use diplomacy, for it rarely produces Terror and they cannot enter the heavens (where they might converse with gods) in any event.

Meetings of the gods are carefully arranged affairs filled with subtle meanings and hidden motives. When a god wishes to speak with another god, an avatar or chosen spirit usually represents him. This representative travels to the





heavenly abode of deity with whom the god wishes to speak. During this initial meeting, the god and messenger make agreements for further meetings, which usually take place in the Celestial Gardens. Fate allows all deities to visit the Gardens and even work Miracles. However, if any deity violates the Gardens in any fashion, Fate's retribution is swift.

These meetings can last for ages, as even now the elder gods still meet in private locations to discuss matters in the Known World. Demons and spirits are also allowed to meet with the gods here before their appointment in Fate's court arrives.

In these meetings, deities discuss anything they wish. Popular subjects include mortal followers, heroes, and the lands in which they live. These discussions can lead to peace agreements as well as war pacts and trade permissions. The gods represent their nations and national interests. Gods are much like kings and queens, controlling their followers' fortunes and lives.

Sometimes when diplomacy does not work, gods go to war in the Celestial Gardens. Since deities may not violate this place's sanctity (and in any case nothing important can be permanently created or destroyed in the Spirit World), their mortals battle for them in the Known World. Gods support their mortals with Miracles, and all beings in that area of the Gardens observe the battle. If the opposing gods disagree with particular vehemence, they leave for their celestial abodes to continue the war from their estates.

Every so often, opposing gods confront each other directly, manifesting in the Known World and clashing with divine, earth-shaking weapons. Such duels can have lasting repercussions. Fate does not intervene, unless the Miracles in the war create irreversible damage to the Known World or affect the Spirit World.

Fate moves in its own way, always in secret and with ulterior motives.

THE NATURE OF FATE

Fate is a cosmic force, personified in the Spirit World as a cloaked figure with an incorporeal, upright body and able to take the form of any spirit or creature who addresses

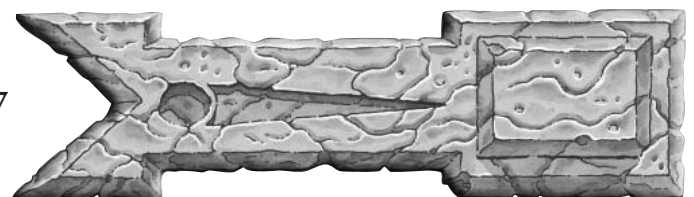
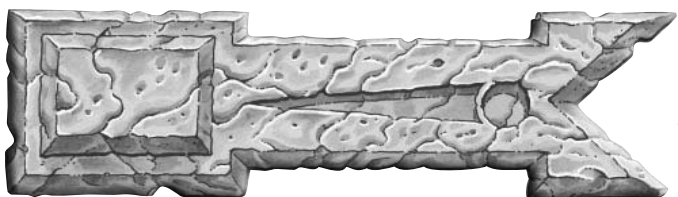
it. Its goals are hidden. It uses no name; the name of "Fate" was given to it by the deities it governs. In the Courtyard of Fate in the Celestial Gardens, it passes judgment on spirits, gods, Leviathans, and demons. Fate can be at many places at once, collecting rogue spirits with help through its army of Grapplers. Fate is

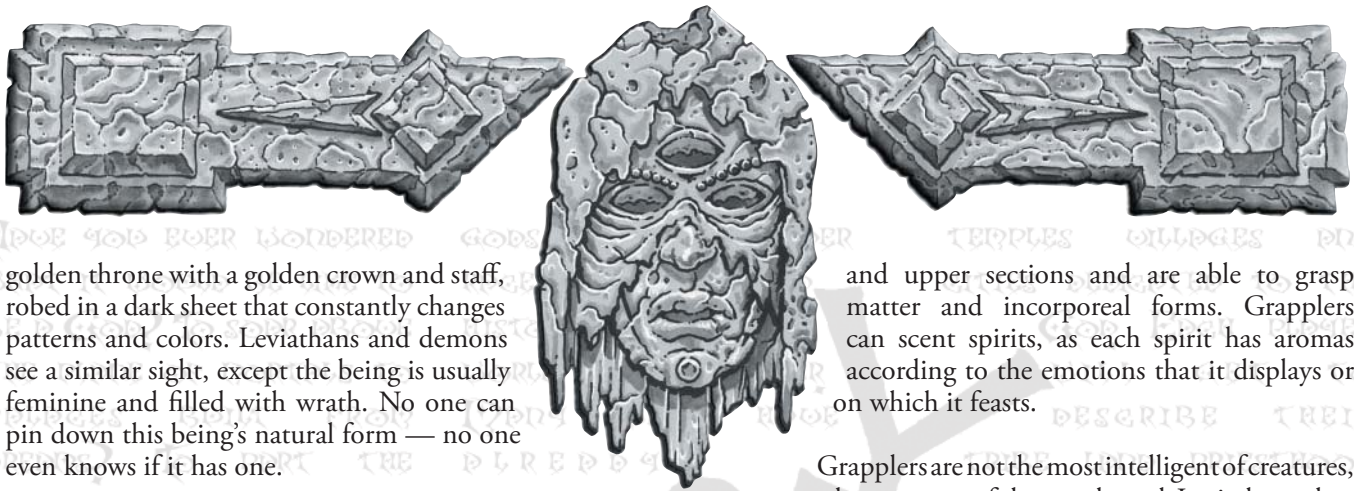
not omnipotent or omnipresent, as many demons, rogue spirits, and Leviathans escape its grasp. Fate's powers are vast, but it uses them sparingly, mostly to steer events away from catastrophic conclusions. This powerful demiurge has no friends or allies, only subordinates who carry out its will.

All spirits have met or will meet with Fate. Doing so is unavoidable, as Fate governs the Celestial Spheres and the Known World. Though gods describe it in this way, they use the word "govern" lightly, as this being is more of a steward of souls and the afterworld. Some mortals call Fate the Grim Reaper, Destiny, Death, or the Creator. It is none of these as it does not reap souls, decide other's fate, kill, or write the laws of the universe. It is only Fate.

Deities meet often with Fate in its courtyard to discuss matters of the Known World and the Celestial Spheres. Spirits passing to their god's heaven or hell, as well as souls returning to the Well of Souls, meet with Fate before going on to their destinations. Enraged souls, powerful Leviathans and truant demons try to avoid Fate, hiding in the dark corners of the Veil of Dreams and the Known World. Eventually Fate's Grapplers or a vigilant god brings the offending spirit to Fate's justice, and Fate sends these twisted souls back to the Well of Souls to be reformed. Fate is patient, for time is on its side.

Meeting with Fate is an intensely personal experience, as its appearance and personality varies based on the being with whom it speaks. Many spirits who pass on to the Well of Souls describe Fate as a shadowy, faceless elder of their tribe or nation, an elder who speaks in whispers—disturbing, yet comforting. Some see Fate as a beautiful member of the opposite sex; some see it with wings (of many types), guiding them to their proper heavens. Other souls describe Fate as a merciless beast with snarling fangs and many tails, dragging their souls to a hellish land. Gods view Fate as a giant being of the deity's parental race, who sits on a bright





golden throne with a golden crown and staff, robed in a dark sheet that constantly changes patterns and colors. Leviathans and demons see a similar sight, except the being is usually feminine and filled with wrath. No one can pin down this being's natural form — no one even knows if it has one.

The matters over which Fate presides are vast and ever-changing, according to its plans' whimsical, calculating nature. Fate always anoints new gods, as it makes the final decision to allow a spirit full access to the Celestial Spheres and the Known World. The punishment of rogue spirits, demons, and Leviathans is also Fate's jurisdiction, and the sentence is usually a return to the Well of Souls.

Fate sends most homeless spirits to the Well of Souls to be reborn again in the spirit waters. Gods sometimes choose a few special souls who remember their past lives as they are reborn. These beings are the gods' earthly champions, blessed by Fate.

Fate does not interfere with most matters in the Known World, and the elder gods hold much sway in earthly matters, checking the activities of other gods and Leviathans. Fate becomes involved in worldly affairs only when catastrophic changes pose a threat to its eternal plans. Since no one knows what these are, gods can create horrible events with impunity. Even by the elder gods have few records that speak of Fate interfering with matters in the Known World.

GRAPPLERS

Grapplers are creatures that Fate creates to retrieve rogue spirits and demons. They are dark, oddly-shaped beings which hunt in both the earthly and celestial realms. Shaped like a cross between a worm and an octopus, a Grappler has a sectional body ten arm-spans long and three arm-spans wide. Its sections bear splotchy patterns that are ever-changing, except for its underbelly, which is lighter and more constant.

Near the creature's "head" is a gaping maw of a mouth much like that on a lamprey or suckerfish, allowing the Grappler to swallow spirits and store them for travel. Tentacles of indeterminable length surround the mouth

and upper sections and are able to grasp matter and incorporeal forms. Grapplers can scent spirits, as each spirit has aromas according to the emotions that it displays or on which it feasts.

Grapplers are not the most intelligent of creatures, nor are they as powerful as gods and Leviathans, but they are loyal and obedient to Fate. Grapplers are capable of defeating spirits and some demons, but they alone cannot overcome Leviathans and powerful demons. These strange beings bring many foolhardy spirits and demons to the Courtyard of Fate, but many more escape them.

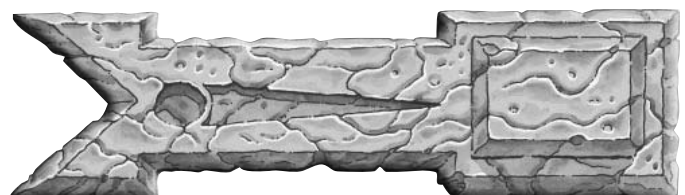
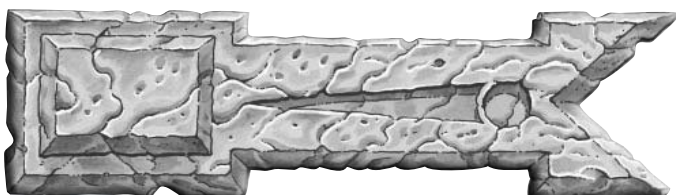
Who can know the thoughts of a being not of the Well? All we can do is listen and hope.

A FINAL NOTE ON THE CREATOR

The Creator is even more mysterious and unknown than Fate, even to the Gods of the Known World. No being in the heavens or on earth has ever met the Creator, except, possibly, Fate. What we know is that, in the beginning, there was the Void and Thought. The First Thought, as legends proclaim, created everything in existence.

Many deities have asked Fate about its master. Some have been answered. What these gods asked and what Fate replied remains a secret, for neither the gods nor Fate wish to discuss it. The secrets of creation and its author are buried deep in the myths and lore spread throughout the Known World and the Celestial Spheres.

May this recollection of my experience guide you, spirit or mortal, through the coming struggles that define life.



CHAPTER 4: CHARACTER CREATION



Your character is a deity: a god or goddess¹.

You've only recently achieved divinity, but still you command scores of followers and wield power far eclipsing that of any mortal. The first step to playing this game is to create your character, a god whom mortals worship and who works Miracles on the land.

¹Note that the word "god" refers to both male and female deities, as well as those without gender.

A number of traits together define your god and outline her capabilities, as shown and explained below. Write these down on your character sheet in the appropriate places as you determine them.

1. Concept
2. Symbols
3. Primary and secondary domains
4. Inclinations
5. Followers
6. Belief
7. Miracles
8. Commandments
9. Worship details
10. Celestial realm

In addition to the above, all gods have other capabilities common to them. These abilities include manifesting themselves physically in the world and casting their awareness about the land. See "Divinity," below, for an explanation of these abilities.

1. CONCEPT

The first step of character creation is to create a concept for your god. Consider what sort of deity you will be playing. Is she wrathful, just, strict, bloodthirsty? What are the distinguishing features? What is your god's temperament? You may find these concepts changing as you flesh out your deity during this process and during play, but a strong initial idea will provide a solid foundation. If you

are having difficulty and need some inspiration, try reading the sections of the book on the existing deities in the setting to pick up some ideas as well as real-world mythology. You should also settle on a name, and on an origin (what was your deity before the belief and prayer of mortals raised them to their current status).

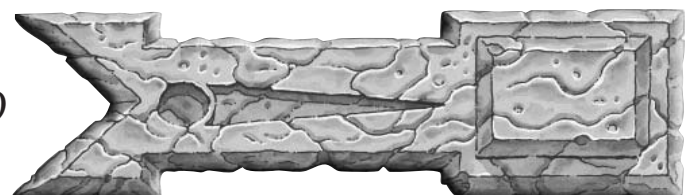
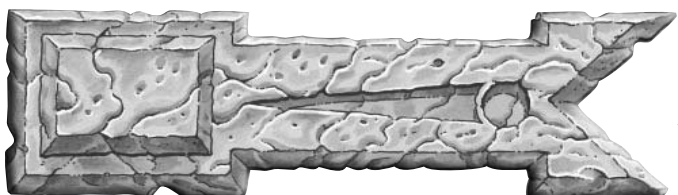
If your deity will be one member of a pantheon of gods you should discuss concepts with the other players—while the decision on what to play will ultimately be yours, discussion can help create a coherent pantheon with interesting links between the members; much like a small human community, many pantheons include strong friendships, bitter feuds, marriages, relationships, and even family members.

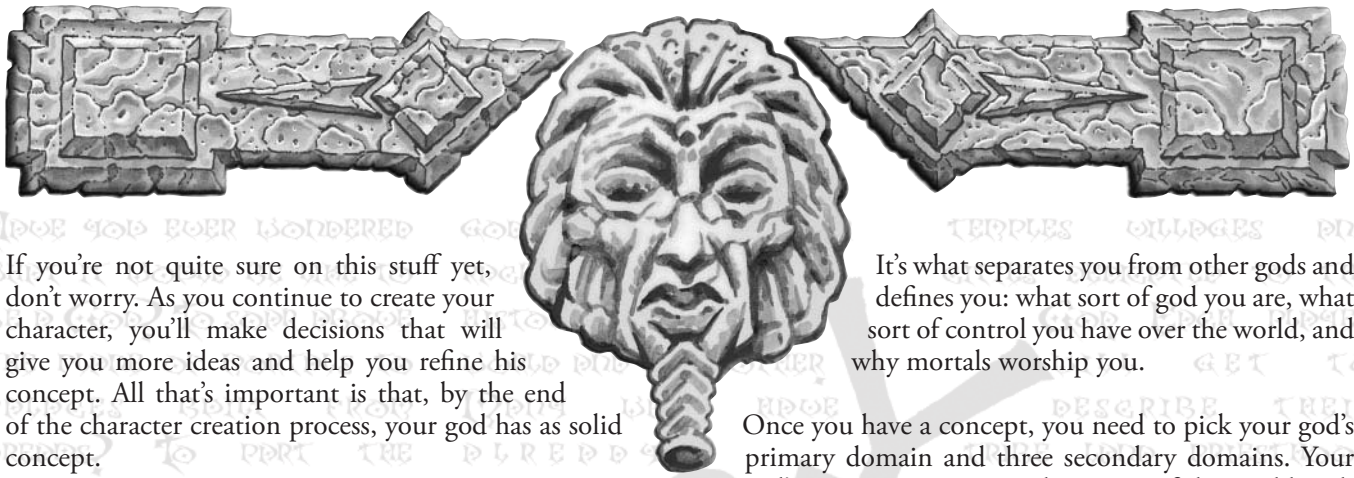
You might also determine how your god directs his mortal followers. For example, he might speak to holy women during prayer or he might send his followers visions when they undergo certain ceremonies. See the "Gods and Conflict" sidebar in Chapter 5: Playing the Game—Conflict and Miracles.

Many gods also have titles. These can range from descriptive words that appear after or before their names, like "Grelg the Wrathful" or "Beautiful Royana," to alternative monikers by which they are sometimes known, such as "Storm Seer" or "The Treacherous One." Real-world mythology brims with such names and titles, so you might look to legends from various cultures when you are deciding whether or not to give your god a title. A list of possible titles also appears on Table #–1.

Deciding on your god's concept should give you an idea of what you want your god to do and should provide direction for the rest of the creation process. In addition, you should have something to write in the character sheet's Name, Pantheon, Title, and Appearance sections—though if you like, you might wait until determining your domain in the Celestial Realms before settling on an appearance.

Once you have settled on a basic concept, run it by the GM to make sure it will fit into the game he has in mind.





If you're not quite sure on this stuff yet, don't worry. As you continue to create your character, you'll make decisions that will give you more ideas and help you refine his concept. All that's important is that, by the end of the character creation process, your god has as solid concept.

It's what separates you from other gods and defines you: what sort of god you are, what sort of control you have over the world, and why mortals worship you.

After some thought Paul decides he wants to play Selaphon, God of Water—a mercurial deity whose moods change like the tides and whose actions can rarely be anticipated. Selaphon was once a mischievous minor river demon, but after a flood a local human village took to offering prayer to him in an attempt to placate him. The increased power from his worshipers' prayers allowed him to spread his influence until he gained enough sway to ascend to the Celestial Realms as a god. Paul also grants Selaphon a title: the Everchanging.

Once you have a concept, you need to pick your god's primary domain and three secondary domains. Your god's Primary Domain is the aspect of the world with which they are most closely associated, the aspect that caused mortals to first pray to them for help and guidance. As a result, their powers are wedded to this concept, enabling them to affect large and wide-ranging changes over it with much less expenditure of Belief than in other areas. This Primary Domain should be defined by just one or two words embodying a single concept, and should cover a major area of mortal endeavour. Animals, Trickery, War and Fire are all examples of valid Primary Domains. When you're deciding on a primary domain, also keep in

2. SYMBOLS

Every god has symbols. Their followers wear these symbols to show their faith and place them on buildings to seek your blessing or avoid your wrath. Most gods have several symbols. For example, a god often has a color that symbolizes him, which can be any color you wish. Other symbols include simple pictures or runes that your priests might wear as holy symbols, specific plants or animals, or particular motions and gestures—cats, mistletoe or a placing of the hand over the heart, for example.

Decide on a few symbols and write them on your character sheet. Your concept should give you some good ideas.

For example, since Selaphon is the God of Water, some shade of blue makes sense as a symbol. Paul decides on dark blue: the color of the ocean's deep waters. He also invents a couple other symbols: A couple of stylized jagged lines reminiscent of waves (similar to the symbol for the zodiac sign Aquarius, which is where he got the idea) and the swordfish, which he decides will be Selaphon's sacred animal. In times of anger, worshipers of Selaphon slide their hand smoothly in front of them to ask for calm both in the water and themselves.

3. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DOMAINS

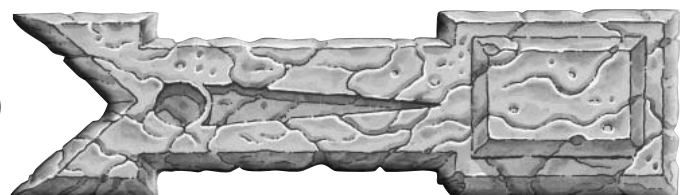
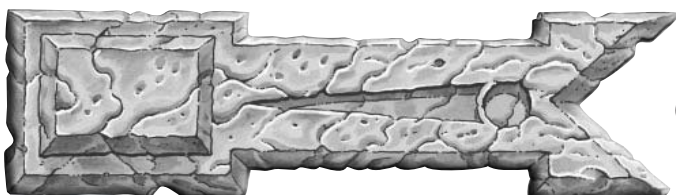
Your primary domain is your most distinguishing aspect.

PANTHEONS AND SOLO GODS

Some mortal tribes worship only a single god—the tribe has one god, which serves all its needs, and no others. Most tribes, however, have a small pantheon: The members worship several gods who together see to the tribe's needs. When you create characters at the beginning of a campaign, the best method is to form a pantheon with the other players. Each player controls one god in the pantheon, and together they share control of the tribe. More information about how the gods might share control of these followers—particularly when they disagree—appears throughout this chapter.

On the other hand, each player might control a god who rules an entire tribe by himself. In this case, the gods are less likely to work together peacefully, but perhaps several tribes have allied and pool their resources.

You can also play a game in which the gods compete against each other, either directly or indirectly. Before you start such a game, make sure that is what all the players want.





mind that gods cannot create souls (though they have a lot of power of what happens to them), and even gods have no control over fate and destiny. A list of possible primary domains appears on Table 4-2.

trickery, and because of the tendency of a running stream to sound like laughter or chuckling.

4. INCLINATIONS

Miracles are the primary ways in which gods interact with the world. Miracles come in four styles: Creation, Destruction, Transformation, and Control.

Creation: Creation Miracles bring things into being.

Destruction: Destruction Miracles destroy or kill things.

Transformation: Transformation Miracles physically alter things.

Control: Control Miracles mentally alter people and creatures.

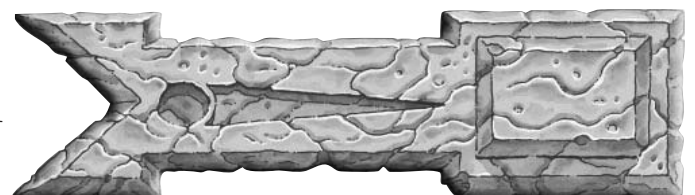
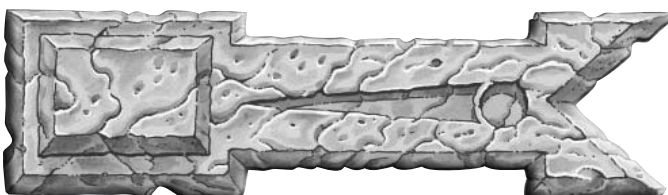
See Chapter 5: Playing the Game — Conflict and Miracles, “Miracles,” for more information about miracles and their different styles.

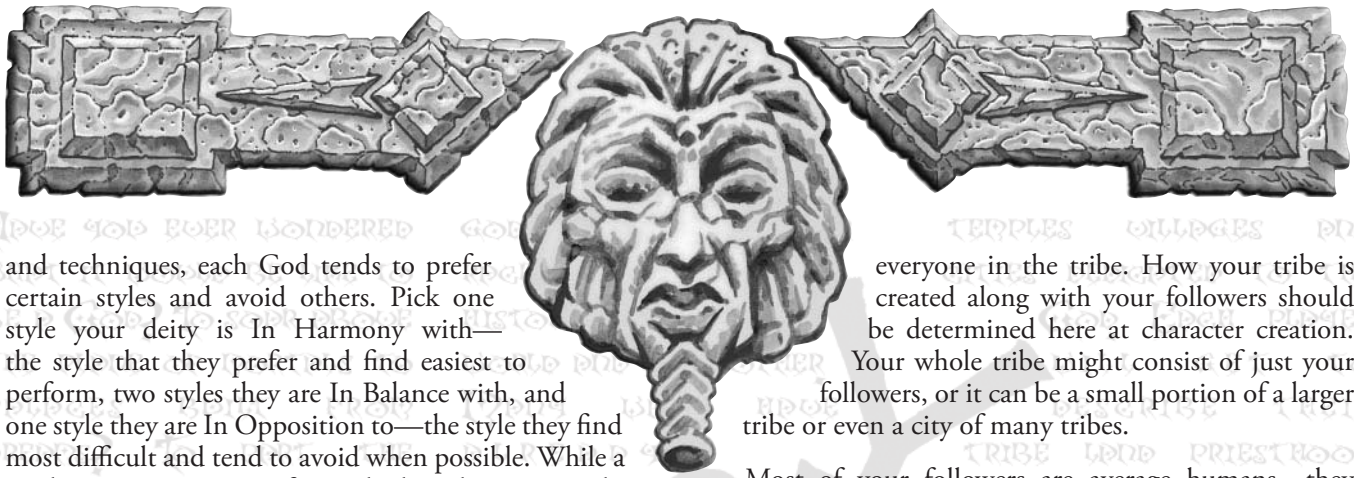
As each style requires fundamentally different mindsets

While the exact area encompassed by your concept will be determined by the GM, those that are less obviously important and far-reaching should be interpreted more broadly than those with obvious and immediately useful applications. Hence, domains such as Dance should also cover areas with strong metaphorical links to the concept (such as courtship, and avoiding conflict), while a more concrete concept such as War would not need such leeway. You should talk over non-obvious concepts with the GM to ensure you agree on what will be covered by your choice. A god’s followers also associate him with other tasks. Such associations come about because of legends, of tasks you accomplished before you became a god, of problems you solved early in your divinity, or for some other reason. These associations becomes entangled with your followers’ worship as priests repeat them and legends grow, and as a result other areas become associated with you. These areas are your secondary domains—well-defined concepts related only tangentially, if at all, to your primary domain that through your actions and the worship and beliefs of their faithful have wedded themselves to you. You should choose three of these, which should be narrower, more specific concepts than your primary domain, such as Dance, Ice, Trees, Childbirth or Cats. A list of possible secondary domains appears on Table 4-3.

See Chapter 5 Playing the Game—Conflict and Miracles, “Miracles,” for more information about miracles and how your domains affect them.

Paul has already chosen his God’s Primary Domain (Water) while coming up with a concept, so he tries to think up some secondary domains that will be fun, useful, and appropriate. He eventually settles on Freedom, Farming, and Humor. He picks Freedom because of Selaphon’s changeable nature, and the tendency of rivers to carve out their own paths no matter what may be in their way; Farming to make it easier to ensure his lands are bountiful and because of water’s great importance in irrigation; and Humor both because of Selaphon’s enjoyment of jokes and





and techniques, each God tends to prefer certain styles and avoid others. Pick one style your deity is In Harmony with—the style that they prefer and find easiest to perform, two styles they are In Balance with, and one style they are In Opposition to—the style they find most difficult and tend to avoid when possible. While a God may cast any type of miracle they choose, miracles that they are in Harmony with or that fall within their Domain are much easier for them (Domain refers both to concepts encompassed by a God's Primary Domain or their areas of Dominion), and hence have lower costs in Belief, while styles of miracle they are In Opposition to are more difficult and costly. See the Miracle section for more detailed guidance on the different styles.

Paul immediately settles on Transformation as the style of miracle Selaphon will be In Harmony with due to his changeable nature. The style to be In Opposition to is less obvious, but he eventually settles on Control—water is necessary for life and growth (Creation), but floods and storms can devastate wide areas (Destruction), while Selaphon's nature means he is not best suited to the intricacies and understanding required for mental control. With these choice made, that leave him In Balance with Creation and Destruction.

5. FOLLOWERS

A god wouldn't be a god without followers! These are people—mortals—who live in the Known World and worship you. They invoke your name for blessings or curses, celebrating your holy days and following your commandments. Their belief in you gives you power. The more followers you have, the more power you have.

You start with one hundred followers. The GM can increase this number if he wants to run a game with more powerful gods. These followers live somewhere in the Known World. The GM probably has an idea of where he wants your followers to begin. Table 4-4 also has a list of possible starting locations.

A group of your followers living near each other, with their own culture and society, is sometimes called a tribe. You may have followers in a tribe but the whole tribe may not be of your followers! Your tribe may be comprised of several factions and deities competing for the hearts and souls of

everyone in the tribe. How your tribe is created along with your followers should be determined here at character creation.

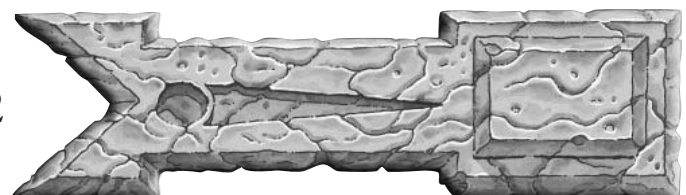
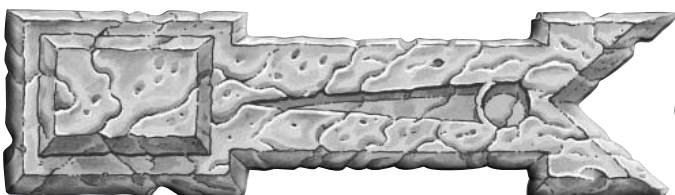
Your whole tribe might consist of just your followers, or it can be a small portion of a larger tribe or even a city of many tribes.

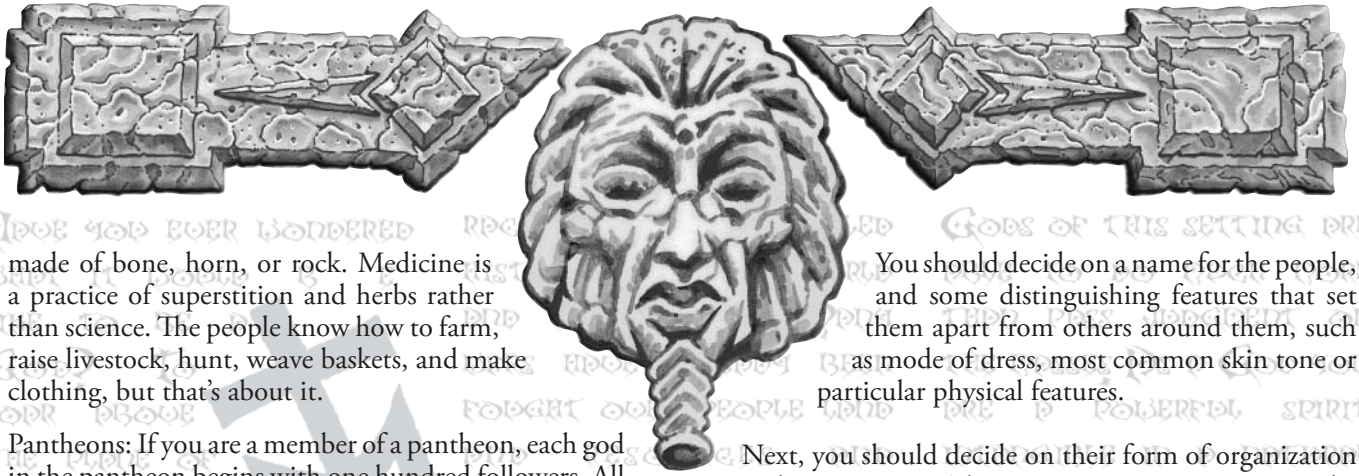
Most of your followers are average humans—they have Body, Mind, and Spirit scores of d6. However, a few of them stand out. Ten percent of them (so ten people, if you have a hundred followers) have Body scores of d8. They might be the tribe's warriors, hunters, holy crusaders, or anything else, but the important thing is that they have Body scores of d8. (Their Mind and Spirit scores are still d6s.) Similarly, another 10% of your followers have d8s for Mind, and another 10% have d8s for Spirit. Thus, a standard tribe for a new god has seventy normal followers with d6s for all their scores, ten people with d8s for Body, ten with d8s for Mind, and ten with d8s for Spirit.

A tribe's makeup generally remains about the same. Thus, as time goes on and you gain more followers, in general 10% of your followers will have d8s for Body, 10% will have d8s for Mind, and 10% will have d8s for Spirit. Of course, a number of factors, such as conquering a tribe of scholars, can alter this ratio.

Devout followers are special followers in your tribe that adhere to every wish and whim of the deity. They hold unswerving loyalty to the god and generate double the belief (See Chapter 5 Playing the Game / Gain Belief) If you want your followers to be Devout, it must be all of the followers or none. There is no compromise. But there is a penalty as well. Devout members of your flock are dependent and must have miracles spent on them. If one year passes with no miracles spent on the Devout they revert back to normal followers generating normal belief. They can only regain the status of Devout after two years of spending miracles on them. (See Chapter 5 Playing the Game/ Dependency)

The typical technology level for a new human tribe is fairly primitive. Your followers are about the equivalent of historic humans in the Neolithic Period. They make huts out of cloth, wood, mud, or adobe. They have not discovered the secrets of metal smithing, so their weaponry consists of spears, bows, and the occasional dagger or knife





made of bone, horn, or rock. Medicine is a practice of superstition and herbs rather than science. The people know how to farm, raise livestock, hunt, weave baskets, and make clothing, but that's about it.

Pantheons: If you are a member of a pantheon, each god in the pantheon begins with one hundred followers. All the gods' followers combined comprise the pantheon's tribe. Though all the mortals worship all the gods in the pantheon, some pay special heed to you, which is why they are considered your followers. Thus, they give you Belief, but provide no Belief for your allies. (Alternatively, if you don't like the idea that mortals revere some gods more than others, each god simply has a number of followers that are considered his for the purposes of generating Belief.)

Over the years, mortal communities build up a rich store of history and customs. Many people choose to name themselves after their God, but others choose the name of a major prophet or ruler, the city or territory in which they originated, a major event in their history they wish to communicate, or some particular feature or virtue they feel they embody. In a few cases, their history no longer records the origin of their name, and it has become nothing but a distinctive set of syllables.

CUSTOMIZING YOUR TRIBE

As mentioned in the "Followers" section, a typical tribe has a 10/10/10 breakdown for its above-average members: 10% have d8s for Body, 10% have d8s for Mind, and 10% have d8s for Spirit. However, if you would like to customize your tribe, you can shift around this 30% however you wish. For example, if you envision your tribe as a warlike and savage people, you might switch its makeup to 20/5/5 (so 20% of your followers have d8s for Body, but only 5% have d8s for Mind and 5% have d8s for Spirit) or even 30/0/0. If you envision a tribe of scholars, you might switch the makeup to 5/20/5, or, for a tribe of shamans, to 3/2/25, or anything you like, as long as the total is 30%.

You should decide on a name for the people, and some distinguishing features that set them apart from others around them, such as mode of dress, most common skin tone or particular physical features.

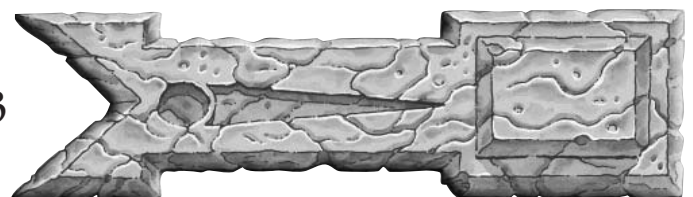
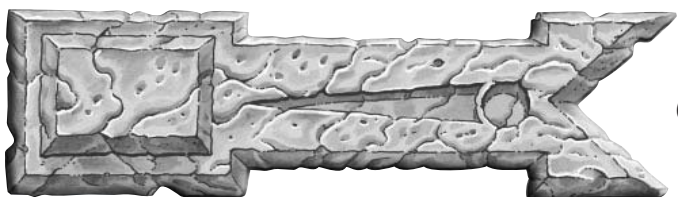
Next, you should decide on their form of organization and government. Theocracies are common given the power and influence of the gods, whether in the form of a complex hierarchy of priests, or a loose association of villages each governed by a local wise man. However, other systems such as democracies or dictatorships are equally feasible.

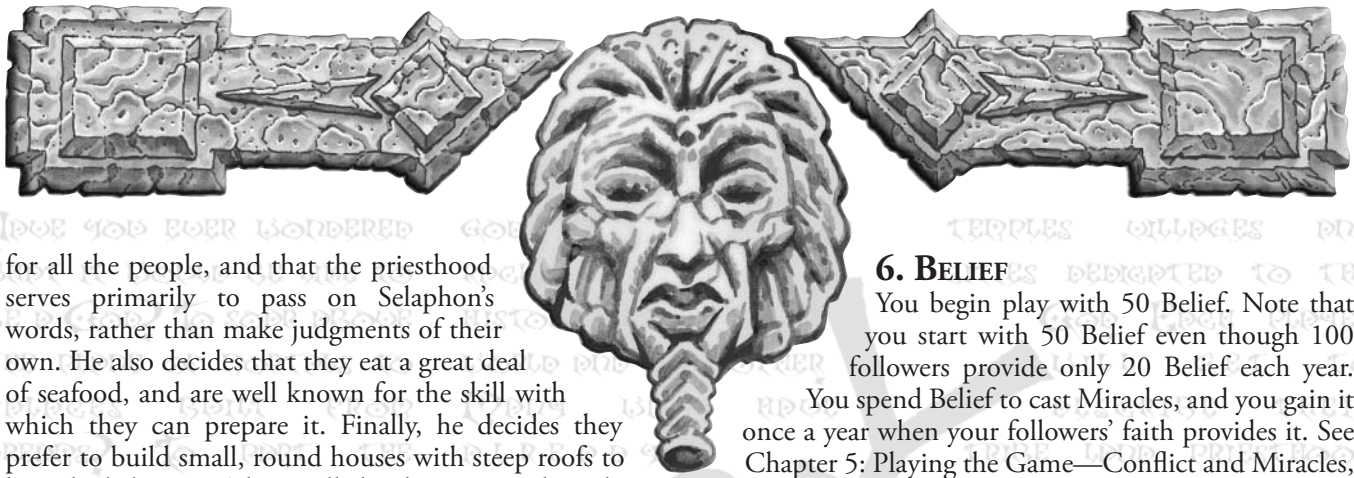
If the tribe follows a pantheon of Gods, you should also decide if all of them share the same status, or whether there is a particular acknowledged leader among them, and whether there is a separate priesthood for each God, or whether the priests share the duties out amongst themselves.

Finally, you should put down some interesting minor but distinctive features of the tribe, such as their love of eating and skill at preparing a certain type of food, habit of sleeping for an hour at noon, or cultivation of different breeds of dog. For the most part, this will have no mechanical effect in-game, but will set the scene for interactions between your tribe and other peoples, as well as fleshing out the mortals under your control. Feel free to add to it at a later time when more details have become apparent through play.

Once per year, you check in with your followers to ensure that you are giving them appropriate attention. They also grant you Belief at this time. See Chapter 5 *Playing the Game—Conflict and Miracles*, "Maintenance and Years," for more information.

Selaphon is not part of a pantheon, so Paul creates the tribe on his own. He originally intended to name his tribe after their God, but find the term "Selaphonites" too unwieldy. Instead, he decides to name them the "Asterii," which he declares means "children of the rippling waters" in their ancestral tongue. He decides that each village elects a small council to lead them every three years, who in turn send one of their number to a Great Council that makes decisions





for all the people, and that the priesthood serves primarily to pass on Selaphon's words, rather than make judgments of their own. He also decides that they eat a great deal of seafood, and are well known for the skill with which they can prepare it. Finally, he decides they prefer to build small, round houses with steep roofs to best shed the rain. This is all the description the tribe needs for the moment and Paul decides he will add more later when he thinks up more identifying features.

6. BELIEF

You begin play with 50 Belief. Note that you start with 50 Belief even though 100 followers provide only 20 Belief each year.

You spend Belief to cast Miracles, and you gain it once a year when your followers' faith provides it. See Chapter 5: Playing the Game—Conflict and Miracles, "Miracles," and "Maintenance and Years" for more information.

7. MIRACLES

Miracles are one of the most important parts of this game.

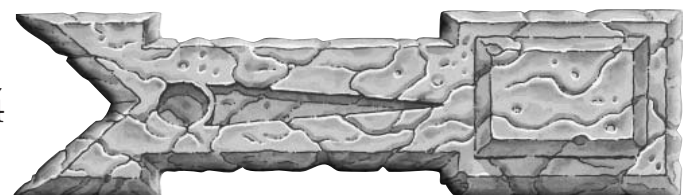
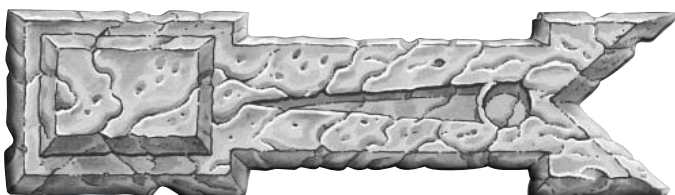
TABLE 4 - 1: TITLES

d%	Title
01	Wrathful
02	Beautiful
03	Merciful
04	Merciless
05	All-powerful
06	Treacherous
07	Foul
08	Shining
09	Radiant
10	Dark
11	Shadow-Cloaked
12	Veiled
13	Wise
14	Mighty
15	Thunderous
16	Gentle
17	Loving
18	Fierce
19	Glorious
20	Ever-changing
21	Constant
22	The All-Father (or Mother)
23	Lord (or Lady) of [primary domain]
24	King (or Queen) of [primary domain]

25	The Betrayer
26	Magnificent
27	Golden
28	The Great Father (or Mother)
29	Just
30	Master (or Mistress) of [primary domain]
31	Giver of Life
32	Shepherd of Souls
33	The Winged One
34	Winking
35	One-eyed
36	All-knowing
37	All-seeing
38	The Charioteer
39	The Divine Warrior
40	Ghostly
41	Leaping
42	Jealous
43	Greedy
44	Gluttonous
45	The Mind-Raven
46	The Prophet
47	Wonder Worker
48	Serpent Wind
49	Smile-Loving
50	Averter of Ills

51	Counselor
52	Dusty
53	Friendly
54	Highest
55	The Thunderbolt
56	Ruthless
57	He (or She) Who Delights in Battle
58	The Musician of the Gods
59	The Farshooter
60	The Healer
61	The Bloodletter
62	of the Golden Shafts
63	Friend of Youth
64	Lady (or Lord) of the Lake
65	The Huntress (or Hunter)
66	Noisy
67	She (or He) of the Owl
68	Armored
69	Silver-Girded
70	The Gift-Giver
71	Lovely-Haired
72	of the Splendid Fruit
73	The Vizier
74	Judge of the Dead
75	The Devourer

76	Protector of the Dead
77	The Preserver
78	The Inventor
79	God of the Hanged
80	The Inflamer
81	Swift Trickster
82	The One with a Magic Staff
83	The Blind One
84	The Favored
85	Peacemaker
86	Sun-Sparkled
87	Moonlit
88	King (or Queen) of the Gods
89	Golden Tooth
90	The Ram
91	The Hornblower
92	Nimble
93	Messenger of the Gods
94	The Sly One
95	The Shape Changer
96	The Sky Traveler
97	Excellent
98	Snowshoe Goddess (or God)
99	Guardian of [territory]
100	Women-Maddener





They are the means by which gods affect mortals and the mortal world. See Chapter 5: Playing the Game — Conflict and Miracles, “Miracles,” for more information on miracles.

a brief description, and an evocative name in the appropriate space on your character sheet.

8. COMMANDMENTS

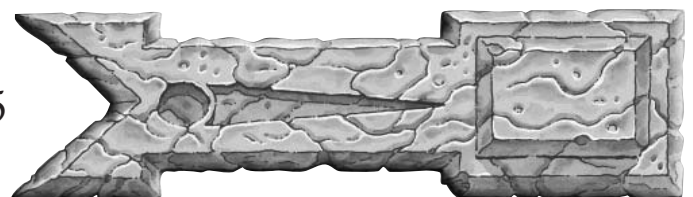
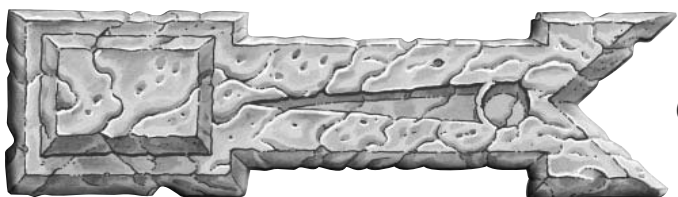
Most gods have certain Miracles for which mortals know them. These Miracles are usually associated with the gods’ primary domains. If you’d like to conceive some of these signature Miracles now, consult Chapter 5: Playing the Game — Conflict and Miracles, “Miracles,” to determine how much they cost, then write down the cost,

While a few gods are willing to trust the judgment of their high priests when it comes to defining the laws and morals of their people, the majority instead choose to set down certain immutable rules which may not be broken, under any circumstances.

Though Commandments are invariably presented by the priesthood as the deity establishing important moral

TABLE 4 - 2: PRIMARY DOMAINS

d%	Primary Domain
01	Animals
02	Trickery
03	War
04	Fire
05	Dance
06	Water
07	Wind
08	Earth and Stone
09	The Oceans
10	Storms
11	Plants
12	Disease
13	Death
14	Fear
15	Cold
16	Heat
17	The Sun
18	The Moon
19	The Hunt
20	Fertility
21	Hearth and Home
22	Night
23	Day
24	Magic
25	Food
26	Science
27	Health
28	Courage
29	Goodness
30	Evil
31	Retribution
32	Justice
33	Nature
34	Knowledge
35	Order
36	Craft
37	Freedom
38	Love
39	Healing
40	Creation
41	Destruction
42	Luck
43	Madness
44	Wilderness
45	Protection
46	Strength
47	Travel
48	Weather
49	Commerce
50	Treachery
51	Truth
52	The Sky
53	The Harvest
54	Martyrdom
55	The Afterlife
56	The Underworld
57	Knowledge
58	Balance
59	Darkness
60	Secrets
61	Prophecy
62	Light
63	Revelry
64	Wealth
65	Femininity
66	Masculinity
67	Abundance
68	Birth
69	Civilization
70	Agriculture
71	Adventure
72	Family
73	Victory
74	Supremacy
75	Judgment
76	Hardship
77	Rebirth
78	Law
79	Chaos
80	Vigilance
81	Transcendence
82	The Heavens
83	Loyalty
84	The Mind
85	Humankind
86	Winter
87	Spring
88	Summer
89	Autumn
90	Time
91	The Unknown
92	Exploration
93	Preservation
94	A particular climate, such as deserts or jungles
95	Cycles
96	Beginnings
97	Transitions
98	Endings
99	Calamity
100	Assistance





HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED
WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO
BE A GOD? TO SOAR ABOVE

GO
RIDE
RISTO

TEMPLES VILLAGES AND
CITIES DEDICATED TO THE
GOD. EVER PLAYER

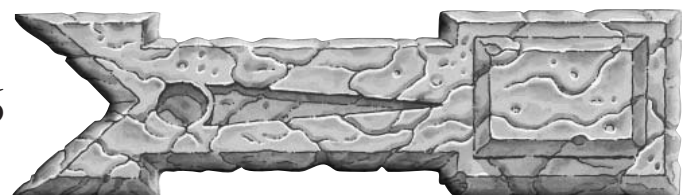
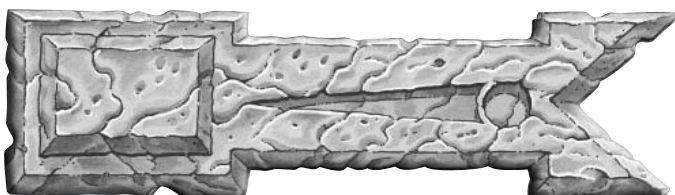


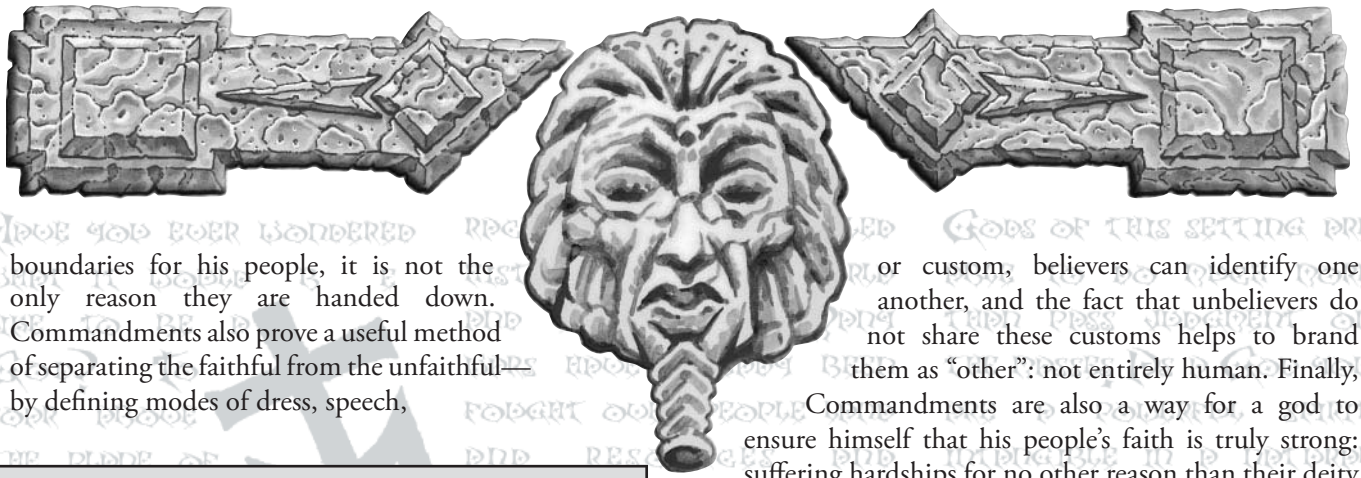
TABLE 4 - 3:
SECONDARY DOMAINS

d%	Secondary Domain
01	Beauty
02	Nobility
03	Leadership
04	Glory
05	Ugliness
06	A particular disease or ailment
07	Children
08	Parenthood
09	Sleep
10	Dreams
11	Snakes
12	Cats
13	Crocodiles
14	Suicide
15	Wolves
16	Fish
17	Volcanoes
18	Earthquakes
19	Rivers
20	Lakes
21	Forests
22	A particular feature of the land, such as a specific river, mountain, or forest
23	Lightning
24	Foresight
25	Music
26	Theatre
27	Art
28	Hate
29	Envy
30	Malice
31	Slaughter

32	Horizons
33	Distance
34	Roads
35	Humor
36	Wit
37	Illusion
38	Gemcutting
39	Tyranny
40	Fitness
41	Athletics
42	Sports
43	Brawling
44	Traps
45	Mining
46	Smithing
47	Spiders
48	Sight
49	Engineering
50	Common sense
51	Zeal
52	Discipline
53	Conquest
54	Intrigue
55	Vanity
56	Killing
57	Assassins
58	Thieves
59	Liars
60	Scouts
61	Wine
62	Marriage
63	Islands
64	Gambling
65	Running
66	Passion

67	A particular segment of the population, such as shepherds, tattoo artists, or acrobats
68	Mountains
69	Good fortune
70	Vengeance
71	Medicine
72	Grief
73	Drought
74	Famine
75	Learning
76	Construction
77	Poetry
78	Communication
79	Dueling
80	Thunder
81	Strategy
82	Tactics
83	Writing
84	Loyalty
85	Archers
86	Swordfighters
87	Pirates
88	Horses
89	Birds
90	Trees
91	Suffering
92	Prosperity
93	Overcoming obstacles
94	Messages
95	Rain
96	Clouds
97	Oaths
98	Ambition
99	Rescue
100	Accidents





boundaries for his people, it is not the only reason they are handed down. Commandments also prove a useful method of separating the faithful from the unfaithful—by defining modes of dress, speech,

or custom, believers can identify one another, and the fact that unbelievers do not share these customs helps to brand them as “other”: not entirely human. Finally, Commandments are also a way for a god to ensure himself that his people’s faith is truly strong: suffering hardships for no other reason than their deity told them they must.

TABLE 4 - 4: STARTING LOCATIONS

D%	Location*
01–04	Atanastan
05–09	Jasinu
10–14	Kathonia
15–19	Samona
20–23	Kybel†
24–28	Lashon
29–32	Sssnamon†
33–37	Rothena
38–41	Atan (City)
42–46	Brun
47–51	Haarath
52–56	Croesus
57–61	Duluth
61–64	Laanad (City)
65–69	Honoxia
70–74	Pashon
75–79	Yannawy
80–83	Phatul (City)
84–87	Vohens (City)
88–91	Calaba (City)
92–95	Damarsun (City)
96–100	Elio (City)

Your followers will go to enormous lengths to avoid violating any Commandment, no matter how strict or unreasonable they may be. Despite the occasional difficulty of following these Commandments, your followers always do so unless the GM deems otherwise (in the course of an adventure, for example).

During character creation you should define one or more Commandments, which are customarily (though not always) expressed either in the form “Thou Shalt...” or “Thou Shalt Not...” Unless otherwise specified, Commandments apply to the entire tribe, but many gods add additional commandments for their priests or specific laws on their holy days.

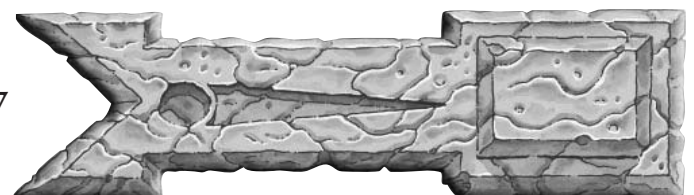
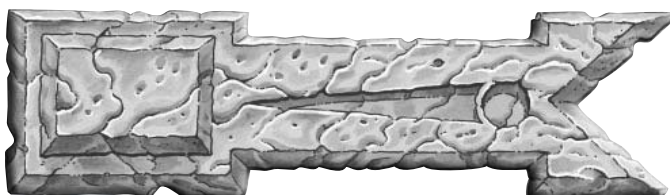
While there is no limit on how many Commandments you may have, in practice more than eight or ten to a tribe may become difficult to keep track of (you may wish to assume that your followers have many more, undefined, Commandments). New Commandments can also be handed down during play should you wish to do so.

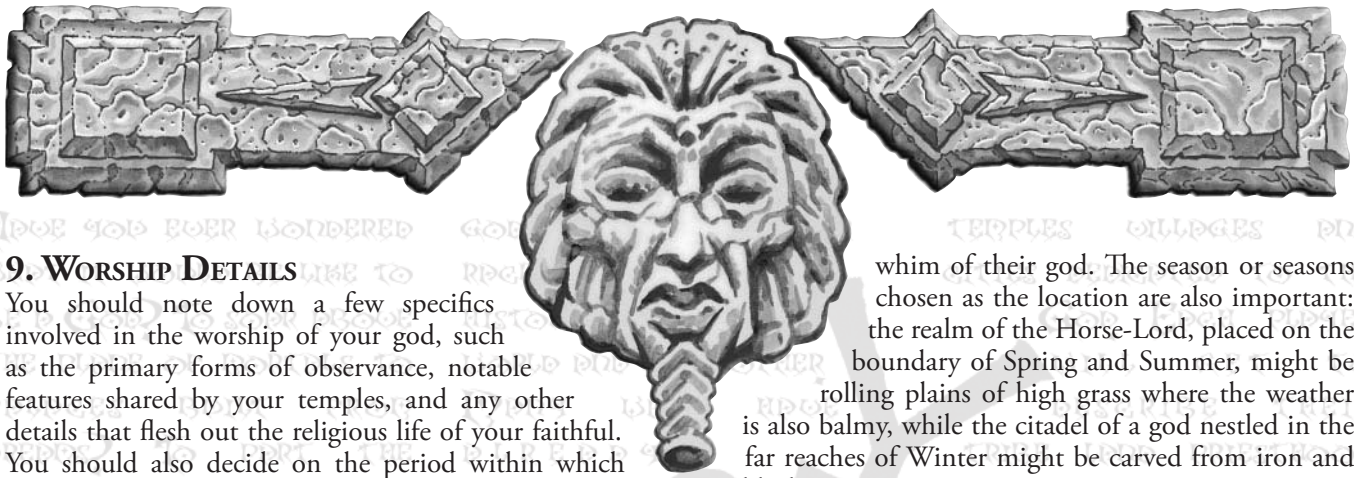
Paul’s God isn’t part of a pantheon, so he plans to have quite a few Commandments eventually to flesh out his tribe. But since he isn’t really ready to define every aspect of his deity he decides to only define a few Commandments now and hand down some more later in the game once he’s got a fuller handle on Selaphon’s personality. The two he settles on are “Thou shalt swear no oath in thy God’s name,” as Selaphon’s mercurial nature would make swearing a static oath by his name blasphemy, and “Thou shalt consume no liquid but pure water,” preventing his followers from drinking alcohol or juices—a harsh decree, but one he feels will help ensure that only those who truly believe join his flock and prove a powerful sign of their devotion.

* If you are using the optional strategic board game rules (see Appendix 1), most of the locations on this list provide ample or lush territories. Those marked with a dagger (†) are harsh.

See Chapter 2 Xil’s Guide to the Known World for more information on these locations.

† If you are using the optional strategic board game rules (see Appendix 1), these territories are harsh.





9. WORSHIP DETAILS

You should note down a few specifics involved in the worship of your god, such as the primary forms of observance, notable features shared by your temples, and any other details that flesh out the religious life of your faithful. You should also decide on the period within which your main feast day should occur (this will often, but not always, be during the same Season as was chosen for the location of your dwelling place in the Celestial Realm), and any specifics involved in that ceremony.

Each god also has a season (winter, spring, summer, or autumn) that is particularly holy to him. Your most important holiday usually falls within this season, and your followers often spend a good portion of the season in various forms of worship. At the end of the season, you check in with your followers to determine how you're treating them; see Chapter 5: Playing the Game—Conflict and Miracles, "Maintenance and Years," for more details. Paul doesn't think Selaphon would be as obsessed with regular observance as most deities, and hence decides that his temples tend to be relatively rare, with most worship occurring at meal times at small shrines in each house. He also decides that when crossing a stream each of his followers stops to utter a brief prayer of thanksgiving. He chooses the beginning of Spring for his feast-day, occurring on the day on which the ice begins to melt and water begins to flow free. As a sign of devotion, he decides that at the height of the festivities his followers pick one of their number by lot, and ritually drown them in icy water—now there's a sign of faith!

10. CELESTIAL REALM

Next, you should define your dwelling place in the Celestial Realm. This is your home, and an area you have total control in designing. The Celestial Realm is split into four regions corresponding to the four seasons, which encircle the Eternal Gardens wherein dwells Fate.

First, select where and in which region you will place your home. The closer to the Eternal Gardens the more static and formal the domains of the Gods tend to be, similar to those that could be constructed in the mortal realm, while those out in the far reaches of the Celestial Realm are strange, impossible regions that depend only on the

whim of their god. The season or seasons chosen as the location are also important: the realm of the Horse-Lord, placed on the boundary of Spring and Summer, might be rolling plains of high grass where the weather is also balmy, while the citadel of a god nestled in the far reaches of Winter might be carved from iron and black ice.

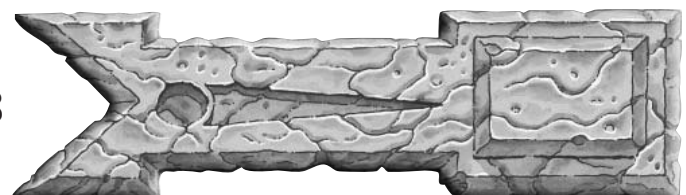
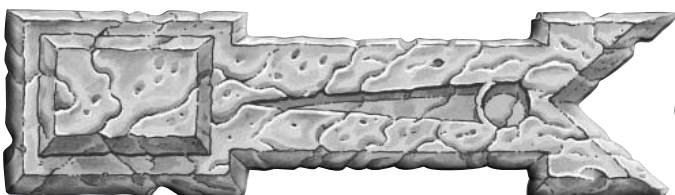
Secondly, you should define what your realm is like. While the size of a deity's realm is limited by their power (being roughly equivalent to the area of the mortal realm controlled by their followers) and may even grow or shrink over time, within that realm they have total control. Most Gods' realms serve not only as a place to live, but also play host to the souls of their departed followers.

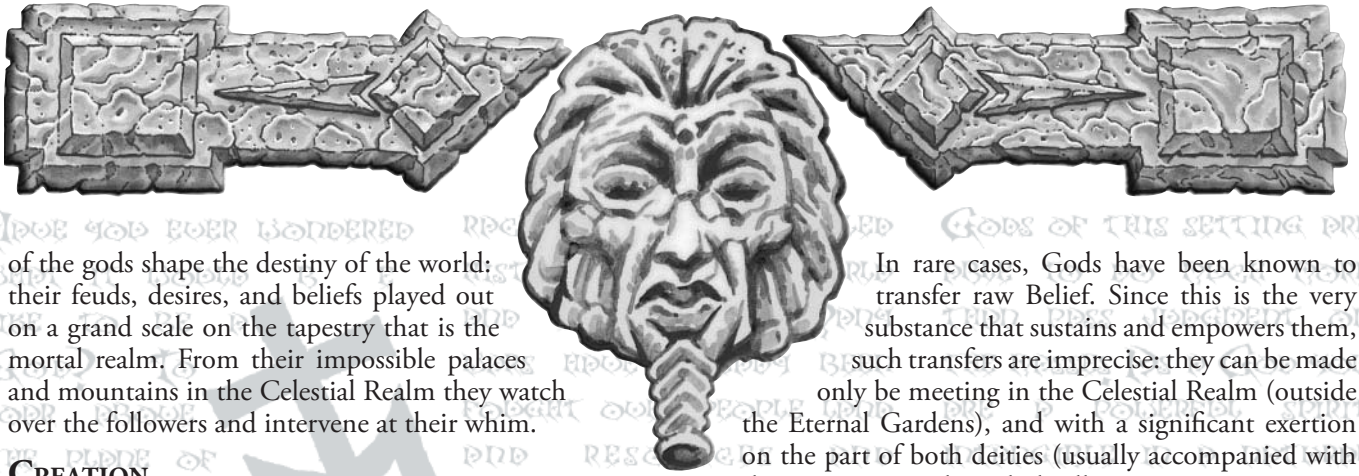
Finally, if you have not already conceived your god's appearance, you should decide the appearance your god customarily takes while in the Celestial Realm—this is also normally the form worshippers will think of when they pray, and will appear in religious sculptures and paintings. If your deity is part of a pantheon, you should decide whether or not all of the gods will share a realm—in such cases you should decide on a single location between you, and while each deity will have control over the specifics of their own inner sanctum, the design of the realm as a whole should be decided by all players working together. In other cases members of a pantheon each have their own realms, often on opposite sides of the Celestial Realm, while in some cases some dwell together while others live apart. See Chapter 3 Lore of the Spirit World for more information about creating your Celestial Realm.

Paul decides that Selaphon's territory within the Celestial Realm will lie on the boundary of Winter and Spring, and will be a giant complex of canyons and cliffs, filled with waterfalls and rapids and floating chunks of ice, the rocky outcrops joined by numerous rickety bridges. His temple in the center will be an impossibly slender tower of blue marble, a realm of silks and cushions. His normal form here is a slender young human with curly white hair and startling blue eyes.

DIVINITY

While their power may be granted by mortals, the actions





of the gods shape the destiny of the world; their feuds, desires, and beliefs played out on a grand scale on the tapestry that is the mortal realm. From their impossible palaces and mountains in the Celestial Realm they watch over the followers and intervene at their whim.

CREATION

All gods are empowered by the Belief of their many followers. However, there are many routes that can be taken to attain Godhood—with sufficient belief, any being can ascend as a deity. Some of the more common causes include:

- Demons or spirits who convinced sufficiently large numbers of mortals to worship themselves.
- Important mortals, alive or dead (often kings) who were venerated by their followers to such an extent they become Gods.
- Heroes of existing Gods whose delegated powers led to cults forming to worship them directly.
- Coalescing spontaneously from a sufficiently large population of worshippers desperate for a deity to protect them and answer their prayers.

Belief lends them power and strength, granting them the ability to perform limited Miracles. Eventually, with enough followers (roughly 100 mortals dedicating all of their beliefs to a single entity) they are able to ascend to the Celestial Realms, and carve out a small portion of it as their own, becoming minor Gods. Over time as they accumulate more worshippers their powers and realm will expand.

Belief is all-important to a God—with it they can tear down mountains and sway armies to their will. Without it they are nothing but a memory. The most common source of Belief is the accumulation as the seasons turn, but it can also be gained through victories over adversity, mass sacrifice, or other means. The maximum Belief a God can have is equal to 100 Belief for each token they control; no method can increase their total beyond this.

However, should the number of followers a God controls be reduced, they do not lose this excess Belief, though they can gain no more until either their population increases again, or their store of Belief drops below its maximum allowed level.

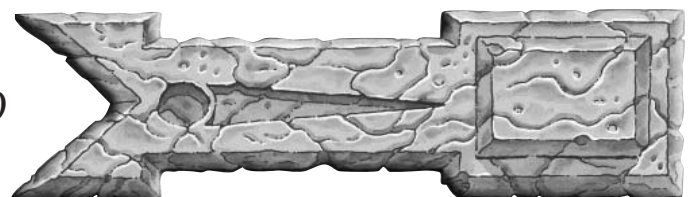
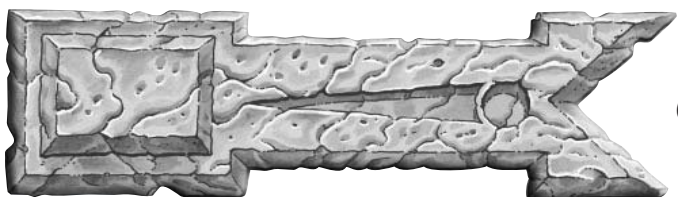
In rare cases, Gods have been known to transfer raw Belief. Since this is the very substance that sustains and empowers them, such transfers are imprecise: they can be made only by meeting in the Celestial Realm (outside the Eternal Gardens), and with a significant exertion on the part of both deities (usually accompanied with the receiving God symbolically consuming a portion of the form of the donor God). Even with all this effort, the process is a wasteful one: half of the transferred Belief (rounding up) is lost in the exchange. Both parties must be willing participants for such a transfer; it cannot be accomplished by force.

THE CELESTIAL REALM

The natural place of the Gods is the Celestial Realms, a strange and unnatural region where the landscape depends on the whim of the God who controls the area, and the spirits of the dead walk as they did in life. Some regions are beautiful paradises filled with trees and flowers of surpassing beauty, while others are so hellish or simply alien a mortal mind would rebel at the sight. The realm is fluid, and the Gods can reshape it with little effort.

In the Celestial Realm, Gods may take on whatever form they please, and change it at will. They may also reshape the landscape around them, altering a region as far as the eye can see for a single point of Belief. While the cost is trivial, the addition will not be long-lived: a radical change (such as turning a wasteland of ice into a lush garden) will begin to change back in a matter of hours, while a moderate change (shaping a mountain into a giant statue of the God) will last only for days. Minor or complementary changes (altering the color of leaves on a tree to a darker green) will survive for weeks, or even a month, but eventually all will return to their natural form. God and spirits cannot be affected directly by use of this power.

The exception to this is the God's own region. This area (chosen during character creation) is their own to shape as they will, and any change they make to it is permanent; other Gods are also unable to reshape the terrain. A God's territory is innately linked to their power—as they gain followers their demesne will expand (the region is roughly equivalent to the land their followers occupy, or would occupy, under more normal circumstances if these followers





live in particularly scattered or close-knit conditions), and it will shrink should their sway decrease, down to just a few square yards should they lose every last worshipper.

Conflict in the Celestial Realm is possible, but poses no threat: the forms of Gods or spirits can be rent and torn asunder, but will reform within a few minutes (alternatively, Gods may wish to spend a point of Belief to reform themselves instantly). They may also choose to spar more formally, by each trying to affect some change on the landscape. In formal or informal combat, the victor is invariably the deity most willing to spend Belief. Such conflicts can be costly in terms of Belief, and tend to be ultimately unsatisfying: as a result, most Gods prefer to settle conflict via mortal representatives and pawns.

The Eternal Gardens in the center of the Celestial Realm prove the exception to the malleability of the landscape: in the home of Fate no amount of Belief or effort can effect the slightest change, and the form of Gods and spirits cannot be damaged in any way. As a result, the region serves as a neutral ground, sanctuary, and place of rest.

PRAYER

While in the Celestial Realm, Gods are constantly aware of the prayers of their followers, which they generally hear as a quiet whisper on the edge of hearing. While minor Gods with only a few hundred faithful may be easily able to identify individual prayers, most experience it as a soft rustling on the edge of hearing as myriad followers pray for help or guidance. The stronger the will of the one offering the prayer, and the more effort is expended in its formation, the louder it echoes in the mind of the God to whom it is directed. Particularly potent prayers (such as after months of ritual preparation, or by those who kill themselves so their God might consider their request most seriously) are heard as if the believer were shouting nearby.

For the most part, however, prayers wash unconsidered over the deity. Simply by choosing to do so they can listen to any individual prayer, but given the sheer volume of requests only the most minor gods can pay attention to every request. However, they will still receive a sense of what their followers are praying about—if thousands pray about a lack of food their deity will be aware that their

people are hungry, even if they never listen to a single prayer explicitly. The sudden swell of prayers means they will also be immediately aware of any great disaster or event to suddenly befall a significant proportion of their followers.

The gods can choose to pay attention to certain individuals, and many prefer to pick a single priest or leader as the representative of their followers, listening directly to the prayers of this individual, and otherwise simply letting the prayers of the others wash over them. Others ignore all prayers completely, while yet others prefer to pick and consider prayers purely at random.

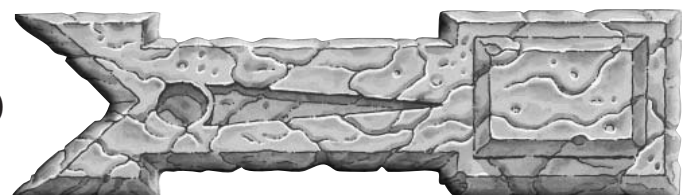
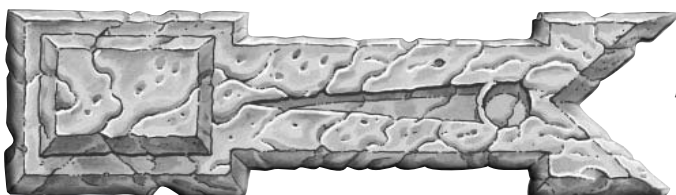
Divine Sight

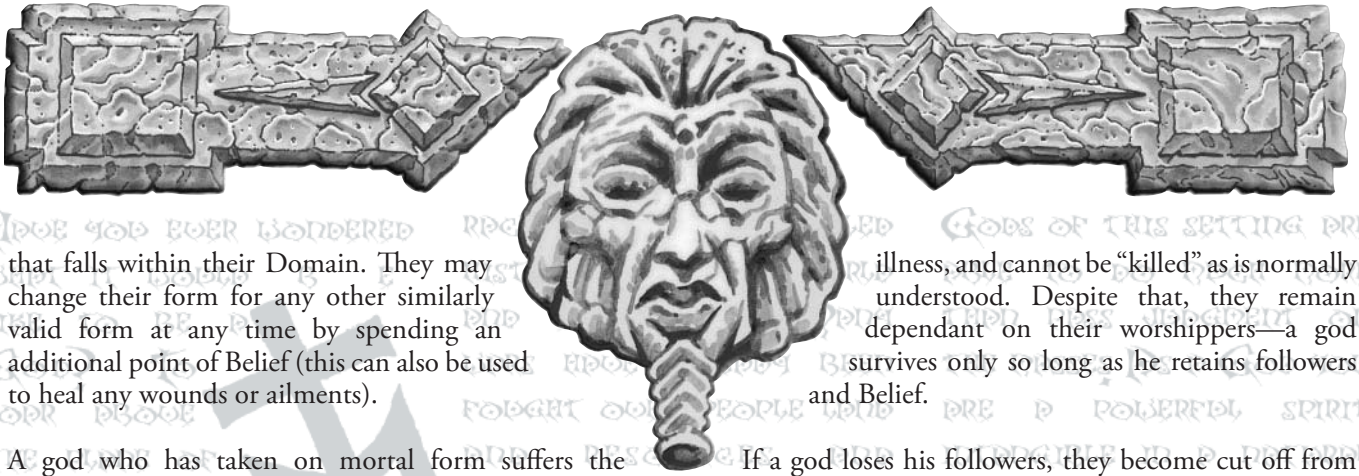
Gods are not limited to prayer when it comes to the mortal realm: they can also choose to view it directly. By concentrating, a deity can choose to view any area of the mortal realm over which they have dominion (generally, any of their territories, along with any location occupied by one of the faithful), as well as any part of their territory in the Celestial Realm. While this requires no expenditure of Belief, it does take a degree of concentration, and the deity can observe only one location at a time. Using Divine Sight, they can perform Miracles in the mortal realm and observe the results.

INCARNATION

While some of the gods watch over the mortal realm by listening to prayers and using Divine Sight, some prefer to take a more direct approach, incarnating directly and walking among mortals, either in the full panoply of their glory or in disguise to find out what is really going on in the world.

A god may incarnate with a simple effort of will and the spending of a single point of Belief. They may appear in any area which they could view with Divine Sight, along with the exact spot at which they ascended to the Celestial Realm when they became a deity. When doing so they must take on a mortal form: this can be that of a member of any species that worships them (not limited to the visages of their followers: they may take any appearance of that species they like), any form customarily associated with them by their followers, or that of any mortal creature





that falls within their Domain. They may change their form for any other similarly valid form at any time by spending an additional point of Belief (this can also be used to heal any wounds or ailments).

illness, and cannot be “killed” as is normally understood. Despite that, they remain dependant on their worshippers—a god survives only so long as he retains followers and Belief.

A god who has taken on mortal form suffers the constraints and limitations of this form, though their abilities are exceptional by mortal standards: A god is considered to be exceptional at every skill and ability (rated as an individual with D10 for purposes of conflict resolution), with the exception of skills that are considered to fall under their domain, which they exhibit at the limit of human capacity (rated as D12 for conflict resolution).

If a god loses his followers, they become cut off from the mortal realm in many ways. Furthermore, they no longer have a source of Belief, retaining their current supply, but unable to refill it, and should they ever exhaust it completely they dwindle to nothingness. A God without followers is in a terrible state: they cannot hope to gain more believers without using Belief, but in doing so they are expending the only resource that sustains their existence. The Celestial Realm is filled with tiny caves or shacks wherein dwell once-mighty Gods, hoarding their last few scraps of Belief, unwilling to risk final destruction by incarnating in the mortal realm to search for more followers.

They may choose to exceed these mortal limitations via Miracles, which operate in exactly the same way as if they were using them from the Celestial Realm. As well as using Miracles on their surroundings, they can also use them to enhance themselves, throw lightning, transform into shapes they couldn't normally take, or anything else they have the desire and Belief to accomplish.

A god without followers retains most of their powers—the only loss is that they no longer receive prayers and can no longer use their Divine Sight (because both are tied to mortal followers). They retain the ability to reshape their Celestial realm, incarnate in the mortal realm (at the spot at which they first ascended to the Celestial Realm on attaining Godhood), and use Miracles, although in all cases they must spend the normal amount of Belief to do so.

Their mortal form is vulnerable to mortal damage, and can be hurt or even “killed.” A God will feel pain if struck, just like a mortal, and if somehow their form sustains enough damage to have killed them were they fully mortal, they vanish to reappear in the center of their Celestial Realm. Such a loss is painful and embarrassing enough were they in disguise; being cut down while openly walking in the mortal realm as an incarnate deity can lead to both loss of Belief (the “death” of a known deity's form counts as the loss of a major hero), as well as suffering further loss for losing to a significantly less powerful enemy. The same losses occur should an openly declared deity be bested in some other contest of skill (see the Conflict Resolution section for more details).

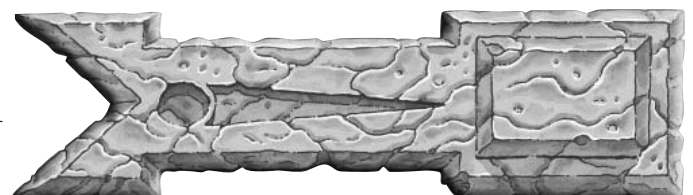
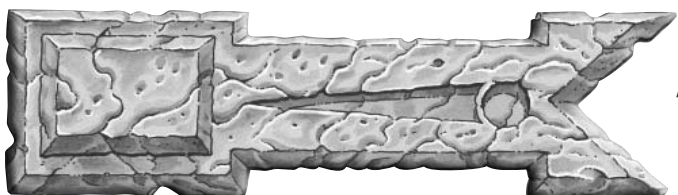
Since the maximum Belief they can receive is capped by the number of followers they have, a God without worshippers cannot receive Belief from any other source—their only hope for more Belief is to convince mortals to worship them by some means (coercion, bribery, persuasion, and trickery are all valid tactics). Hence other members of their pantheon or other friendly Gods may not make a gift of Belief as they might otherwise do, though particularly selfless Gods can command some of their faithful to instead follow the deity without believers.

While incarnate, the God is no longer able to hear prayers and cannot use Divine Sight, as well as being unable to sense the condition of their Celestial Realm. A god may choose to return to the Celestial Realm at any time, reappearing anywhere in their Realm, without spending Belief.

Should a God without followers ever lose their last point of Belief they are instantly destroyed: only Fate knows whether any spark of these unfortunate deities survive in some form.

Destruction

Unlike mortals, gods do not age, are not susceptible to



CHAPTER 5: PLAYING THE GAME—CONFLICT AND MIRACLES



Lightning slashed from the sky, flinging salamander warriors in the air. The air burned and stank with charred flesh and broken steel.

Memnos covered his ears as he watched the debris fall. Looking down from the battlement, he couldn't help but laugh. The cursed salamanders didn't stand a chance of taking their city - not when Gronthar, God of Thunder and Lightning, stood by them!

Memnos looked up. Swirling black thunderclouds filled the sky: a sign of good fortune to Gronthar's followers — and a sign of his divine anger.

Even from the city walls, Memnos heard the salamanders' hisses screams. Gronthar's thunderbolt tore a huge crater in the midst of the salamander force, broken and seared bodies scattered around it. The rest of the army milled in confusion, uncertain of where to stand. Memnos cheered and, through the ringing in his ears, heard his brethren do the same.

Memnos turned to Hallak, who stood next to him. "That will teach those lizards, eh, my friend?"

Hallak nodded weakly, his face pale and sweaty. He staggered to one side and put a hand on the wall.

Memnos stepped forward and gripped Hallak's shoulder. "Brother, are you well?"

"I—" Hallak gasped. His mouth opened and closed like a fish. Memnos stared at him and noticed that sweat was flowing down his face, soaking his skin and clothes.

"Help!" Memnos looked around. "I need an herbalist! Or a shaman! Foul salamander sorcery..." Yet as his gaze swept the battlements, he knew no one would answer his plea, for

fully half the warriors suffered like Hallak, staggering, lying down, leaning against the crenellations. Their sweat pooled on the stones.

"Memnos," Hallak gasped, and Memnos turned back to his friend. "I—"

Hallak's head exploded in his helm.

Memnos shrieked and turned away, but not fast enough. Scalding blood and gobbets of brain coated him, and scorching skull fragments dug into his cheek and the side of his neck. Wet booms and screams echoed across the battlements.

Memnos gasped, wiping Hallak's smoldering gore from his face. He looked over the battlefield, saw the salamanders raising their weapons, chanting in victory and laughing, mocking the newly-exploded dead.

The thunderheads swirled and growled.

Memnos looked back to the battlements. Headless corpses lay everywhere, starburst patterns of blood and gore marking their end. Half of his warriors were dead, the other broken and pale.

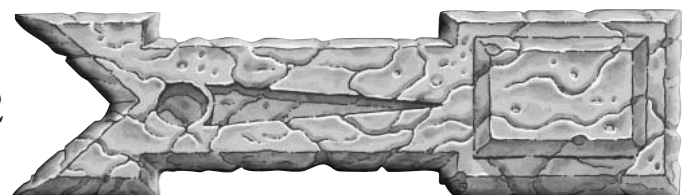
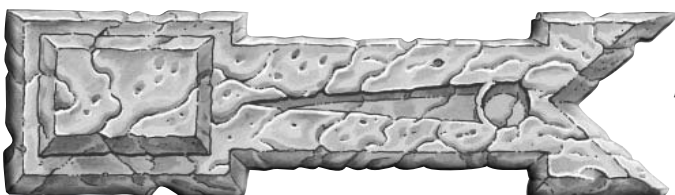
Memnos cringed as a boom echoed below, the wall shaking. The salamanders battered the gate, chanting in rhythm to the ram that they swung back and forth. The warriors looked at each other uncertainly. "Maybe we should surrender?" one whispered to another.

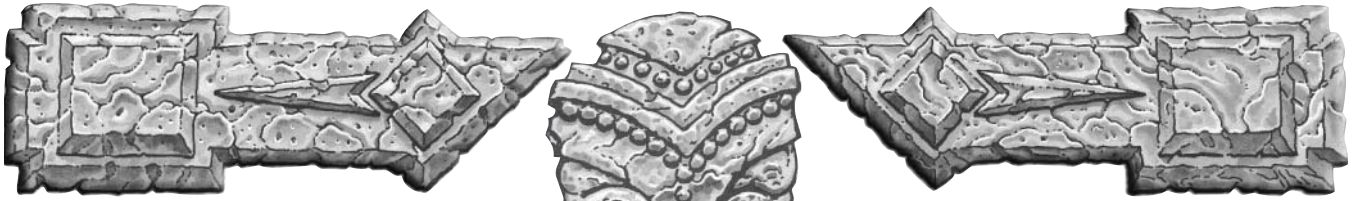
"No!" Memnos screamed at the man. "We are the chosen of Gronthar! We will not give in to these foul creatures. We must stand, here, now! We must avenge our fallen brothers and sisters. Even if you are too cowardly to fight on, I will not rot in the salamanders' slave pits! I will fight for Gronthar!" He turned to the others on the battlements. Everyone looked at him.

"What will you do?" he shouted.

They weren't looking at him anymore.

They were looking up. Memnos looked up, too.





The clouds directly above him blackened, lighting dancing over them. The lighting twisted and spun downward, then upward, then downward again...

A lightning bolt lanced downward, spearing Memnos, passing through him and over him. He opened his hand to drop his sword; it clung to his palm, burning into his hand. Memnos smiled; it did not burn, the divine power...

"What will you do?" he thundered in Gronthar's voice.

This chapter contains the mechanics for playing the game: rules about how to resolve conflicts, how gods perform

Miracles, and how they ensure their followers remain loyal.

CONFLICT

Even gods run into conflicts. This game uses a single mechanic to resolve all conflicts, whether it's a god convincing barbarian tribes to turn their worship to him, a Leviathan terrorizing a town, or mighty armies clashing on the battlefield.

Whenever you find yourself in a conflict, you roll a number of dice (called a *dice pool*). The GM (or the other player, in cases where you're in direct conflict with another player) also rolls a number of dice. Whoever gets the highest number on a single die wins, with varying repercussions.

GODS AND CONFLICT

Gods do not often come into serious conflict themselves, but their followers experience such strife almost daily.

Miracles: Though gods have great influence on the mortal world, only rarely do they affect it directly. They do not normally take human form and go walking around in the world, slaying beasts and exploring dungeons. Instead, gods perform Miracles to interact with the world indirectly—though some of these methods *seem* direct. A god might perform Miracles to alter something that is already on the mortal world (such as enhancing his followers or inspiring them to accomplish a task), or by creating something that then affects the world (like a stroke of lightning).

Controlling Followers: A player controls his god's followers as well as his god. Because these followers worship the god and try to carry out his divine will, they perform tasks that they assume he desires. Most new gods also speak to their followers in more direct ways. A god might speak directly to his shamans during their prayer, he might influence his priests (or the rest of his followers) in dreams, he might use a Miracle to create an avatar who rules the tribe, and so forth. Each player should determine how his god interacts with his followers.

Note that players roll dice for their followers when they are in conflict, whether or not gods are involved.

To Resolve Conflicts: Each side rolls a number of dice; the side that rolls the highest single value wins.

The number of dice you roll and their size depend upon a number of factors.

STEPS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTS

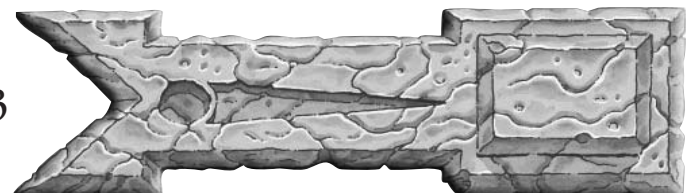
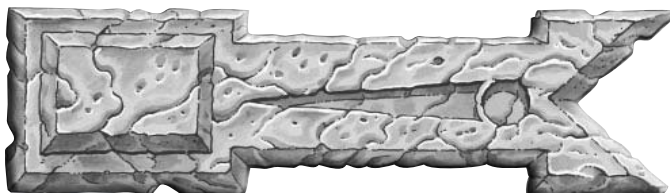
When resolving a conflict, follow these steps:

- 1) Determine scale.
- 2) Determine number of dice.
- 3) Determine die size.
- 4) Perform Miracles.
- 5) Roll the dice.
- 6) Determine the outcome.
- 7) Repeat until the conflict is resolved.
- 8) Gain and lose Belief.

STEP 1: DETERMINE SCALE

A conflict's *scale* refers to its scope or breadth; how many people are involved, what size territory is at stake, and the like. Determining the scale affects a number of factors, such as how many dice each participant gets to roll and how mighty their Miracles must be to influence it.

To determine the scale, consult Table 5-1: Determining Scale.



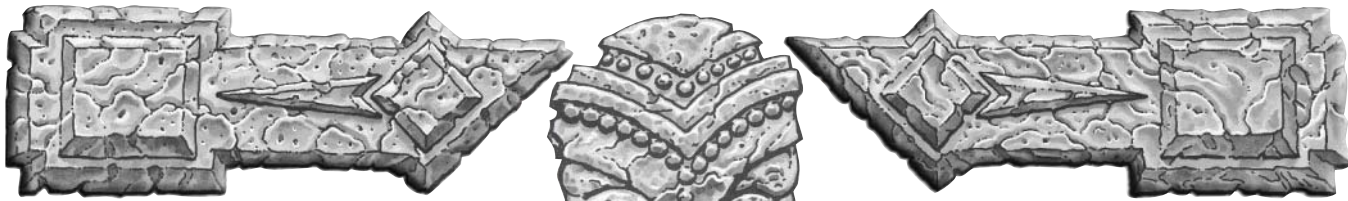


TABLE 5-1: DETERMINING SCALE

Scale	People per Side*	Token Size*	Examples
Individual	1–9	1	Single combat; an argument between a few individuals
Household	10–99	10	A tavern brawl; a team sport; a skirmish between scouting parties
Village	100–999	100	A significant skirmish; a train of pilgrims crossing a river
Territory	1,000–9,999	1,000	An army storming a walled city; a tsunami crushing a great swath of land
Nation	10,000–99,999	10,000	A decisive battle between two great powers
Continent	100,000+	100,000	A decisive battle to decide the fate of the world

* Approximate; see below.

or whatever) of many men. Thus, when a hero with the military prowess of a hundred soldiers faces a single swashbuckler, the scale is village level rather than individual level—just as if the swashbuckler was up against a hundred soldiers.

Also, scale can refer to more than just people. Fortifications, warhorses, and the like can also apply. Chapter 6 provides examples of such resources and their value in conflicts. For items not included there, the GM is the final arbiter on what qualifies as a resource that can meaningfully affect the conflict—and, in some cases, if it is worth more than a single individual. (A trained basilisk in one army might be the equivalent of ten soldiers, for example.)

Despite the hard numbers on Table 5-1, the values are approximate. Round up, and use common sense. A conflict with 99 people on a side is a village-scale conflict (not a household-scale one). In a clash between an army with 10,000 individuals and an army with 9,991 individuals, both sides count as having *about* 10,000 people, and both are nation-scale. The GM has the final say on the conflict's scale.

STEP 2: DETERMINE NUMBER OF DICE

Each side in a conflict rolls dice; the number of dice is equal to the number of tokens the side has. Thus, each token contributes one die in the conflict.

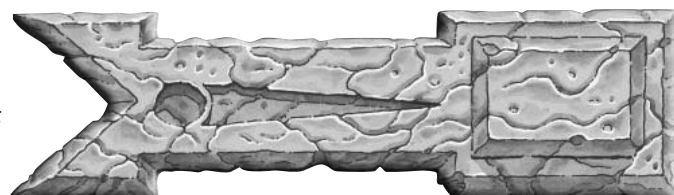
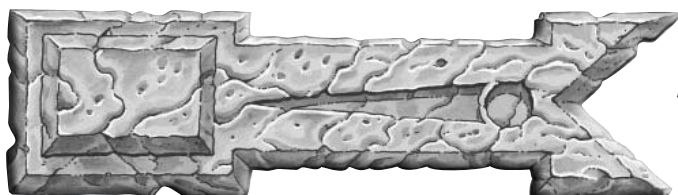
For example, a party of 10 scouts runs into an 80-man guerilla force in the woods, and combat breaks out. Consulting Table 5-1, we can see that this conflict is household-scale. Because in a household-scale conflict a token represents 10 people, the scouts have a single token and roll a single die. The guerillas have eight tokens and roll eight dice.

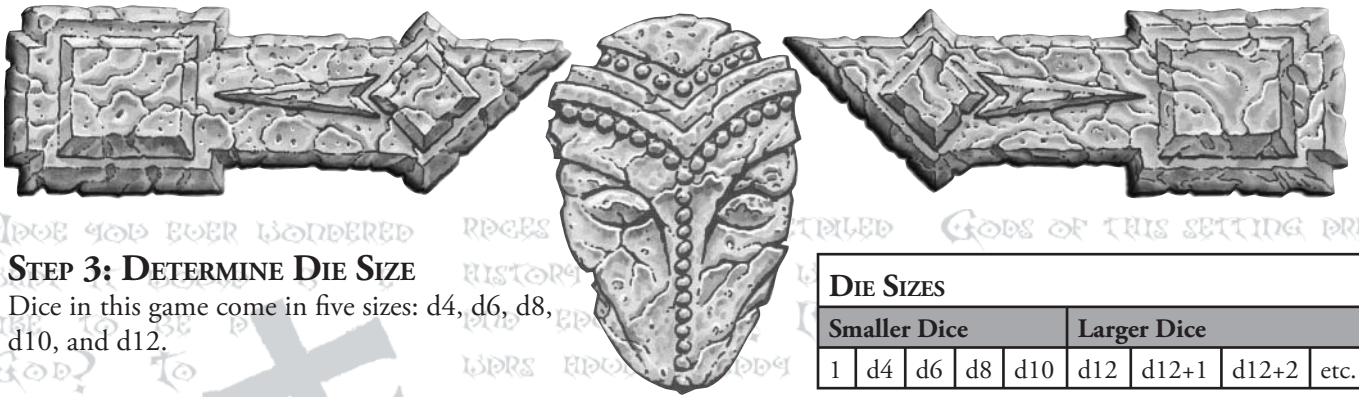
Round up if the ones digit is 5 or higher. Thus, if the scouting party consists of 15 scouts, that side gets two tokens and rolls two dice. If the party consists of 14 scouts, that side has only one token and rolls only one die.

Thus, a battle between two armies, each with about 2,000 people on a side, is territory-scale. Twenty outdoorsmen weathering a savage blizzard is a household-scale conflict. *Tokens* represent a side's resources. Table 5-1 describes how many individuals (or their equivalent) a single token represents. So, when two armies of 800 soldiers each clash, the conflict is village-scale, and each side has eight tokens.

If one side in the conflict is of a different scale than the other(s), the *conflict's* scale is the largest possible size. (The smaller-scale side suffers a disadvantage see Steps 2 and 3, below.) Thus, if ten townsfolk gang up on a lone traveler, the conflict is household-scale, even though one side has but a single participant.

Note that, while scale usually refers to the number of individuals present, some people are imbued with supernatural might and have the strength (mental, military,





STEP 3: DETERMINE DIE SIZE

Dice in this game come in five sizes: d4, d6, d8, d10, and d12.

The number of individuals (or other resources) you have in a conflict determines the number of dice you roll; their power and skill determines your die size. Consult Table 5-2: Determining Die Size to determine the appropriate die size based on the quality of your resources (whether they're people, trained basilisks, or whatever).

Resource	Die Size	Explanation	Examples (in a Military Conflict)
Inappropriate	d4	Inexperienced people or low-quality resources	Untrained men and women with poor equipment; the wounded, old, and/or young
Average	d6	Standard-quality resources	Mature fighters with a small amount of training
Select	d8	Veteran or high-quality resources	Experienced, well-equipped troops who have fought in a number of conflicts
Excellent	d10	Rare and powerful resources	Formidably equipped, highly trained troops
Unmatched	d12	Resources of legendary power or effectiveness	Fanatic secret warrior cults; soldiers empowered by their god

A number of factors can affect your die size.

INCREASING AND DECREASING DIE SIZE

If an effect (such as a Miracle) *increases* a die's size, you use a die with more sides (a "larger" die); move one step to the right on the list below. (Thus, a d4 increases to a d6.) If an effect *decreases* a die's size, move to the left. (A d12 decreases to a d10.) A d4 decreases to a simple value of "1" and cannot be decreased further. A d12 increases to a d12+1, then a d12+2, and so on.

Smaller Dice					Larger Dice			
1	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12	d12+1	d12+2	etc.

MORTAL STATISTICS AND THE NATURE OF CONFLICT

Most creatures (and supernatural objects and the like) have three statistics: Body, Mind, and Spirit. Each statistic has a corresponding die size from d4 to d12 with a bonus or penalty equal to ½ value of the max value of the die. For example, the soldiers of a city might have Body d6, Mind d4 -1, and Spirit d6. These values are the size of the dice used in conflicts of the appropriate kinds.

Many conflicts, including battles, are physical conflicts and use the participants' Body values. Mind conflicts include the use of mortal skills and knowledge, particularly magical or supernatural nature. Spirit conflicts include attempts to convince people of a course of action, dealing with belief in the gods and remain steadfast in the face of terror.

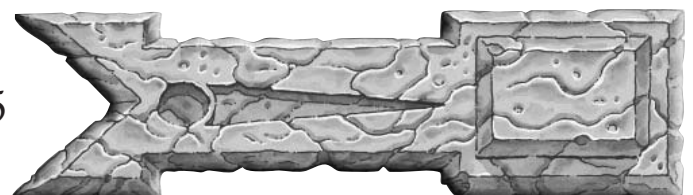
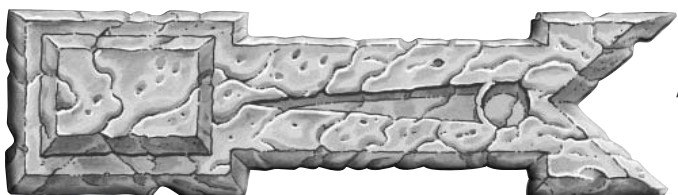
In some conflicts, each side uses a different statistic. A wizard attempting to use magic to split a rock pits his Mind against the rock's Body.

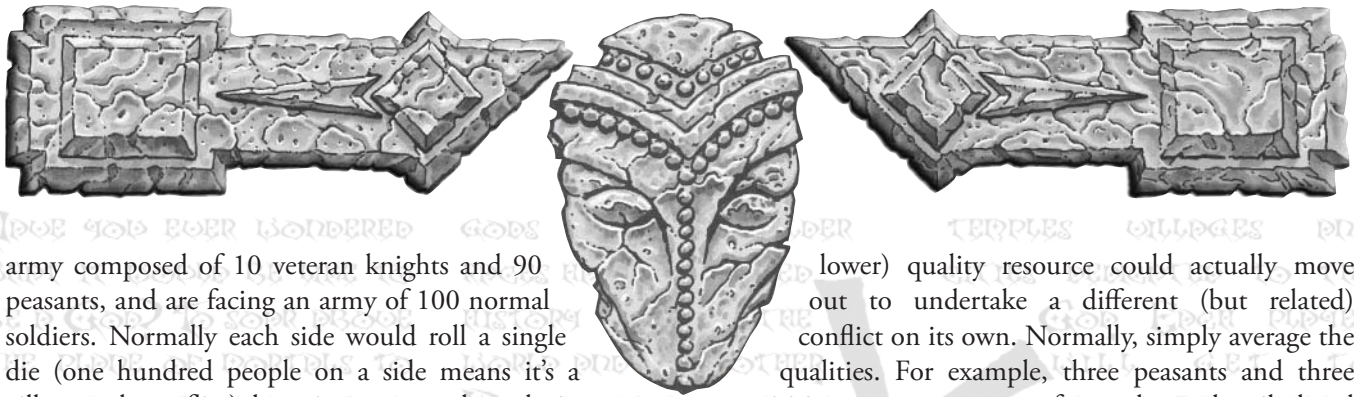
BONUSES AND PENALTIES

Some creatures provide a bonus on die rolls. Priests with especially strong conviction might have a Mind score of d6+2, for example. The bonus applies to each die you roll. Similarly, some creatures take a penalty on their die rolls. If the priests honed their bodies through ritual exercise but never trained for combat, they might have a Body score of d6-1. Such a penalty cannot reduce a die roll to a value less than 1.

VARYING QUALITIES

In some conflicts, you might have resources of different qualities. For example, a band of well-trained and equipped knights might join an army of pitchfork-wielding militiamen. In this case, you roll the appropriate dice for each one. To continue the above example, you have an





army composed of 10 veteran knights and 90 peasants, and are facing an army of 100 normal soldiers. Normally each side would roll a single die (one hundred people on a side means it's a village-scale conflict), but, since you need to take into account the varying qualities, the first side rolls 9d4 and 1d8. The second side then also rolls one die for each 10 people in its force, rolling 10d6 total. Thus, the GM has two options: Use the side's average or most populous resource (the knights don't have enough numbers to make a difference in the battle) or split the conflict into two (or more) separate conflicts. (The knights confront the squad of enemy wizards while the militiamen and the enemy soldiers cross pitchforks.)

Splitting the conflict makes sense only if the higher (or

lower) quality resource could actually move out to undertake a different (but related) conflict on its own. Normally, simply average the qualities. For example, three peasants and three visiting veterans are at a farm when a hostile band of barbarians charges over the hill. Your followers take up arms to combat them. Since the peasants roll d4s for combat and the veterans roll d8s, you can just roll d6s (the average die size).

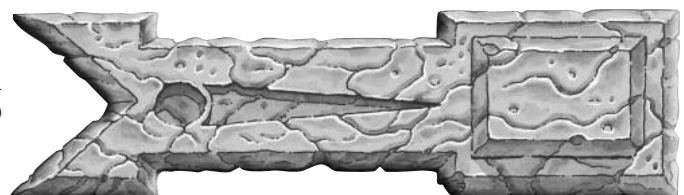
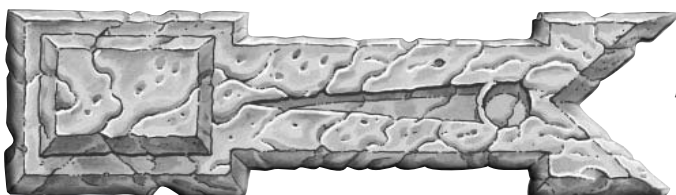
OUTNUMBERED

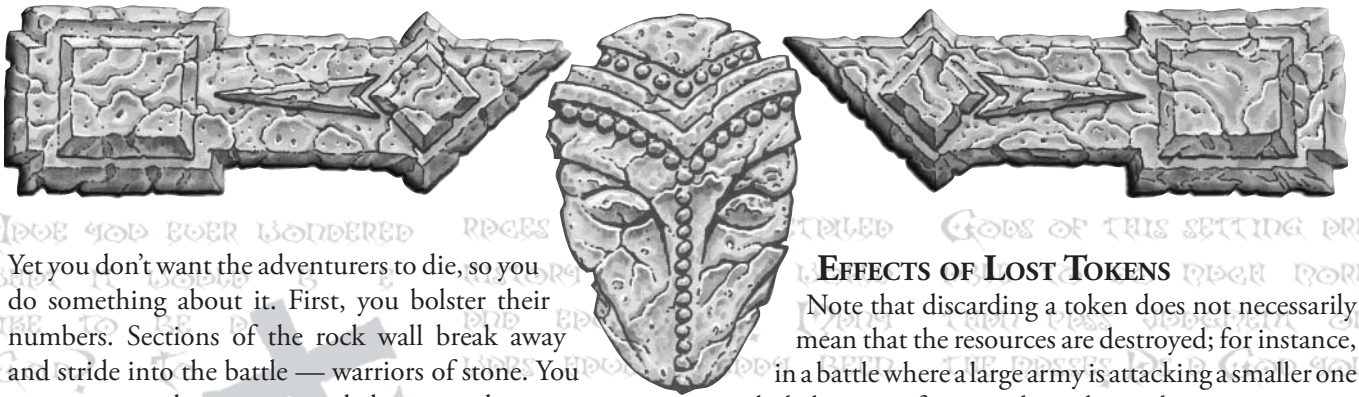
If one side in a conflict is of a different scale than the other(s), the smaller side decreases its die size by two steps for each category by which the scale differs. Thus, 10 combat veterans (household-scale) facing an army of a hundred soldiers (village-scale) roll 1d4 instead of 1d8. Ten normal (non-veteran) soldiers (household-scale) facing off against the same hundred soldiers (village-scale) are reduced to a value of 1 (a "d1," in essence), while the army rolls 1d6.

STEP 4: PERFORM MIRACLES

Since players control gods, deities are involved in almost every conflict. They rarely allow their mortal servants to struggle unaided; gods perform Miracles to give themselves and/or their followers an edge. A god might perform a Miracle to fill his warriors with power, turn the ground into quicksand, cause swordsmen to arise from the bones of the fallen, or just about anything else you can imagine. Miracles add dice to your dice pool, increase your die size, remove dice from your opponent's dice pool, and/or reduce his die size.

For example, three adventurers search a cavern complex for relics that might help their village. They accidentally stumble into a lair of three giant lizards; the lizards awaken hungry. They clash. The adventurers roll d6s and the lizards roll d8s. If you did nothing to help your followers, your dice pool would be 3d6, while the lizards' dice pool would be 3d8.





Yet you don't want the adventurers to die, so you do something about it. First, you bolster their numbers. Sections of the rock wall break away and stride into the battle — warriors of stone. You create two such creatures to help your adventurers, boosting your dice pool to 5d6. Next, the wall splits open and gems pour forth, spinning through the air, wrapping the adventurers in jeweled arms and armor imbued with divine might. Doing so increases their die size to d10. So (assuming the lizards get no support), you roll 5d10 for your followers while the lizards still have only 3d8.

Of course, you can't just throw Miracles around at will; such supernatural power comes with a price. See "Miracles," below, for more information about Miracles.

STEP 5: ROLL THE DICE

You've figured out how many dice each side gets, and how large they are. Roll them!

STEP 6: DETERMINE THE OUTCOME

Each side determines its *high number*, which is the highest single number on one of its dice. The side with the highest high number wins.

For example, one side rolls a 1, 1, 3, and 4, and the other side rolls a 1, 5 and 7. The first side's high number is 4, while the second side's high number is 7. The second side wins.

The exact outcome depends on what the winning side was trying to accomplish. If it was trying to affect the other side's resources (by killing them, converting them, entrapping them, and so on), it succeeds to a degree. The winning side destroys (or otherwise affects) a number of the opponent's tokens equal to the number of dice it rolled that scored higher than the opponent's high number. So, in the example above, the winning side affects two of the opponent's tokens, since it rolled two dice (the 5 and the 7) that were higher than the loser's high number (4).

The losing player chooses which tokens are affected.

EFFECTS OF LOST TOKENS

Note that discarding a token does not necessarily mean that the resources are destroyed; for instance, in a battle where a large army is attacking a smaller one holed up in a fortress, discarding tokens representing the fortress could represent the attackers breaking down the gates or otherwise bypassing the fortress's advantages. The GM decides the effect of the token being discarded once the battle is over. While in a fight removing tokens usually represents death, in other situations cities might need repairing, political favors may have been called in, a bridge might have been built over a gorge, the loser of a race might suffer a loss of popularity, or any other appropriate outcome.

TIES

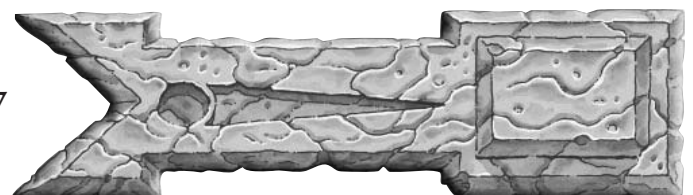
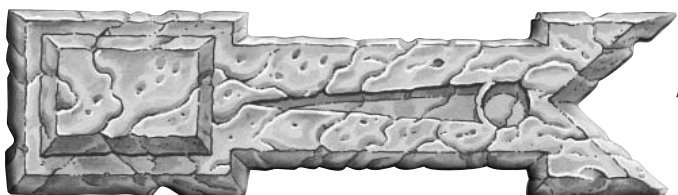
If two (or more) sides have equal high numbers, the GM determines if one side had an edge over the other. This edge reflects the innumerable unquantifiable factors that affect a conflict. It can come from a number of sources and often involves the players being inventive and descriptive. One side might have an edge due to clever troop deployment, for example, or an especially stirring (and well role-played) speech from a leader. The edge allows the GM to take into account factors that would otherwise be too minor to represent.

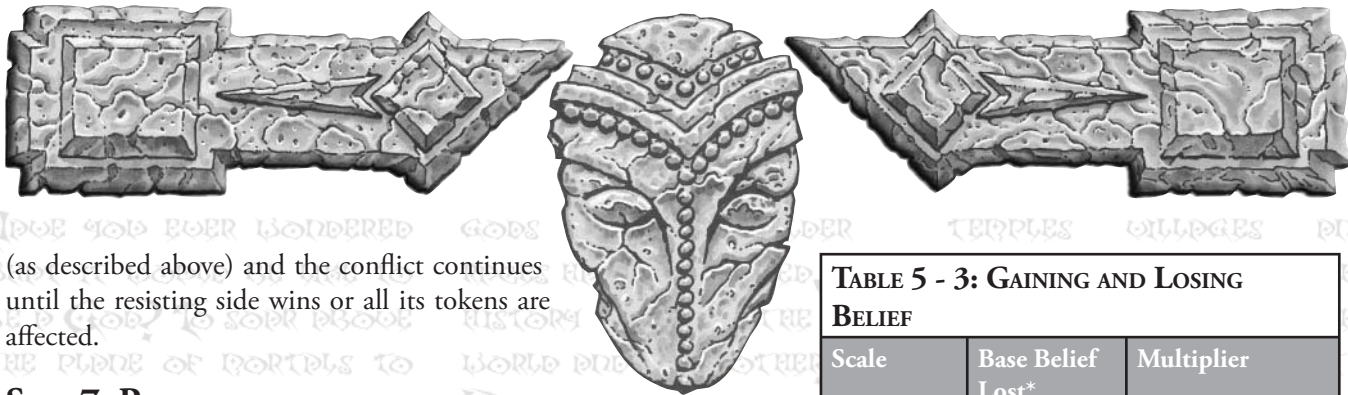
If one side has an edge over the other, he wins the conflict and affects one of the opposing side's tokens.

The GM can rule that neither side has the edge. In this case, the conflict is a stalemate; neither side affects the other.

RESISTANCE

In some conflicts, one side isn't trying to affect the other at all, but is instead simply trying to *avoid* being affected. For example, a god might send a mighty rainstorm to frighten his enemies or cause blades to shoot up from the ground. In such a case, if the resisting side wins the conflict, it is unaffected and the conflict ends. If the other side wins the conflict, it affects a number of the resisting side's tokens





(as described above) and the conflict continues until the resisting side wins or all its tokens are affected.

STEP 7: REPEAT

The victor just did *something* to the loser (like kill some giant lizards), but the loser might still have some fight left in him. Repeat the process (with the loser’s possibly diminished tokens) until one side has clearly triumphed over the other. At this point the conflict’s nature might have changed; see “Conflict Considerations,” below.

STEP 8: GAIN AND LOSE BELIEF

Assuming their followers were involved in the conflict or witnessed it (and at least suspected that their gods were involved), the deity on the winning side gains Belief as his followers’ faith in him is justified. The losing deity loses Belief, as her followers’ faith is shaken.

The Belief a god gains or loses in conflicts depends upon the scale of the conflict and his followers’ Spirit scores—specifically, the highest Spirit of the followers who survived (as long as enough of them participated to contribute in the conflict’s resolution; a single devout nun in a clash of 10,000 people doesn’t grant you more Spirit). Roll one die for their Spirit and multiply it by a number depending on the conflict’s scale, as shown on Table 5-3: Gaining and Losing Belief.

The system for losing Belief is slightly different, because followers with high Spirits are less likely to lose faith in their gods. Thus, when losing Belief as a result of a conflict, a god loses a specific amount of Belief, as shown on Table 5-3, but reduces this base number. Roll your followers’ Spirit (the highest Spirit of the followers involved in the conflict — again as long as enough of them were around to impact the conflict), multiply the result by a number dependent on the conflict’s scale (as shown below), then subtract that amount from the base belief lost.

TABLE 5 - 3: GAINING AND LOSING BELIEF

Scale	Base Belief Lost*	Multiplier
Individual	1	0 (1 Belief is gained or lost in all individual-scale conflicts)
Household	10	1
Village	20	2
Territory	30	3
Nation	40	4
Continent	50	5

* Roll your followers’ Spirit, multiply it by the multiplier, and subtract the result from the base Belief lost.

For example, a band of assassins slays a cabal of enemy priests. This is a household-scale conflict. The victorious deity rolls the assassins’ Spirit - a d6 - and scores a 4. He multiplies this by 1 and gains 4 Belief.

The losing deity loses 10 Belief by default, but rolls the priests’ Spirit to offset this. His priests were particularly devout, with Spirit scores of d6+2. He rolls an 8 and multiplies this by 1, so it remains an 8. He subtracts 8 from the base of 10 and ends up losing a mere 2 Belief - though disheartened in their final moments, his priests still maintained faith in their master.

INTRA-TRIBAL CONFLICTS

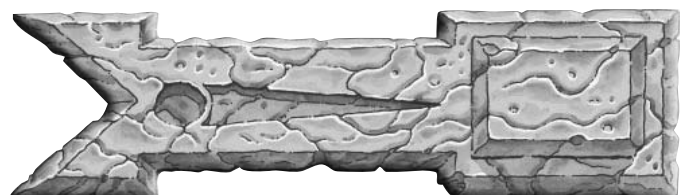
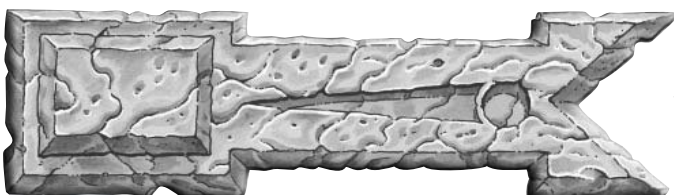
Conflicts among members of the same religion do not cause the god to gain or lose Belief (other than those he spends on Miracles during the conflict, of course). Thus, your followers give you Belief if they triumph over outside forces, but not if they fight among themselves.

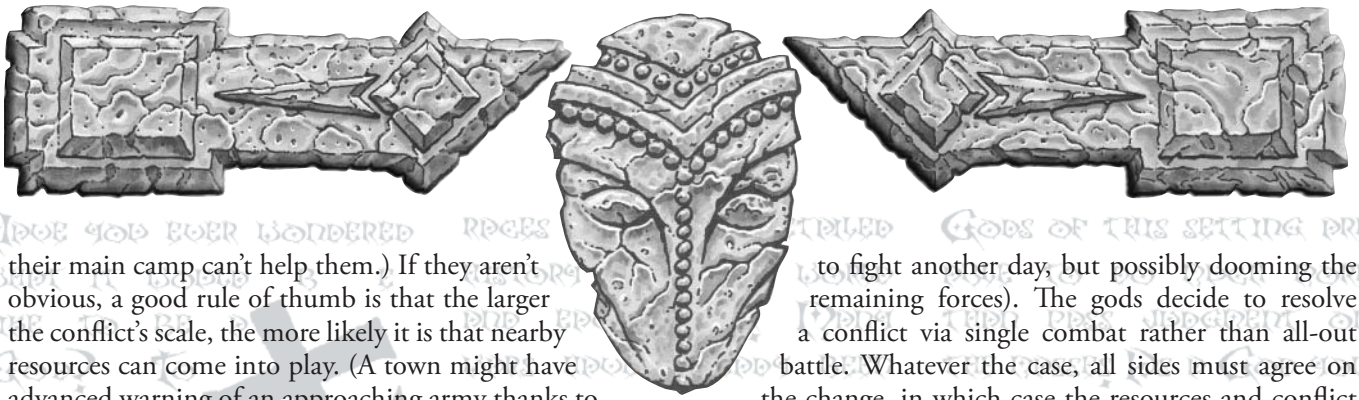
CONFLICT CONSIDERATIONS

In some cases, other considerations come into play during conflicts.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

The resources available to a conflict should be obvious. (If a scouting party runs into a hunting hydra, the soldiers in





their main camp can't help them.) If they aren't obvious, a good rule of thumb is that the larger the conflict's scale, the more likely it is that nearby resources can come into play. (A town might have advanced warning of an approaching army thanks to scouts or simply being able to see it, allowing them to send messengers to neighboring villages.)

The GM has the final say as to what resources are available. He might also make rulings based on special cases, like deciding that if the village holds out for four rounds of conflict, the nearby garrison can reach it.

WITHDRAWING RESOURCES

A group of frontiersmen stumbles onto a den of trolls. The frontiersmen want to escape, but the trolls don't want to let them go; the frontiersman's leader elects to stay and fight the trolls to delay them and allow his men to escape. What happens?

A side in a conflict may attempt to withdraw resources without losing them. Doing so is called *restarting* the conflict. Such a restatement can be either cooperative or competitive.

Cooperative Restatement: When all sides agree to a change in the resources, the result is a cooperative restatement. Two scouting parties from opposing nations bump into each other in the wilderness, but neither one really wants to fight; so after a few threats and boasts, they turn around and walk off. Some units of an army slip away and the enemy doesn't pursue (ensuring the escaping troops live

to fight another day, but possibly dooming the remaining forces). The gods decide to resolve a conflict via single combat rather than all-out battle. Whatever the case, all sides must agree on the change, in which case the resources and conflict are rearranged to take the alterations into account.

Competitive Restatement: A competitive restatement occurs when one side wishes to make a change the other side does not support. For instance, while one player might want some of his units to retreat from a battle, the other player may not want to let them go. In this case, one of two things can occur: The nature of the conflict can change, or the conflict can split into two (or more) different conflicts.

Conflict Change: If one side wishes to withdraw *all* of its resources and the other side wants to pursue, the conflict is no longer a battle—it is a pursuit. Such a change may mean that some resources are no longer appropriate (fixed fortifications and siege weapons, for instance), or change in value. (The heavily armored soldiers would have made short work of the lightly armed skirmishers, but they have trouble jogging after them.) The GM adjudicates such changes.

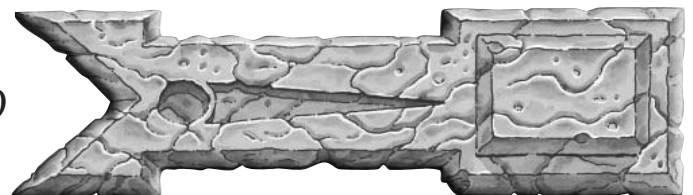
Conflict Split: If one side wishes to withdraw *some* of its resources, the other side must decide how to respond. For example, a couple trolls might stay to fight the lead frontiersman while the other trolls pursue his fleeing compatriots. In this case, the conflict has split into two separate conflicts: the trolls battling the single human, and the other trolls pursuing the other frontiersmen. Both conflicts involve the participants' Body scores, but the GM might rule (or find in ref) that trolls are slow, and give them a -1 penalty on their dice pools as they pursue. He might also rule that, if all the trolls ignore the remaining frontiersman, that he gets to attack them as they pass without retaliation (a conflict that, if he loses, carries no negative consequences).

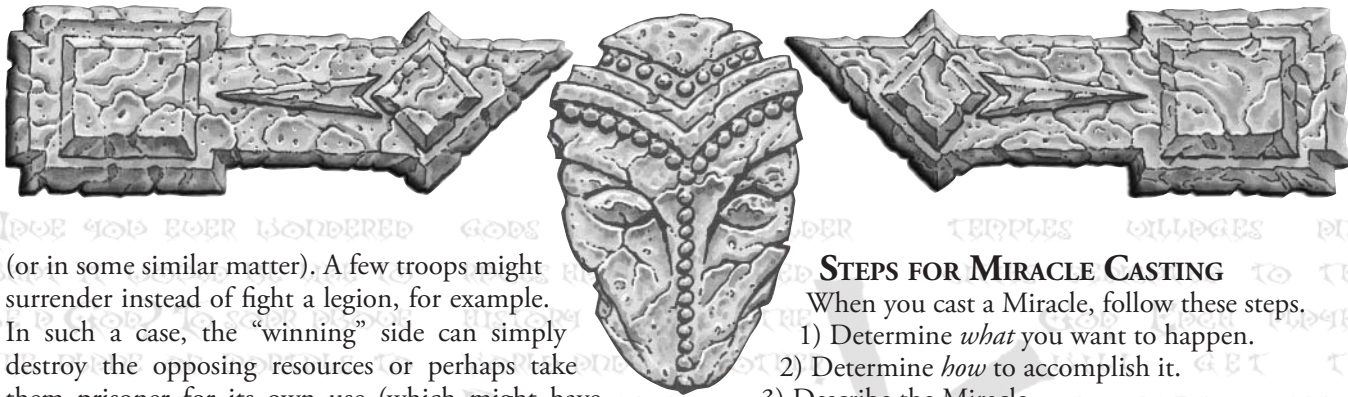
NO CONFLICT

One side can elect to put up no resistance. In this case, the other side can simply affect it as it originally planned

PURSUIT

When one side chases another, normally such a pursuit is again a conflict based on the participants' Body scores. The outcome of this conflict determines whether or not the pursuing side catches the fleeing side, and if so, how many. If the pursuing side *does* catch at least a portion of the fleeing side, another Body conflict - this one more violent - ensues.





(or in some similar matter). A few troops might surrender instead of fight a legion, for example. In such a case, the “winning” side can simply destroy the opposing resources or perhaps take them prisoner for its own use (which might have various repercussions later on).

DIFFICULT AND IMPOSSIBLE TASKS

Some tasks may be difficult. The peasant boy armed with a sword is going to have a tough time slaying the dragon. Such difficult conflicts are usually difficult based on discrepancies in numbers or (in this case) quality, and are represented by increasing or decreasing die sizes and numbers.

Some tasks, on the other hand, are impossible, and the GM can rule that a proposed conflict has no chance of succeeding and simply assume it fails. The street urchin isn't going to convince the hostile army to turn around and march the other way—at least, not without divine assistance. When you're a god, nothing is impossible.

CONFLICT WITH MULTIPLE SIDES

Some conflicts involve three (or more) sides. Each side rolls its own dice pool based on its resources. Allied sides combine their dice pools.

MIRACLES

Miracles are the heart and soul of this game. They are the driving force behind it and the primary way gods affect the world. The creation, description, and effects of Miracles make up a great deal of the game.

Miracles are the medium by which gods interact with the mortal world, unleashing the power gifted to them by the prayers of thousands in a single transcendent moment. How they use this incomparable power is most often the defining feature of the god—some prefer to work with such subtlety and grace than no mortal can detect their interference, while others strive to instill the maximum awe and respect in the witnesses when they unleash their Miracles. A Miracle can blast a mountain to fragments, or gentle a single deer—the temperament of the god and the belief of their followers are the only limiting factors.

STEPS FOR MIRACLE CASTING

When you cast a Miracle, follow these steps.

- 1) Determine *what* you want to happen.
- 2) Determine *how* to accomplish it.
- 3) Describe the Miracle.
- 4) Determine the Miracle's cost.
- 5) Spend Belief.
- 6) The Miracle occurs!
- 7) ...But other gods counter it.
- 8) Repeat.

COMMON MIRACLES

Of course, no Miracle is really *common*, but gods have a number of miraculous abilities that are easier to cast than those you create on the fly. Such Miracles include manifesting yourself physically on the Known World, listening to your people's prayers, and casting your awareness about the mortal world. Some cost Belief, while some don't.

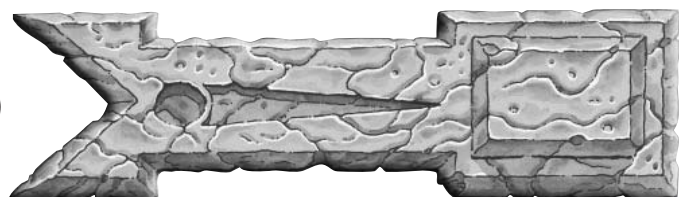
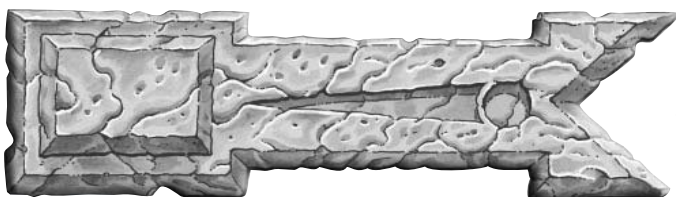
See Chapter 4 - Character Creation for more information on these abilities, which all gods possess.

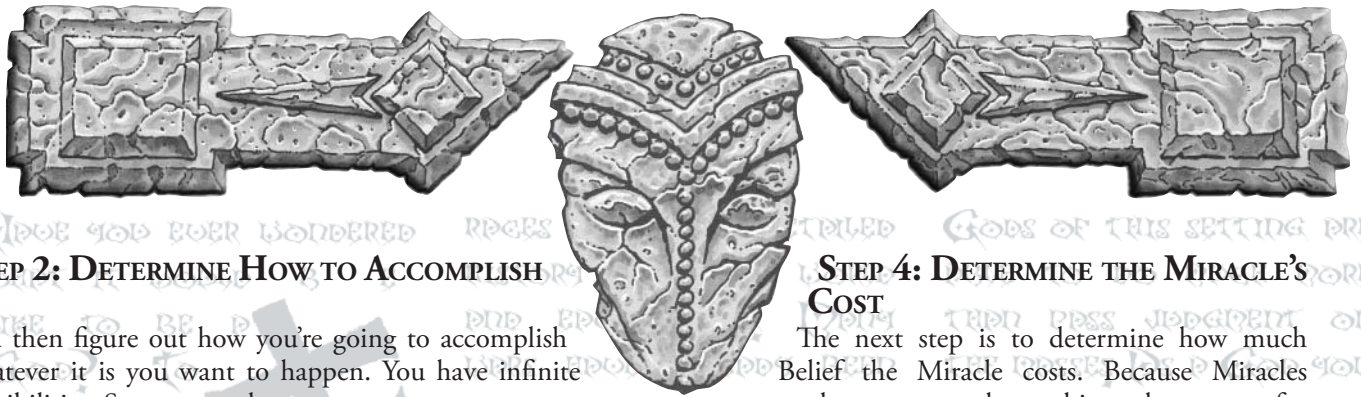
STEP 1: DETERMINE WHAT YOU WANT TO HAPPEN

This step should be obvious, but in some cases it might not be. The first step is to identify the problem, then determine what you want to do to solve it. You might find it easiest to begin with the words “I want.” This step is basic; it's not “I want the scouts to become mighty warriors,” it's “I want the scouts to be able to kill these trolls.” In many cases, you might combine this step and step 2, and sometimes what you want might be so obvious that you skip right past step 1.

Some examples of things you might think to yourself during this step are:

- I want more people in my tribe.
- I want those barbarians to start worshipping me.
- I want the mountain lions to stop eating my people's sheep.
- I want the opposing army to no longer be a threat.
- I want to eliminate my rival's followers.





STEP 2: DETERMINE HOW TO ACCOMPLISH IT

You then figure out how you're going to accomplish whatever it is you want to happen. You have infinite possibilities. Some examples:

- Make your people supernaturally more fertile.
- Send priests with the power to perform magic to preach to the barbarians.
- Cause landslides that kill the mountain lions.
- The day turns to night, the skies thunder, and a mighty voice tells the opposing army to “turn back, or face the wrath of the gods!”
- Permanently turn all of your rival's followers into goats.

Obviously, you have many different avenues when attempting to solve a problem. If you want to eliminate your rival's followers, you can turn them all into goats; or you can send a supernatural disease to decimate their population; or you can kill their crops and livestock to force them to move; or you can cause a tidal wave that crushes their village; or you can make the nearby barbarians believe that they have a new set of enemies; and so on.

Exactly *how* you accomplish your ends is largely a matter of personal style, inclination, and domain. Gods are more likely to use methods that they, by nature, favor. A god of death is likely to simply kill his rival's followers rather than drive them away, while a god of the sun might cause a heat wave that makes them migrate to cooler climes. How gods solve their problems and achieve their goals distinguishes and characterizes them.

STEP 3: DESCRIBE THE MIRACLE

Steps 1 and 2 are about brainstorming; step 3 is when you tell the GM what happens. “All of the people in that town turn into goats,” for example, or “I inflict the town prostitute with a horrible disease that makes your hair fall out, then your eyes gum up, then kills you through pneumatic paralysis. Then I sit back and cackle.” Evocative and clever descriptions can help you if something untoward happens that might foil your Miracle. How the Miracle resolves is based on this description as well, so when you tell the GM what happens, that's the “official” version of your Miracle.

STEP 4: DETERMINE THE MIRACLE'S COST

The next step is to determine how much Belief the Miracle costs. Because Miracles can do pretty much anything, the system for determining their costs is elaborate and has its own series of steps.

To determine how much a Miracle costs, do the following.

- 1) Determine the Miracle's base cost.
- 2) Determine the Miracle's cost factor.
- 3) Determine the Miracle's total cost.

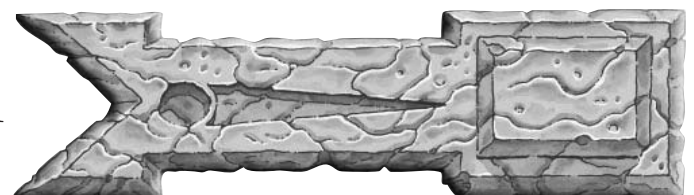
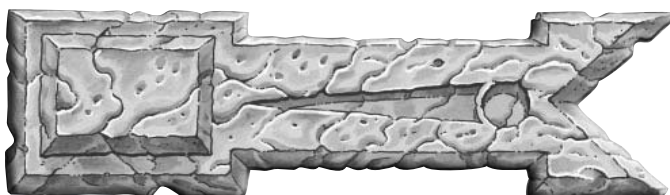
MIRACLE COST STEP 1: BASE COST

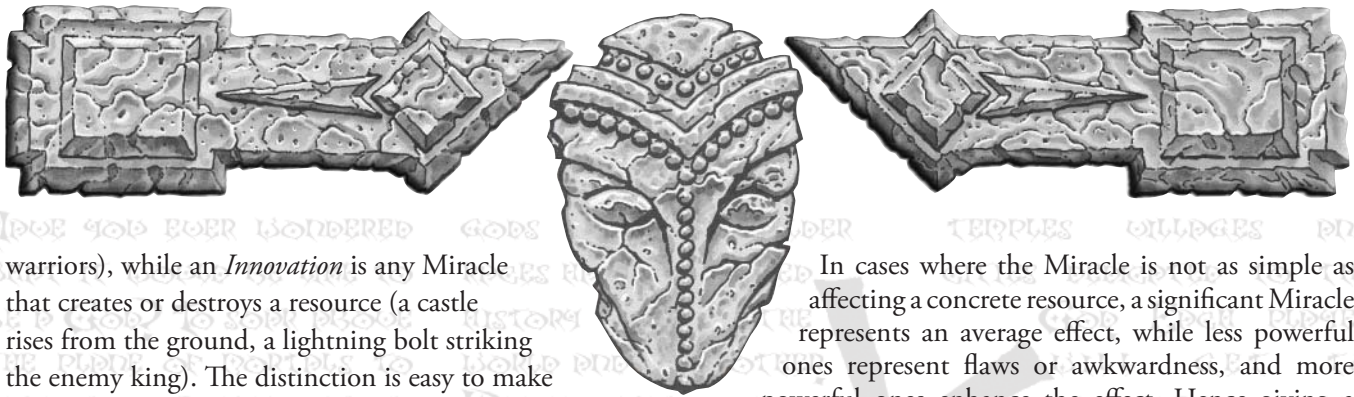
The first step is to determine the Miracle's *base cost*. The Miracle's base cost depends on two elements: its effect (alteration or innovation), and its power (trivial, minor, significant, major, or legendary). Once you know the Miracle's effect and power, consult Table 5-4: Miracle Base Cost to determine its base cost.

ALTERATION MIRACLES	
Power	Base Cost
Trivial	2
Minor	3
Significant	4
Major	5
Legendary	6
INNOVATION MIRACLES	
Power	Base Cost
Trivial	4
Minor	5
Significant	6
Major	7
Legendary	8

Effect: All Miracles are either alterations or innovations.

An *Alteration* is any Miracle that enhances or degrades an existing resource (befuddling the mind of a group of hunters, golden armor magically appearing on a band of





warriors), while an *Innovation* is any Miracle that creates or destroys a resource (a castle rises from the ground, a lightning bolt striking the enemy king). The distinction is easy to make during conflict resolution—Alterations increase or decrease dice sizes, while Innovations grant dice or destroy/cancel dice. Outside conflict resolution the same metrics are used to determine which is which, the final decision being up to the GM.

Power: A Miracle's power defines how impressive and effective it is. A trivial alteration is equivalent to turning an unskilled individual into a skilled one at some task, while a major alteration could give those same unskilled individual abilities on par with the greatest performers of that task to have ever lived. See the "Miracles and Conflicts" sidebar for a definition of how this translates into dice types.

In cases where the Miracle is not as simple as affecting a concrete resource, a significant Miracle represents an average effect, while less powerful ones represent flaws or awkwardness, and more powerful ones enhance the effect. Hence giving a human the power of flight on par with that of the birds would be a significant innovation (an innovation because humans cannot fly naturally, so this is a new effect). Casting it at a trivial level would mean the recipient would require a significant run-up to get off the ground, and would be able to fly only slowly and awkwardly. A legendary level of the Miracle would enable the recipient to fly at incredible speeds and altitudes, grant impressive maneuverability, and allow flight even under conditions of terrible storms.

MIRACLES AND CONFLICTS

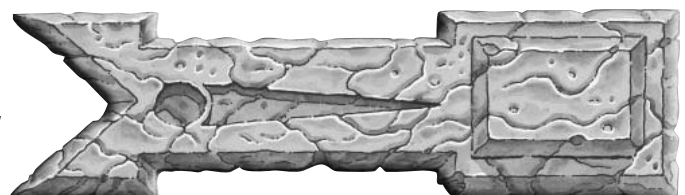
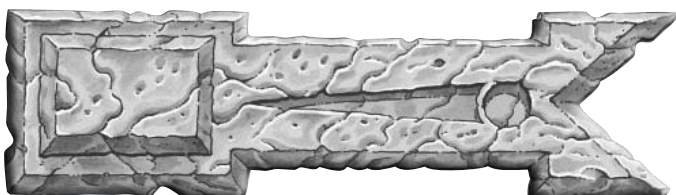
When you cast a Miracle, do you roll dice? If you create a fire to burn a forest, and no other god does anything to stop you, does the forest burn? If you make a gigantic flaming meteor plummet from the sky on a collection of barbarian tents, do the barbarians automatically get smashed?

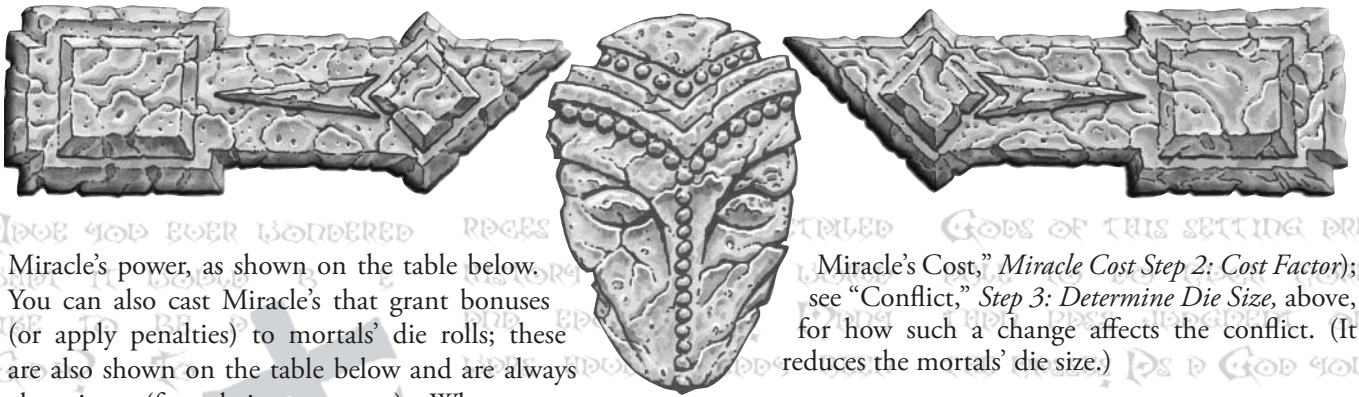
The answer: It depends. If your Miracle does not affect people (or other creatures), you don't need to roll dice. It's not a conflict. If no other god counters your forest fire Miracle, the forest burns.

If your Miracle *does* affect people (or other creatures), and the effects would be harmful or change them in some way they might not like (like converting them to your worship), you *do* need to roll dice; the barbarians have a chance of leaping out of the way before the meteor clobbers them. Consult "Conflict," above for information on how to resolve such conflicts.

If your Miracle causes such a conflict, it is most likely a matter of mortals resisting what you try to do to them. The mortals roll dice according to their appropriate statistic: for example, Body for leaping away from a meteor or resisting a poison, Mind for resisting mental control, or Spirit to keep their faith in the face of hardship or fear.

The size of the die (or dice) you roll depends on whether the Miracle is an alteration or an innovation and on the





Miracle's power, as shown on the table below. You can also cast Miracles that grant bonuses (or apply penalties) to mortals' die rolls; these are also shown on the table below and are always alterations (for obvious reasons). Whatever you create or alter gets the indicated dice (or the indicated bonuses or penalties) for its Body, Mind, and Spirit scores. Therefore, if you cast a legendary innovation to create an enormous, Neanderthal giant, it has d12s for Body, Mind, and Spirit.

Miracle's Cost," *Miracle Cost Step 2: Cost Factor*); see "Conflict," *Step 3: Determine Die Size*, above, for how such a change affects the conflict. (It reduces the mortals' die size.)

When affecting up to a hundred mortals, roll separately against each group of 10 (or portion thereof). When affecting from a hundred to a thousand mortals, roll separately against each group of 100, and so on. Thus, some of the barbarians might make it out alive while the meteor crushes the rest.

INNOVATION MIRACLES	
<i>Miracle's Power</i>	<i>Die Size</i>
Trivial	d4
Minor	d6
Significant	d8
Major	d10
Legendary	d12
ALTERATION MIRACLES	
<i>Miracle's Power</i>	<i>Die Size Increase or Decrease Steps*</i>
Trivial	No effect
Minor	One step
Significant	Two steps
Major	Three steps
Legendary	Four steps
<i>Miracle's Power</i>	<i>Bonus (or penalty) to Die Roll†</i>
Trivial	No effect
Minor	+1 (or -1)
Significant	+2 (or -2)
Major	+3 (or -3)
Legendary	+4 (or -4)

COMBINED MIRACLES

You can combine several Miracles into a single Miracle. For example, if you want the miners' coal to form into humanoid shapes and mine the nearby gold ore, and want to give these constructs a Body of d8+2, that's a significant innovation (to create the coal miners with a Body of d8) and a significant alteration (to give them a bonus of +2). Calculate the cost for each one separately, then add them together.

CONFLICTS AND SCALE

Five saboteurs are sneaking into tunnels beneath your city's walls in order to bring them down. Your awareness happens to be there, so you do something to stop them: The ceiling drips down to absorb them, then retracts. You cast the Miracle as a significant innovation. It's individual scale, so the saboteurs will be rolling 5d6 (their Body is d6) to resist. You'll be rolling d8s... but how many? Just one?

In general, when you cast a Miracle that creates a conflict, your number of dice is equal to the number of dice the other side rolls. (So, in the above example, you roll 5d8.) In cases where you compete against more than one side, you roll a number of dice equal to the largest dice pool among your opponents.

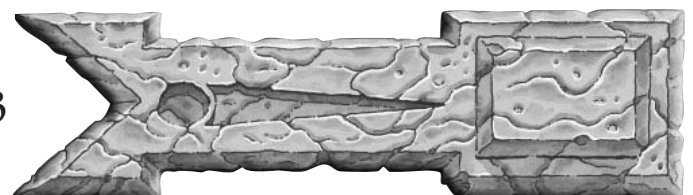
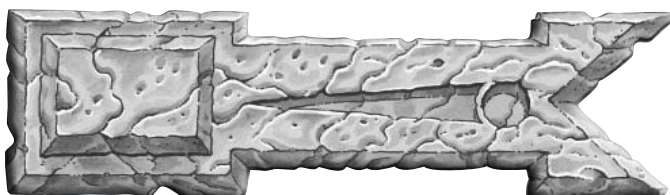
CONVERTING FOLLOWERS

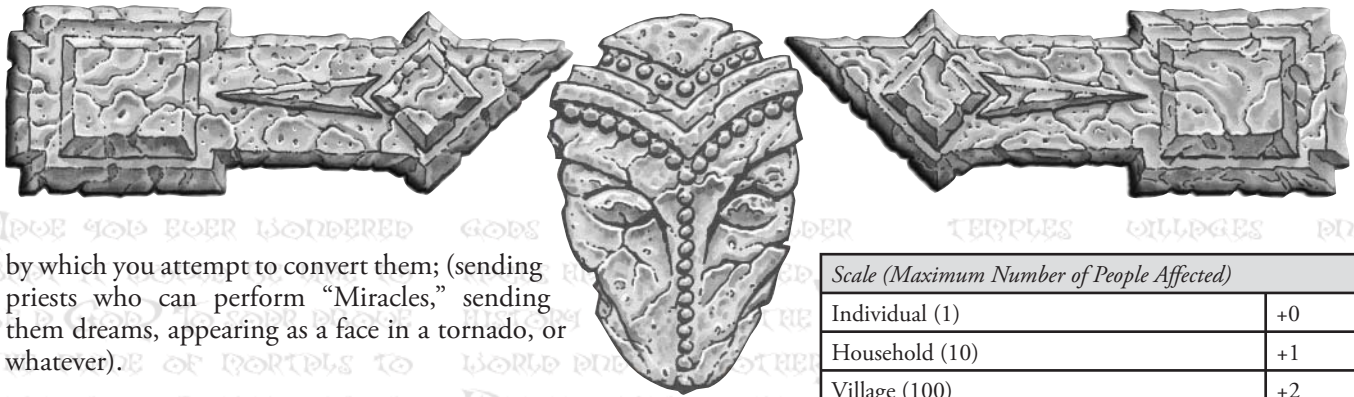
One particular sort of conflict is when you attempt to convert people to your worship. Since followers provide gods with power, you're likely to want more of them.

Whenever you attempt to convert a person or group of people to become new followers, the result is a conflict. The mortals roll their Spirit to resist, no matter the method.

† The maximum bonus or penalty for any die roll is one-half the maximum number on that die. So, a d6 can have a maximum bonus of +3 (and a maximum penalty of -3). A d10 can have a maximum bonus of +5.

If you want to be assured of your Miracle's effects (you *really, really* want the meteor to smash the barbarians), you can increase the Miracle's scale (see "Step 4: Determine the





by which you attempt to convert them; (sending priests who can perform “Miracles,” sending them dreams, appearing as a face in a tornado, or whatever).

MIRACLE COST STEP 2: COST FACTOR

After you determine the Miracle’s base cost, determine its *cost factor*. The Miracle’s cost factor is unrelated to its base cost, but you’ll use it to determine its total cost.

The Miracle’s cost factor depends on its duration, your domain, your inclinations, the location in which it occurs, and its scale. Table 5-5: Miracle Cost Factor summarizes these costs; an explanation of each element appears below.

Scale (Maximum Number of People Affected)	
Individual (1)	+0
Household (10)	+1
Village (100)	+2
Territory (1,000)	+3
Nation (10,000)	+4
Continent (100,000+)	+5
* The cost factor cannot drop below 1.	

TABLE 5 - 5: MIRACLE COST FACTOR	
Aspect	Cost Factor
<i>Duration</i>	
Instant	+0
One conflict or one week	+1
One season (three months)	+2
One year or permanent†	+3
† Permanent Miracles require a constant expenditure of Belief.	
<i>Domain</i>	
The Miracle is within your primary domain.	-2
The Miracle is within one of your secondary domains.	-1
<i>Inclinations</i>	
You are in harmony with the Miracle’s style.†	-1
You are in balance with the Miracle’s style.†	+0
You are in opposition to the Miracle’s style.†	+1
† See the “Miracle Styles” sidebar for an explanation of Miracle styles.	
<i>Location</i>	
The Miracle occurs on or in a location you or your followers control.	+0
The Miracle occurs on or in a location that no god controls.	+1
The Miracle occurs on or in a location that another god (or his followers) controls.	+2

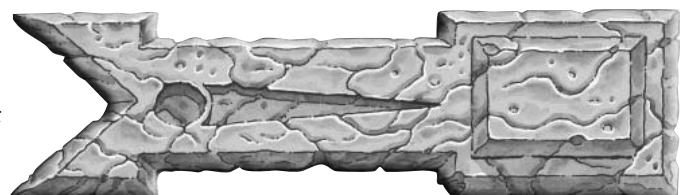
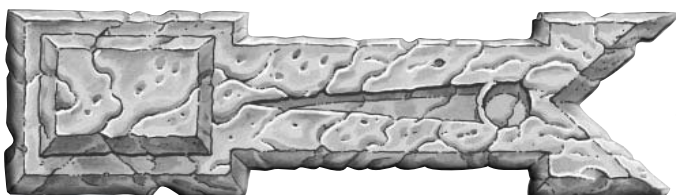
Duration: Duration represents how long the miraculous effects persist. In the case of +1, the Miracle lasts for the duration of a conflict if used during conflict resolution, or one week outside it.

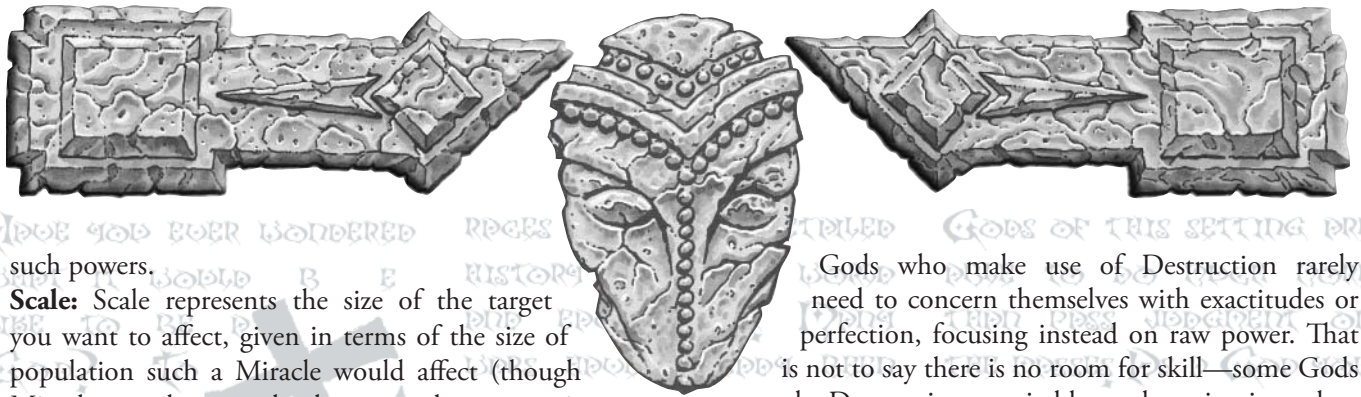
A permanent Miracle requires Belief expenditure every year. Each year after you cast the Miracle, you must spend Belief to maintain it. The Belief you spend in this way is the same amount you would spend to cast the Miracle again, except the cost factor is 1 less.

Domain: Domain represents the increased ease of casting Miracles that fall within the domain of a god—this is the very aspect of the world that they were brought into being to exert control over, and as such it resonates through their very being, and responds to their touch. This reduction in cost factor is applicable to both Miracles that fall under the primary and secondary domains (though it can only be applied once per Miracle, even if the Miracle should happen to fall within two overlapping areas of domain).

Inclinations: Inclination gives a reduced or increased cost depending on the style of Miracle and your inclinations—whether you are in harmony with the Miracle’s style, in balance with it, or in opposition to it. See the “Miracle Styles” sidebar for more information.

Location: Location represents the fact that a god finds it easier to cast Miracles in regions he controls—the faith of his followers saturates the land, making it respond more readily to his touch. In contrast, when casting Miracles in lands controlled by a rival god, the caster must overcome this same aura of belief, making it more challenging to use





such powers.

Scale: Scale represents the size of the target you want to affect, given in terms of the size of population such a Miracle would affect (though Miracles can also target lands or any other appropriate subject of a commensurate scale). For instance, during a conflict, affecting 100 soldiers would be a Miracle with a scale factor of +2. Affecting more than one such resource would require a factor of +3.

MIRACLE STYLES

Four types of Miracles exist, called the Miracles' *styles*: creation, destruction, transformation, and control. Each has a different effect.

Creation: The deities who specialize in it consider Creation the purest form of Miracle. Miracles of Creation do not work with existing matter or circumstances, instead sculpting new and complex forms from base elements or from pure will. To excel at the matter of Creation, a deity must cultivate an enormous depth of focus to allow them to mould every tiny detail exactly as they desire it, coupled with a total understanding of every aspect of the form they seek to create.

Those deities who disdain the art of Creation often consider its practitioners too divorced from the mundane world, creating their own beings from scratch rather than using the entities and materials available. Some even consider the artistry and focus required for Creation wasteful and inefficient, preferring the elegance of simply altering the existing situation.

Streams erupting from the ground, divine golden armor appearing on the faithful, clay warriors rising from the ground to oppose an invading enemy, and a vision of their God appearing before their chosen people are all examples of Miracles of Creation. Note that almost all Creation Miracles are innovations.

Destruction: Miracles of Destruction are unmatched for the spectacle they provide. The powers of Destruction focus on getting the job done in the most direct way possible.

Gods who make use of Destruction rarely need to concern themselves with exactitudes or perfection, focusing instead on raw power. That is not to say there is no room for skill—some Gods make Destruction a veritable art, knowing just when and how to best apply force.

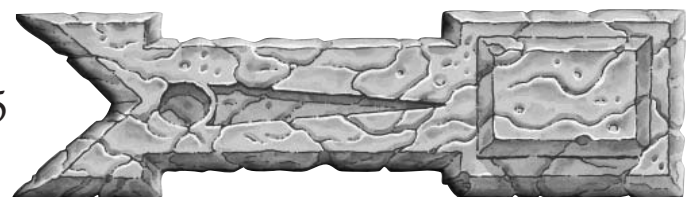
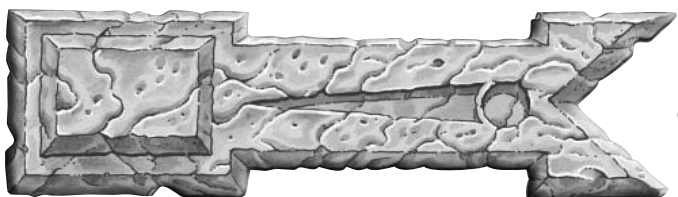
Deities who prefer Destruction over other forms of Miracle are often dismissed by other gods as ignorant or overly destructive, solving every problem through destructive brute force rather than finding a more intelligent solution. While undeniably impressive, many gods find the showy and overpowering Miracles of Destruction wasteful of Belief, and a crude method of instilling fear and loyalty in their followers.

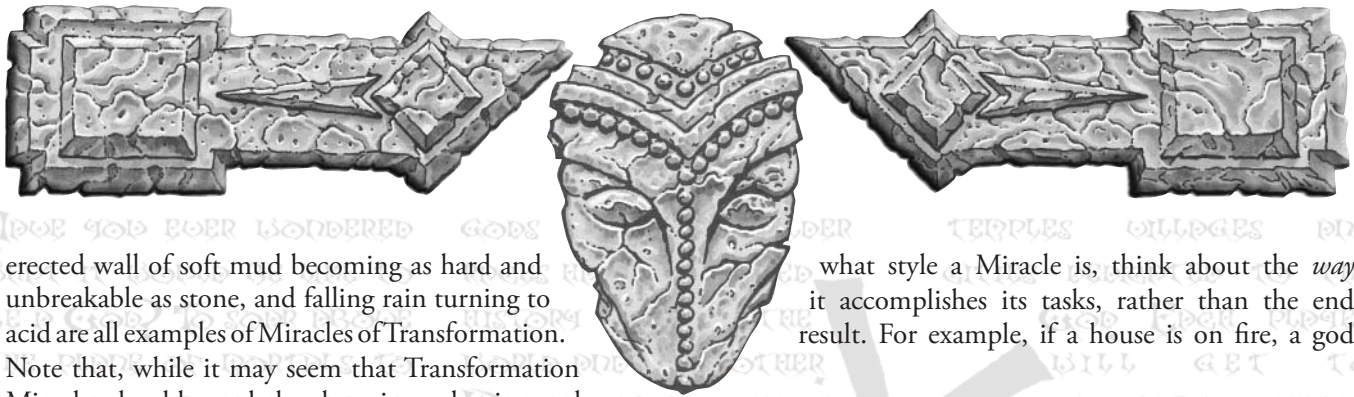
Rains of fire falling from the sky, weapons crumbling into dust, a shoelace breaking, and a terrible storm tearing the roofs from houses are all examples of Miracles of Destruction.

Transformation: Gods who make use of Miracles of Transformation work by molding existing substances into new forms, reshaping it to better suit their needs. More than any other type, use of this style of Miracle requires flexibility on the part of the deity, determining how to make the smallest possible change to achieve their ends. However, its practitioners consider it the most artful of Miracles, with a skilled God able to turn things to his end with a few subtle tweaks and changes.

Those deities who dislike Transformation Miracles tend to consider the gods who practice too dependant on mundane resources and unable to fully impose their own will on reality, depending instead on perverting existing forms. As such some gods consider it beneath them to traffic in the mundane to this extent, and avoid the style as distasteful. Miracles of Transformation can only be used when an analogous substance is present: a Miracle of Transformation could turn a rock into ice, but not into a rat—the differences are too great.

A mouse transformed into a beautiful woman, a forest coming alive to grapple and crush a scouting party, a hastily





erected wall of soft mud becoming as hard and unbreakable as stone, and falling rain turning to acid are all examples of Miracles of Transformation.

Note that, while it may seem that Transformation Miracles should mostly be alterations, that is not the case; remember, any Miracle that creates dice in a conflict where none existed before (such as a toad turning into a burly wrestler) is an innovation, not an alteration.

Control: Widely considered the most subtle of styles, deities who prefer Miracles of Control specialize in the art of domination and enhancement of the senses and of the mind in all its forms. The gods who make use of these Miracles tend to be those who pay the most attention to mortals and to the mundane realm: a skilled deity can completely alter thoughts, emotions, and memories without the subject ever suspecting a change was made. Such gods often consider deities who prefer different styles to be inefficient and inelegant, expending enormous effort when a simple “attitude adjustment” could get the job done.

Gods who shy away from Control usually do so because of the need to so fully understand the minds of mundane creatures, finding thinking in such a limited fashion alien or demeaning, while a few prefer not to meddle for ethical reasons, disliking with the idea of tampering with the thoughts of those who trust and worship them.

Granting a prophet the ability to scry nearby locations, turning a loyal regiment’s minds to mutiny in an instant, giving a weapon the ability to speak and reason, and removing all memories of an attack on them from the minds of a village are all Miracles of Control. Most Control Miracles are alterations, but those that affect mindless creatures and objects (such as the speaking and thinking weapon described above) are innovations.

MANY USES

In most cases, through creative description and Miracle use, you can use a Miracle of *any* style to solve a problem. Such ingenuity is important for gods. When deciding

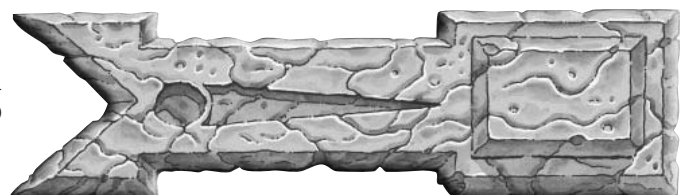
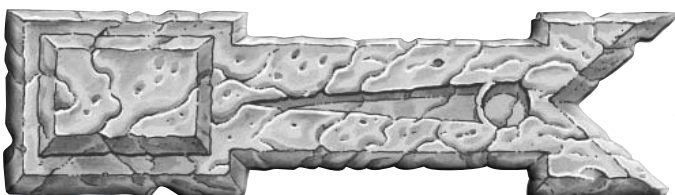
what style a Miracle is, think about the *way* it accomplishes its tasks, rather than the end result. For example, if a house is on fire, a god

LASTING EFFECTS

Some Miracles are over the instant they occur, while others take hours or even months for their effects to be fully felt. No matter the duration, once they end the exact type of Miracle will determine what effects persist. The guidelines are as follows:

- All obviously unnatural effects cease. Once a Miracle that created a giant bear formed from black storm-clouds ends, the bear vanishes as the clouds disperse, and a supernaturally induced rage will wear off once the Miracle has run its course.
- Miraculously created matter vanishes, even if it was entirely mundane in form and function – swords and shield created for an army vanish once the power ceases to flow through them.
- Other changes in matter vanish unless the original object could legitimately assume that form – the mouse transformed into a beautiful princess returns to animal form, but a branch twisted into a different shape remains that way.
- All secondary effects persist. For instance, if a magically created spear kills someone, they remain dead, and all other damage inflicted by the spear persists after the Miracle ends and the spear vanishes, or if a Creation Miracle causes a field to sprout in a matter of seconds, the crops will remain but the field will no longer be supernaturally fertile.

As a result, the style and event does matter – a solid gold statue created from nothingness will return to nothing once the effect wears off, but a huge block of gold miraculously sculpted into an identical statue would persist until time (or theft) removed it mundanely.





might use any one of the four styles to extinguish it.

Creation: With a sharp crack the ground splits asunder as a natural well opens not five meters from the blaze, not only allowing villagers to douse the blaze, but providing a handy source of pure water in perpetuity.

Destruction: Thunder rumbles and the heavens open as rain begins to fall in torrents, rapidly extinguishing the fire with no need for any inhabitant to lift a finger.

Transformation: Subtle zephyrs shift and change, slowly at first, but soon a powerful wind is howling down the valley, blowing out the fire.

Control: An eerie piping is heard, and forest animals race from every corner of the clearing, creatures from hares to deer mindlessly charging through the village and flinging their bodies onto the fire until it is smothered. Not only is the fire out, but the inhabitants eat well that night!

MIRACLE COST STEP 3: TOTAL COST

Once you determine the Miracle's base cost and cost factor, determining its total cost is easy. Consult Table #–6 Cost Factor Multiplier: The table provides a number; multiply the base cost by this number. The result is the Miracle's total cost in Belief.

TABLE 5 - 6: COST FACTOR MULTIPLIER												
Cost Factor:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Multiply the Base Cost By:	x1	x2	x4	x8	x15	x30	x60	x125	x250	x500	x1,000	x2,000

For example, Barok casts a Miracle with a base cost of 5 (it is a minor innovation) and a cost factor of 3 (it affects another god's territory for one week; the other cost factor elements do not apply). Consulting Table #–6, Barok's player sees that if a Miracle has a cost factor of 3, we should multiply the base cost of 5 by 4. He does the math: $5 \times 4 = 20$, so the Miracle costs Barok 20 Belief.

STEP 5: SPEND BELIEF

Now that you know how much Belief the Miracle costs, spend it! Mark off the appropriate amount of Belief from your character sheet. Also, if the Miracle directly helps your followers, be sure to write down how much Belief you spend on the Miracle; your character sheet has a spot for that, too. This total will increase throughout the year. During your holy season, you

MIRACLES IN THE CELESTIAL REALM

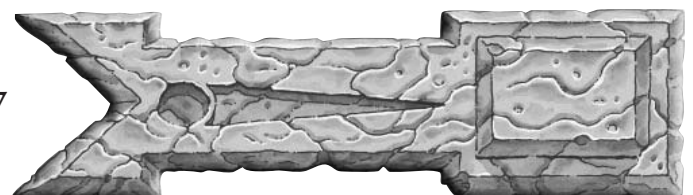
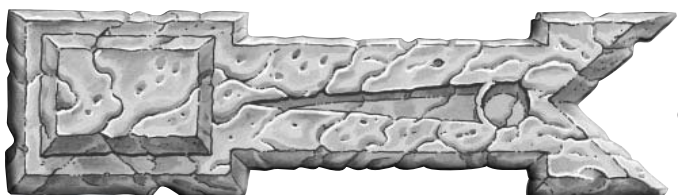
Gods can use Miracles in the Celestial Realm just as they can on the Known World, but the Celestial Realm's heavenly properties make doing so easier—and, in some cases, fruitless.

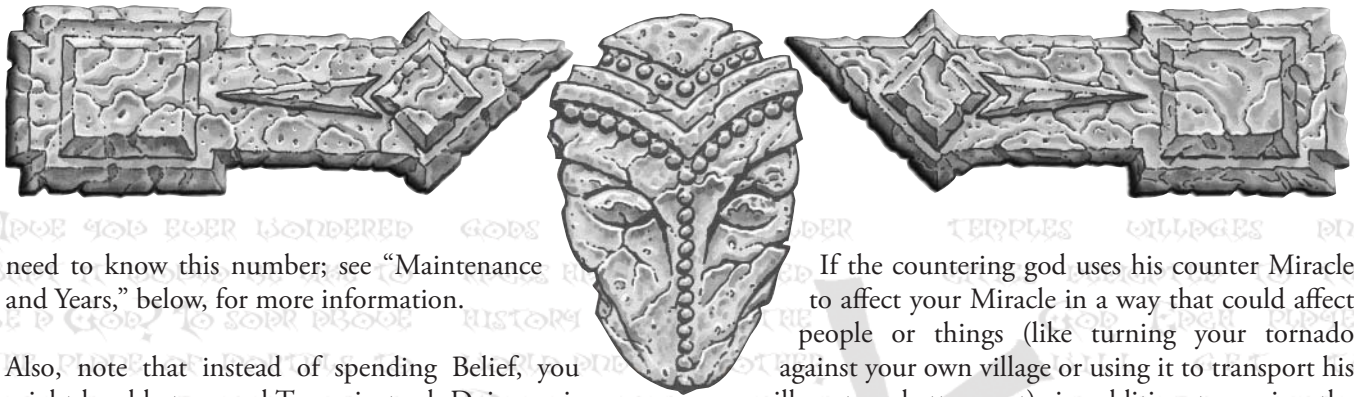
One of the most important aspects of the Celestial Realm is its constant nature. Though Miracles can cause change and even destroy other gods temporarily, in time—usually not too much—the Celestial Realm returns to its normal state. A destroyed god's body eventually reforms. You cannot permanently eliminate deities in the Celestial Realm, which is why most warring gods focus their exertions on their followers in the Known World.

Every god has a specific domain in the Celestial Realm, which is located in a particular seasonal sphere (winter, spring, summer, or autumn). The god can cast Miracles that affect this seasonal sphere at no cost, and in her domain, the effects are everlasting. Of course, these Miracles can affect only the Celestial Realm and the god's domain; they cannot affect the Known World in any way.

A god can cast Miracles that affect the rest of the Celestial Realm (areas outside her chosen season) as well; such Miracles cost half their normal Belief (round up). In these other areas, the god's miraculous effects fade away in time (normal duration rules apply).

See ref for more information about the Celestial Realm.





need to know this number; see “Maintenance and Years,” below, for more information.

Also, note that instead of spending Belief, you might be able to spend Terror instead. Doing so is a dangerous path; see “Terror,” below, for more details.

STEP 6: THE MIRACLE OCCURS!

With the Belief spent, the Miracle comes into effect! Before it can actually work its magic, though (before the storm hits the village, before the people have a chance to use their weapons, before the queen carries out her compulsion), other gods have a chance to counter it.

STEP 7: ...BUT OTHER GODS COUNTER IT

Other gods who are aware of what’s going on have a chance to do something about your Miracle. Miracle-countering is common among deities and often leads to impressive displays.

A god counters your Miracle with a Miracle of his own. This Miracle can take any sort of appearance the god wishes. For example, you cast a Miracle to create a tornado to ravage the village of a rival god’s followers. That god could counter your Miracle in any number of ways, such as the following:

- A celestial eagle swoops in, grabs the tornado in its talons, and carries it away.
- Wind currents shift, forcing the tornado away from the village—or perhaps toward yours.
- One of the townsfolk ascends to the top of the village wall and breathes in... and in and in, sucking in the tornado, then letting out a small cough.
- The tornado parts as it approaches the village, passing harmlessly along either side.
- The tornado lifts the village up, spins it about, and then places it back down—miraculously intact, its people unharmed—and perhaps in a new and more bountiful land.

Cost to Counter: The countering god determines the counter Miracle’s cost in the normal way. The scale is always the same (or larger) than the scale of the original Miracle.

If the countering god uses his counter Miracle to affect your Miracle in a way that could affect people or things (like turning your tornado against your own village or using it to transport his village to a better spot), in addition to paying the countering cost, he must pay Belief as if he had cast a Miracle to accomplish this other task. For example, he would have to spend Belief to create a tornado to ravage *your* village, or to lift a village and move it. However, he does get two benefits to reduce this cost: such a Miracle is always an alteration (rather than an innovation), and he reduces the cost factor by -1 .

STEP 8: REPEAT

If no other god countered your Miracle, whatever you wanted to do happened. If another god countered your Miracle, you may need to counter his. In any case, you might want something else to happen—so return to step 1.

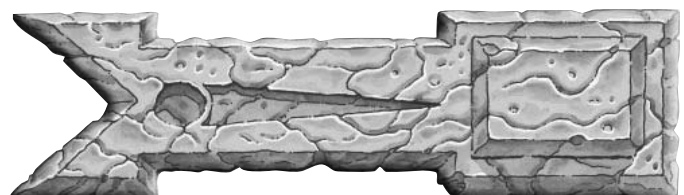
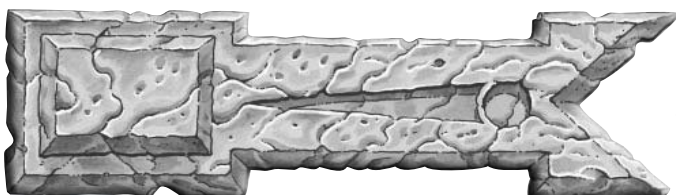
HEROES AND ARTIFACTS

Throughout the Known World, gods empower people and objects with divine power. These champions, and the people wielding these objects, fight for their god’s cause, spreading his word and glory wherever they go. These champions are *heroes*, and these objects are *artifacts*.

Such empowered resources provide a focal point for the tribe to venerate and for the enemies to fear—while their God is often distant and obscured by ritual and a hierarchy of priests, heroes and artifacts are the visible examples of divine power in the mortal realm.

The only difference between a hero and an artifact is a narrative one—heroes are individuals who have been empowered by their god, while artifacts are objects similarly filled with divine power, either created wholesale from nothing, or mundane objects imbued with a Miracle. Mechanically the two are treated identically.

Note that the word “hero” defines any mortal follower empowered with these rules, from a simple priest-healer with the ability to soothe minor ailments to a blazing champion with the strength of a thousand soldiers.





CREATION

Creating a hero or artifact is a Miracle and works much like any other Miracle. However, heroes and artifacts have certain qualities that distinguish them from other Miracles.

GRANT ABILITIES

Heroes and artifacts are ways for you to work your will on the world without constantly using Miracles to accomplish your ends. In some ways, creating a hero or artifact is like combining several Miracles into one. When you empower a hero or artifact, you grant him (or it) certain abilities. Granting the hero abilities is like using the appropriate Miracles yourself, and costs the normal amount of Belief. Unless you give the hero or artifact a disadvantage, it can use its granted abilities whenever it likes, as often as it likes.

For example, if you want your hero to be able to cure disease with a touch, you spend Belief as if *you* had cast a Miracle to cure an individual of disease. Of course, the benefit of creating a hero with this ability is that he can move around, curing disease as he desires. The drawback is that heroes tend to cost a lot of Belief and they are more vulnerable than you.

PERMANENT DURATION

Creating a hero or artifact is a permanent-duration Miracle. If you want a hero who remains a hero for only a little bit and then turns normal again, he's not really a *hero* (at least, not in game terms); he's a mortal you temporarily empower with divine energy, and you use the normal Miracle rules for that.

If you want to grant a hero or artifact an ability that itself has a lengthy duration (for example, you want a master mason who can cause building to sprout from the ground and last for a season), that's an additional duration factor you must build into the Miracle. (In this case, the cost factor is +3 for a permanent Miracle — the hero — and another +2 for the season-long ability.)

SCALE

A common use for heroes and artifacts is to grant a mortal the ability to slay armies, govern nations, or inspire people

by herself. If you grant a mortal such ability, the Miracle is not of an individual scale, but rather of a scale appropriate to the number of people you want the hero to emulate. For example, if you create a champion who fights with the strength of ten soldiers, that's a household-scale Miracle. If you create a priest-queen with the ability to rule a kingdom of 10,000 people, that might *seem* to be a nation-scale Miracle, but she's not actually emulating all 10,000 of her subjects, she's just emulating all the bureaucrats who would assist her. So, she normally she might need several hundred bureaucrats to govern the nation; emulating them all so she can govern alone is therefore a village-scale Miracle. Note that such a hero can literally dispense with all bureaucracy and run the nation single-handedly.

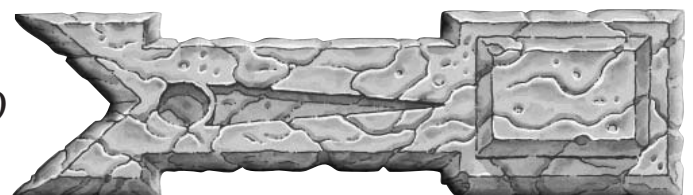
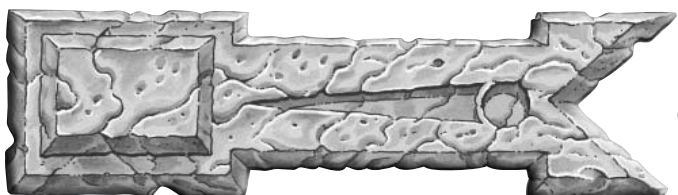
Note that the number of dice a hero rolls might vary depending on the opposition he faces (see the "Miracles and Conflicts" sidebar, *Conflicts and Scale*). Therefore, if you imbue a hero to fight with the strength of ten people (a household scale Miracle), he actually fights with the strength of 10–90 people: if he's fighting ten people, you'll roll one die, and if he's fighting ninety, you'll roll 9 (your number of dice are equal to your opponent's).

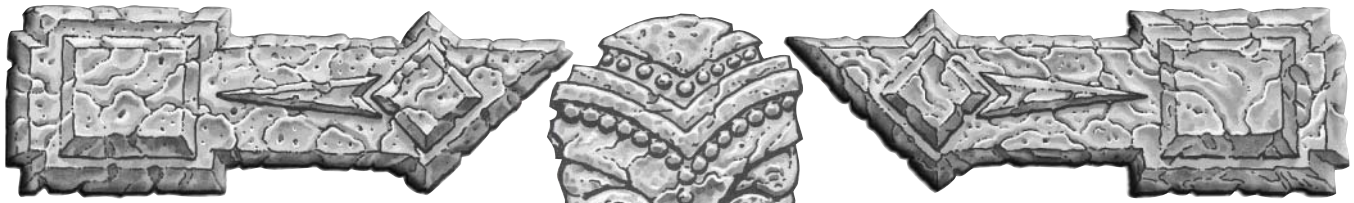
NEW ABILITY COST

Miracles that enhance a mortal's existing abilities cost the normal amount of Belief for a Miracle of the appropriate scale, and they are always alterations (as opposed to innovations). For example, mortals can normally fight, so empowering a hero with the ability to fight as well as a hundred warriors simply enhances his normal ability. Similarly, mortals can normally give persuasive speeches, so empowering a crowd that allows a mortal to sway an army to his side enhances a normal ability.

Granting mortals abilities that mortals normally do not possess—such as curing disease with a touch, hurling balls of fire, flying on golden wings, or seeing into the future—is more expensive, as these abilities fall into the realm of the divine.

Such a Miracle is always an innovation (rather than an alteration).





DISADVANTAGES

Creating powerful heroes can be costly, and even should a God decide to do so they run the risk that a particularly powerful hero may encourage worship of themselves in an attempt to ascend to Godhood in their own right. For these reasons, a God may choose certain limitations when they empower a hero or artifact. In other cases the limitation may simply occur due to the flawed nature of a mortal, or because of a lapse of concentration on the part of the deity.

Whatever the reason, a player may reduce the cost of empowering a hero or artifact by placing limitations on them. Each of these limitations counts as a cost factor of -1 unless otherwise noted, and more than one limitation

can be chosen (though no matter how many limitations are taken, the cost factor for empowering a hero or artifact, or renewing that power, cannot drop below 1).

Disempowering: Victorious conflicts in which they take part generate no Belief for the deity. May only be applied to Miracles primarily designed for use in conflicts.

Eternal: The God *must* always renew their power, if they survive the year, or empower an identical hero/artifact, if they did not. If the God does not have enough Belief they must sacrifice followers to gain the power to do so. Only if they have no remaining followers may they allow the effect to lapse.

Limited: The hero or artifact can use its divine powers only once per month.

Limited, Extreme: The hero or artifact can use its divine powers once every 6 months. This disadvantage reduces the cost factor by -2.

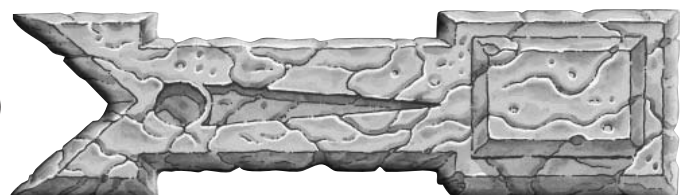
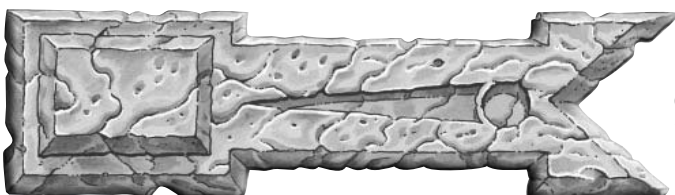
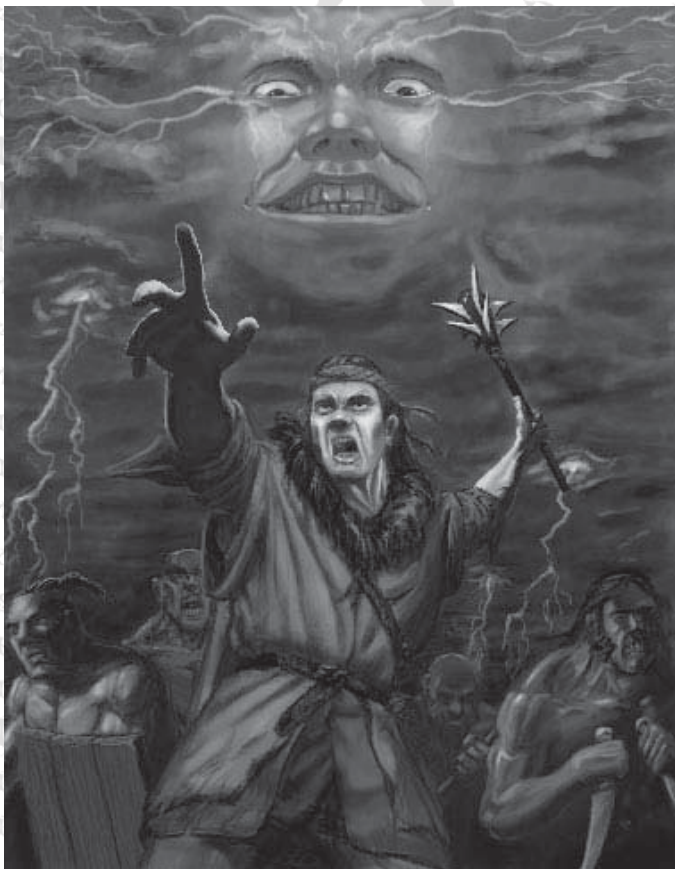
Untrustworthy: The hero is controlled by the GM—while they begin as loyal they will also act to advance their own interest, and may even secretly scheme against their God. This may only be applied to heroes, not artifacts.

Unreliable: For every conflict in which they are to take part or time they are to use their power flip a coin: on a result of tails they cannot or will not use their supernatural ability.

Additional limitations of a similar magnitude that are approved by the GM may also be used.

EXAMPLES OF HERO AND ARTIFACT CREATION

Below are examples of two heroes and one artifact created with these rules.





Marcus, Eliminator of Lost Souls

Barok, God of Night, has a territory surrounded by the cities of rival gods. The best way to eliminate them, he decides, is to create a hero who can slink into these cities, penetrate their temples, and assassinate their priests. Barok finds a likely mortal in the form of Marcus, a young priest-in-training.

Barok wants Marcus to be able to move about unseen, and also wants him to be able to kill anyone who manages to put up a fight, but Barok doesn't have a lot of Belief to spare.

First, Barok determines that he wants to grant Marcus two separate abilities: some way to remain undetected, and superhuman combat prowess. Thus, creating Marcus involves combining two Miracles into one.

Barok begins with Marcus's stealth. Since Barok is the God of Night, he grants Marcus the ability to cloak himself with nearby shadows for as long as the sun remains below the horizon. Barok's player is unsure if this is an alteration or innovation—mortals certainly cannot normally draw shadows around themselves, but they *can* hide in shadows. Barok's player consults the GM, who decides that the ability is an alteration of Marcus's normal ability to hide in dark places. If Barok was instead planning to give Marcus the ability to become invisible under any circumstances, that would be an innovation.

Barok would like to make the Miracle legendary, but doubts he can spare the Belief, so he instead makes it significant. A significant alteration has a base cost of 4. (Looking at the "Miracle's and Conflicts" sidebar, Barok's player notes that a significant Miracle has a base die size of d8 in conflicts. So, when someone else is trying to see Marcus, Marcus will roll a d8 against the observer's Mind roll to sneak by him—not great, but hopefully good enough.)

Barok then looks at the elements that go into this Miracle's cost factor. He lists these as follows:

Duration: Permanent (hero); +3.

Domain: The Miracle falls within Barok's domain as God of the Night; -2.

Inclinations: The Miracle is a creation Miracle, with which Barok is in balance; +0.

Location: Barok empowers Marcus in his own city; +0.

Scale: Individual (the Miracle affects only Marcus); +0.

Total: +1.

So, the total cost for this Miracle is 4 (the base cost) x 1 (the multiplier for a cost factor of 1) = 4. Barok congratulates himself on thinking of such an inexpensive Miracle.

Barok then moves on to the Miracle that grants Marcus superhuman fighting skill. He doesn't have much Belief to spare, so he'd like Marcus to be the equivalent of 10 veteran soldiers. Though that's not enough to make him a real threat on a battlefield, it should allow him to deal with any squads of guards he encounters during his assassination missions.

Veteran fighters roll d8s in conflicts, so consulting the "Miracles and Conflicts" sidebar, Barok's player sees that the Miracle will again be significant, so another significant alteration, which has a base cost of 4. Barok's player then determines the Miracle's cost factor.

Duration: Permanent (hero); +3.

Domain: The Miracle does not fall within Barok's domain as God of the Night; +0.

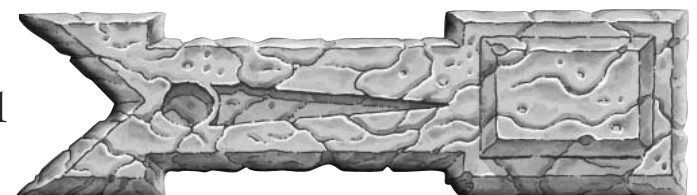
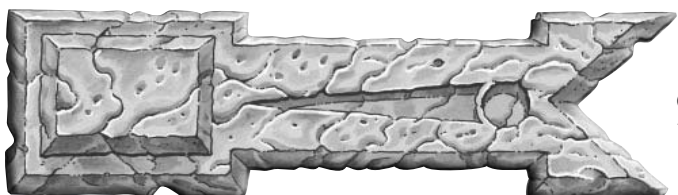
Inclinations: The Miracle is a transformation Miracle, with which Barok is in harmony; -1.

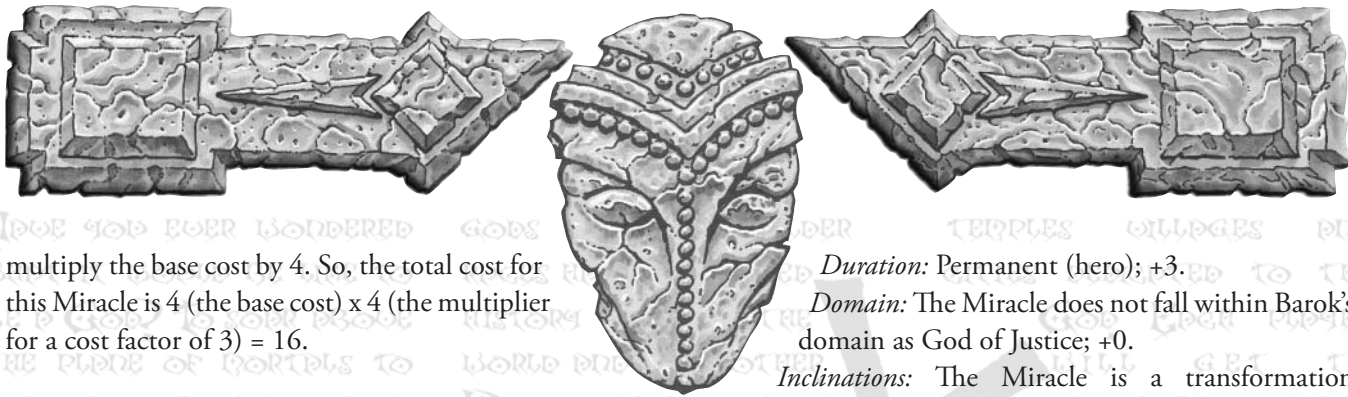
Location: Barok empowers Marcus in his own city; +0.

Scale: Household (Marcus is the equivalent of 10 soldiers); +1.

Total: +3.

Barok's player then consults Table #6: Cost Factor Multiplier and sees that a cost factor of 3 means he has to





multiply the base cost by 4. So, the total cost for this Miracle is 4 (the base cost) x 4 (the multiplier for a cost factor of 3) = 16.

Barok combines the cost of these two Miracles (4 + 16) and determines that Marcus's total cost in Belief is 20—a bit expensive for a new god, but certainly affordable. Of course, Barok will have to pay additional Belief every year to keep Marcus around, but he hopes that he'll be getting more Belief as Marcus slays his rivals' priests and Barok converts their followers.

Pathen, Champion of Justice

The tribe of Ostriach, God of Justice, is ruled by a lineage of priest-kings through whom their deity issues instructions and commands. This single figurehead gives the tribe a focal point, but recently Ostriach has felt something more dramatic is needed—he is vying with a neighboring God to convert a large population of unaligned tribesmen, and would like to make Pathen, the current priest-king, into more than a simple figure-head. Being a straightforward sort of God, Ostriach decides the best way to demonstrate his power is to turn Pathen into a truly awe-inspiring war-leader.

Enhancing Pathen's fighting skills will be a Miracle of alteration, and Ostriach decides to use transformation to turn the slightly pudgy king into a nine-foot tall champion with a frightening set of rippling muscles. Ostriach decides he'd like Pathen to be a match for 100 men, making the Miracle village-scale. Even against a full 100 men, Ostriach wants his champion to be able to win, so he makes the Miracle a major alteration, allowing Pathen to roll d10s in combat and making him the equivalent of a hundred elite warriors.

As a major alteration, the Miracle's base cost is 5. Ostriach's player lists the elements that apply to the cost factor as follows.

Duration: Permanent (hero); +3.

Domain: The Miracle does not fall within Barok's domain as God of Justice; +0.

Inclinations: The Miracle is a transformation Miracle, with which Ostriach is in balance; +0.

Location: Ostriach empowers Pathen in his own city; +0.

Scale: Village (Pathen is the equivalent of 100 soldiers); +2.

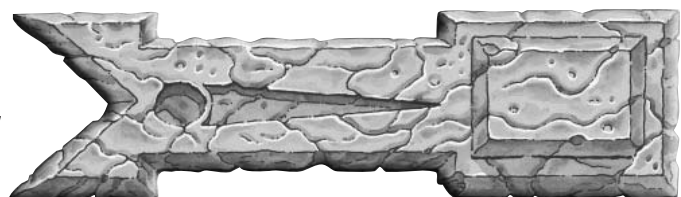
Total: +5.

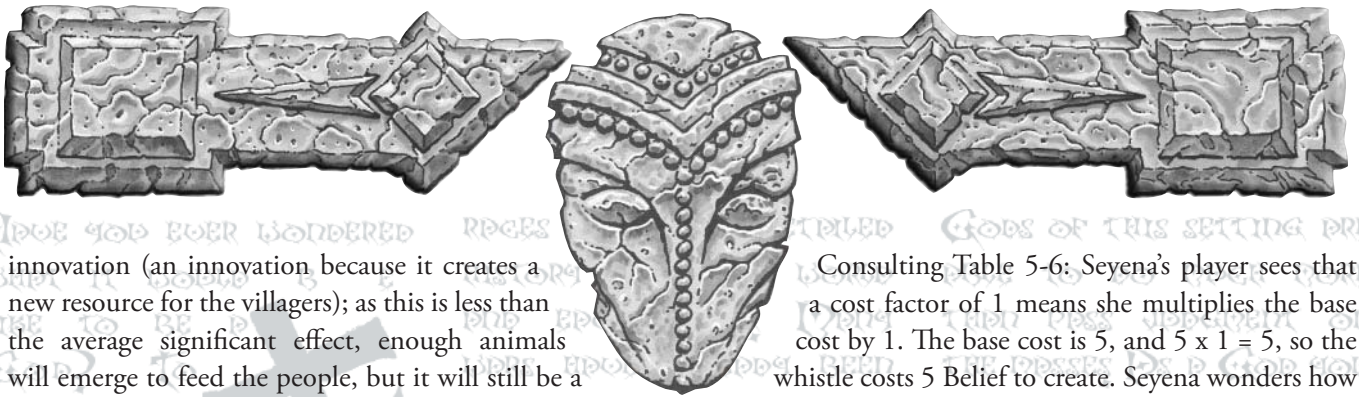
According to Table 5-6, since the cost factor is 5, Ostriach's player should multiply the base cost by 15. The base cost is 5, and $5 \times 15 = 75$, so Ostriach spends 75 Belief to empower Pathen. Each year, Ostriach spends additional Belief to retain him; this cost is identical to the cost of creating him in the first place, but the cost factor drops by -1. Ostriach's player would like to know what Pathen's upkeep is going to be, so he again consults Table 5-6. A cost factor of 4 (5-1) means he should multiply the base cost by 8. $5 \times 8 = 40$, so Ostriach will spend 40 Belief each year to maintain Pathen's power.

THE WHISTLE OF PLENTY

The people of Seyena-Soveen, Goddess of Animals, are often beset by floods which wash out their crops, leaving them to starve. During one year Seyena spent incarnated as a wolf in the forests, the floods were particularly bad, and when she returned to the Celestial Realm she was horrified to discover a third of her followers had perished. As a symbol of her contrition, she swore an oath to her tribe that she would never let them go hungry again, and as a symbol of that oath decided to create an artifact to ensure that even in her absence their food supply would be ensured. She decides to create a whistle that, when blown, will cause birds and animals to emerge from the forest and submit to be slaughtered in order to feed her people.

Since she wants the whistle to be used only in emergencies, Seyena-Soveen's player decides the effect will be a minor





innovation (an innovation because it creates a new resource for the villagers); as this is less than the average significant effect, enough animals will emerge to feed the people, but it will still be a meager and vaguely unsatisfying meal. She wants to feed a village at a time, so the Miracle is village-scale. She decides that the whistle can be used once per month—only when things are really desperate. She also decides that her oath means that she will never be able to withdraw her power from the whistle, which is a disadvantage and reduces the cost factor.

A minor innovation has a base cost of 5. The elements that make up the cost factor are as follows.

- Duration:* Permanent (artifact); +3.
- Domain:* The Miracle falls within Seyena's primary domain as Goddess of Animals; -2.
- Inclinations:* The Miracle is a control Miracle, with which Seyena is in balance; +0.
- Location:* Seyena empowers the whistle in her followers' village; +0.
- Scale:* Village (the summoned animals will feed a village for one day); +2.
- Disadvantage:* Eternal (Seyena *must* spend the yearly Belief to maintain the whistle's power); -1.
- Disadvantage:* Limited (Seyena's followers can blow the whistle only once per week); -1.
- Total:* +1.

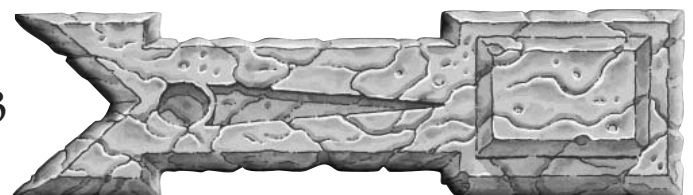
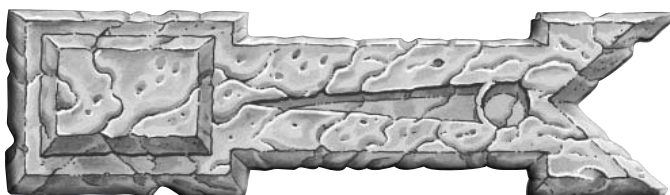
Consulting Table 5-6: Seyena's player sees that a cost factor of 1 means she multiplies the base cost by 1. The base cost is 5, and $5 \times 1 = 5$, so the whistle costs 5 Belief to create. Seyena wonders how much she'll need to spend to maintain it; it will be the same amount as she spent to create it, except the cost factor is one less. However, the cost factor cannot drop below 1, so there's no change there; Seyena needs to spend 5 Belief each year to maintain the whistle's power.

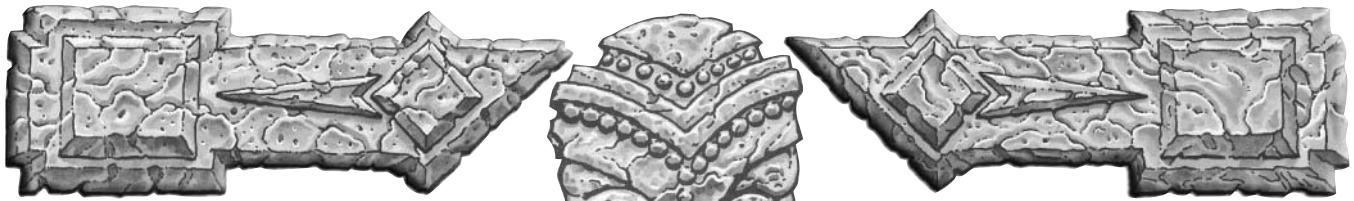
TERROR
Mortals' faith in a god empowers her, but that is not the only way she can rule. Gods (and more frightening creatures) can inspire terror in mortals and feed off the resulting emotions, growing fat in power—but sparking a thirst they may never satiate.



TABLE 5 - 7: TERROR

Scale	Multiplier
Individual	1
Household	2
Village	3
Territory	4
Nation	5
Continent	6





Terror is mechanically almost the same as Belief, but you track it separately. You spend Terror the same way as Belief: you can spend it only on Miracles that generate more Terror (see below).

who worship another god, that god loses a like amount of Belief.

Gods and Leviathans acquire Terror by performing frightening Miracles. To gain Terror, cast a frightening Miracle. If you do so and declare that you consume the Terror it creates, you'll definitely get Terror from it. If you cast a frightening Miracle and do not declare you're consuming the Terror, the GM determines whether the Miracle is truly terrifying enough to grant you Terror. Examples include Miracles that kill or maim innocent people, vivid and gruesome displays, doing horrible things to neutral parties, and anything else the GM deems sufficiently monstrous. (Note that gods can still be *evil*, though, and not become Leviathans, but they might walk careful lines between godhood and madness.)

Once you have fed on a tribe's Terror, you cannot acquire more Terror from that tribe except with a Miracle at a greater power. So once you've performed a minor terrifying Miracle on a tribe, you can't terrorize it again with anything less than a significant Miracle. Once you've used a legendary terrifying Miracle, you have only one method left to terrorize the people: destroy them.

GENOCIDE

Killing people with a terrifying Miracle grants additional Terror. For every ten people you kill with a terrifying Miracle, you gain an additional 1d6 Terror. If the Miracle is not of an appropriate scale to generate Terror on its own (for example, if it's a minor Miracle and you've already used a significant terrifying Miracle on the tribe), you still gain Terror for killing people.

A terrifying Miracle always creates a conflict, as the mortals try to resist the fear you inspire. If you win the conflict, you gain Terror. (Note that, unlike Belief, you gain this Terror even if none of your followers witnesses the Miracle. Also, you can terrorize your own followers to gain Terror if you wish.) Roll a d6 and multiply it by a number based on the Miracle's scale, as shown on Table 5-7: Terror. That's how much Terror you get. If you draw this Terror from people

THE POINT OF NO RETURN

If your total Terror is equal to or greater than half your current Belief, you become an NPC Leviathan. Give your character sheet to the GM and start thinking about another god.

GETTING RID OF TERROR

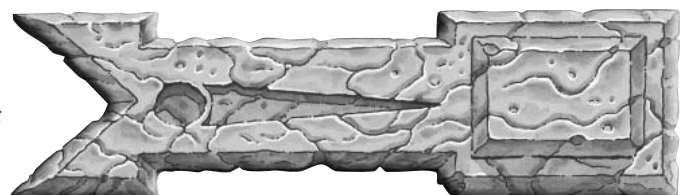
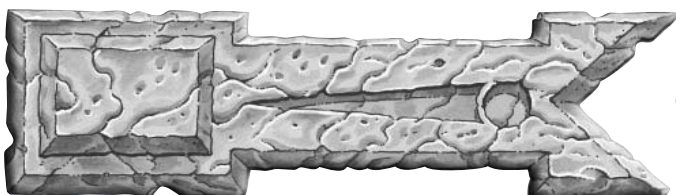
You have three ways you can get rid of Terror: spend it, use Belief to eliminate it, or make a deal with Fate.

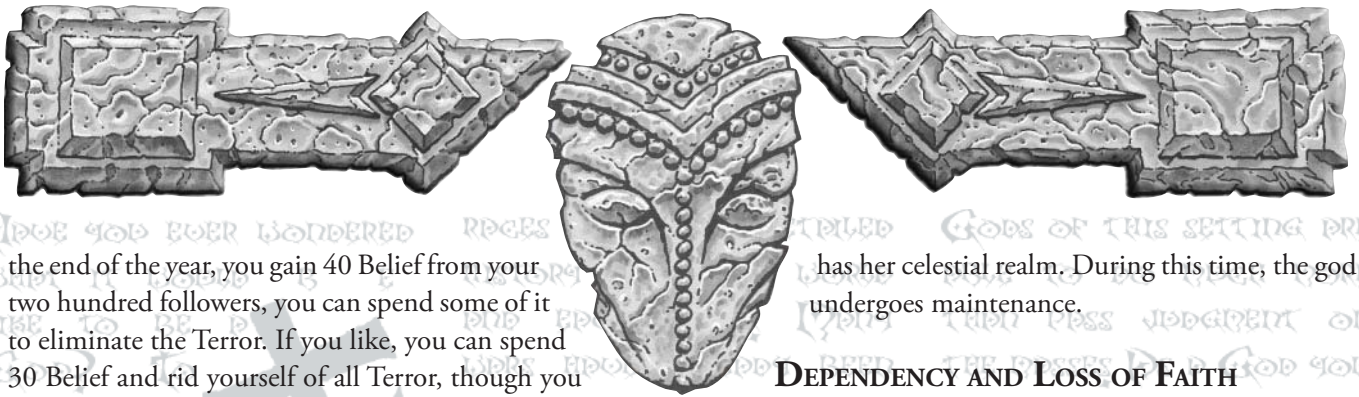
Spend It: You can spend Terror only on Miracles that might create more Terror. However, you can create terrifying Miracles that are too small in scale or too low in power to affect a tribe, and thus, though you still create terrifying events, you don't get any Terror after all.

Belief: At any time when you gain Belief, you can immediately spend some or all of it to eliminate Terror on a one-for-one basis. Thus, if you have 30 Terror and, at

GM'S NOTE - PURPOSE OF TERROR

The idea behind the Terror system is to provide diminishing returns: The tribe builds up immunity, so a god must do more to get the same high. Also, since becoming a Leviathan depends in a large part on how much Terror a god takes in at once, the odds get worse the longer he terrorizes a tribe. Remember, a god can spend Terror only to create Miracles that generate Terror, so he can't get rid of it simply by casting normal Miracles.





At the end of the year, you gain 40 Belief from your two hundred followers, you can spend some of it to eliminate the Terror. If you like, you can spend 30 Belief and rid yourself of all Terror, though you end up gaining only 10 Belief that season.

has her celestial realm. During this time, the god undergoes maintenance.

DEPENDENCY AND LOSS OF FAITH

Gods must walk carefully when dealing with their

You can spend Belief in this way only when you gain it, and you must do so immediately.

Fate: If you're worried about becoming a leviathan and want to lose your Terror, you might consult Fate, who dwells in the Celestial Gardens (Chapter 3 Lore of the Spirit World). Fate's motives and goals are inscrutable, but the entity seems to go out of its way to eliminate leviathans, so it might indeed work with you to eliminate your Terror. Such a boon usually does not come without a price, though; Fate may demand some favor in return.

See Chapter 3 for more details about Fate.

MAINTENANCE AND YEARS

Time is divided into years. The passing of these years has great importance to mortals, but not nearly as much to the immortal gods. Still, once a year, when their followers engage in their yearly celebration of the god's existence, gods gain Belief and check to make sure they are paying the proper attention to their followers. This period is called maintenance.

Each god has a particular season that is holy to her. This season probably corresponds to the season in which she

PANTHEONS

In a pantheon, all gods undergo maintenance at the same time, together. The season in which they do so is the season in which the acknowledged leader of the pantheon has his holy season.

TRACKING BELIEF

When you spend Belief on Miracles that directly help your followers, make sure you write down how much you spent. Your character sheet has a spot for this information. As you cast more Miracles to help them, this number increases. Thus, at the end of the year, you'll know how much Belief you spent, and whether you created dependence or loss of faith.

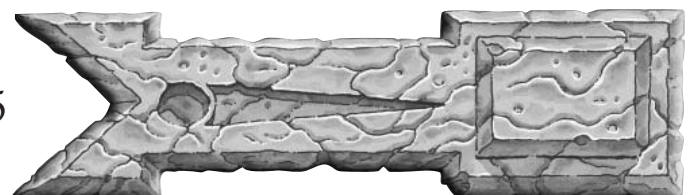
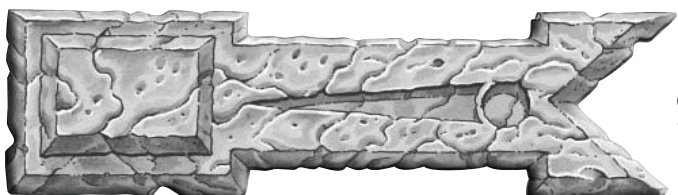
HELPING YOUR FOLLOWERS

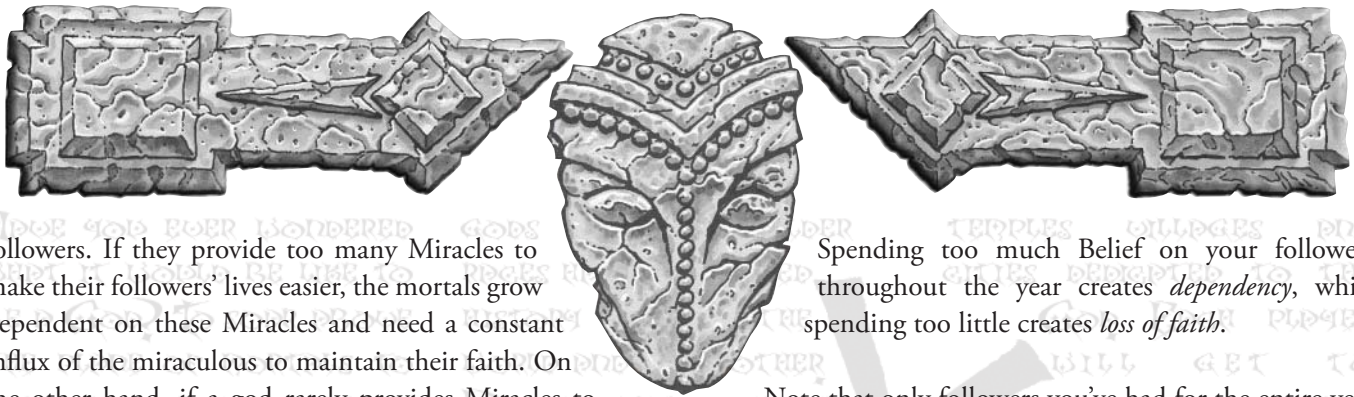
A Miracle that directly helps your followers is one that improves their lives or solves their problems. Miracles that would otherwise further your goals do not qualify. Below are some examples of Miracles that directly aid your followers and might create dependence or loss of faith.

- Curing a disease that ravages a village.
- Making crops supernaturally fertile.
- Defeating the crazed grizzly bears that come to devour your people.
- Creating a hero who is a wise and just ruler.
- Countering Miracles from other gods that would be obviously detrimental to your followers.

Sometimes you might have a tough time determining whether or not a Miracle directly helps your followers. Below are some examples of Miracles that do not directly help your followers and thus cannot create dependency or loss of faith.

- Inflicting a rival village with a disease (unless that village posed a direct threat to your people).
- Creating a stealthy hero to assassinate rival priests.
- Manifesting yourself physically and walking among your people.





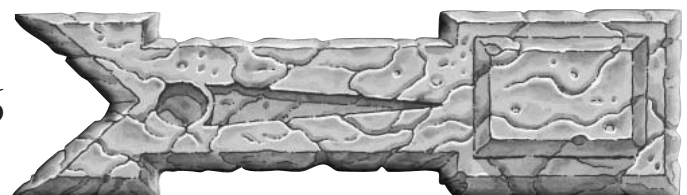
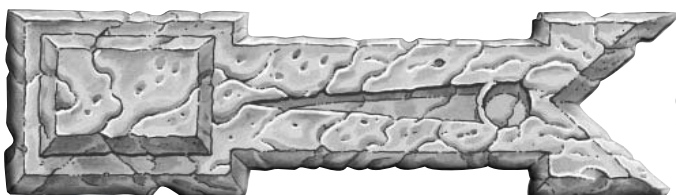
followers. If they provide too many Miracles to make their followers' lives easier, the mortals grow dependent on these Miracles and need a constant influx of the miraculous to maintain their faith. On the other hand, if a god rarely provides Miracles to help his followers, they lose their faith in his existence and might start looking elsewhere for divine guidance.

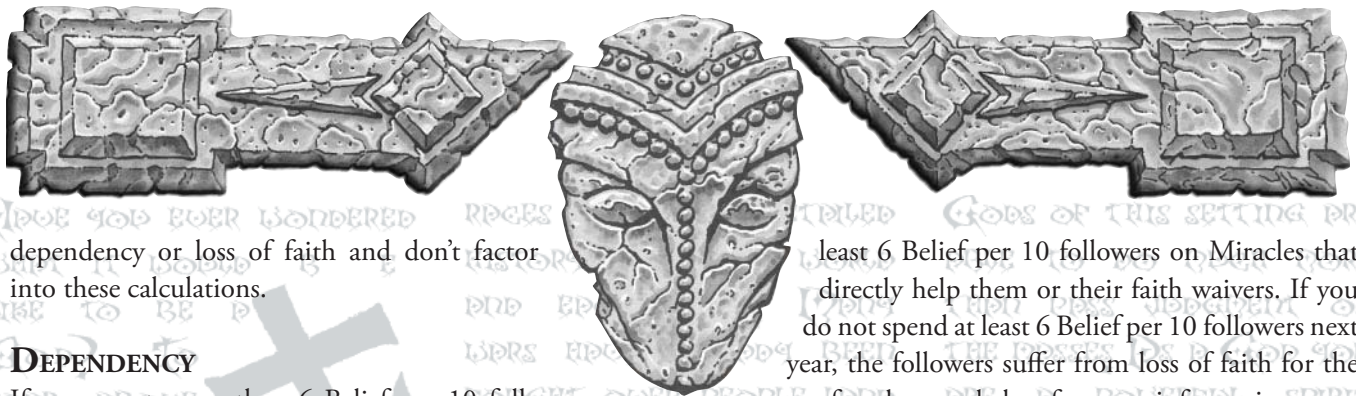
Spending too much Belief on your followers throughout the year creates *dependency*, while spending too little creates *loss of faith*.

Note that only followers you've had for the entire year count for the purposes of dependency and loss of faith; if you gained more followers over the course of the year (by converting barbarians, for example), they cannot create

TABLE 5 - 8: YEARLY EVENTS

d10	Event	Examples	Result
01-02	Ecological disaster	Blizzards; droughts; hurricanes	You lose 1d10x10 followers.
03-04	Prosperity	Temperate and weather conditions just right; sea unusually bountiful	You gain 1d10 followers for every 100 followers you already have.
05-06	Skirmish	Tribe discovers barbarians; barbarians discover tribe; pirates; bandits	Roll your followers' Body. On a 4 or more, they triumph and you gain 1d10 Belief. Otherwise, you lose 1d10 followers.
07-08	Conversion	Missionaries return with the converted; nearby barbarians see the light	Gain 1d10x10 followers.
09-10	Hard times	Winter is hard; summer is hot; a sickness strikes a village	You lose 1d10 followers.
11-12	Omens	Birds flying in particular formation; shapes in clouds and water	Your followers see signs that you are with them; they generate an additional 25% Belief this year.
13-14	Assurance	Particularly good preaching; general well-being	Any followers that would suffer from loss of faith do not do so.
15-16	Doubt	Deaths among the leaders; general hardship	Your followers generate 25% less Belief this year.
17-18	Superstition	Good or bad things happen when people perform particular rituals, but it's not through your doing	Roll your followers' Mind. On a 4 or more, they overcome their superstition. Otherwise, they all suffer dependence for the upcoming year.
19-20	Apotheosis	A hero emerges (for whatever reason)	Your followers exult in one of their members and lavish praise and faith upon him. Their faith is so strong that he indeed becomes a hero. You gain an additional 1 Belief per 10 followers, but can use this Belief only to empower a hero and you must do so immediately. You can supplement it with additional Belief if you like.
21-22	Technological advancement	Your followers build schools, societies for research, discover important alloys, or perform some similar technological development	Choose one particular sort of task, such as combat, farming, seeing distant objects, or anything similar. Your people create a technological development of your choice to assist them in this task; they gain a +1 bonus on all die rolls when their technology might assist them with it.
23-24	Breaking commandments	Many of your followers break minor commandments; a prominent follower (a priest or leader) publicly breaks a major commandment	You must choose how to deal with the transgressor(s). Among other possible solutions, an expenditure of 5 Belief per 100 followers creates appropriate calamities or warnings (of whatever kind you wish) to prove that you're still watching your people. If you don't deal with the problem in some way, the population suffers from loss of faith this year.
25-26	New title	Priests grant you a new title; a new myth arises about you	You gain a new title. You can choose one or you can roll on Table #-1: Titles.
27-28	Rival spirit	Your followers attribute something normally under your purview to a new spirit or minor god	You must immediately spend at least 1 Belief per 10 followers on a Miracle to convince your people that you are still in charge of that particular aspect. If you don't, you lose one of your secondary domains (your choice) until you cast a Miracle that costs at least 2 Belief per 10 followers to retake control.
29-30	New domain	Your followers believe you have control over an additional aspect of the Known World	If you immediately spend at least 2 Belief per 10 followers on a Miracle to convince your people that they're right, you gain an additional secondary domain. Determine it randomly on Table #-3: Secondary Domains.





dependency or loss of faith and don't factor into these calculations.

DEPENDENCY

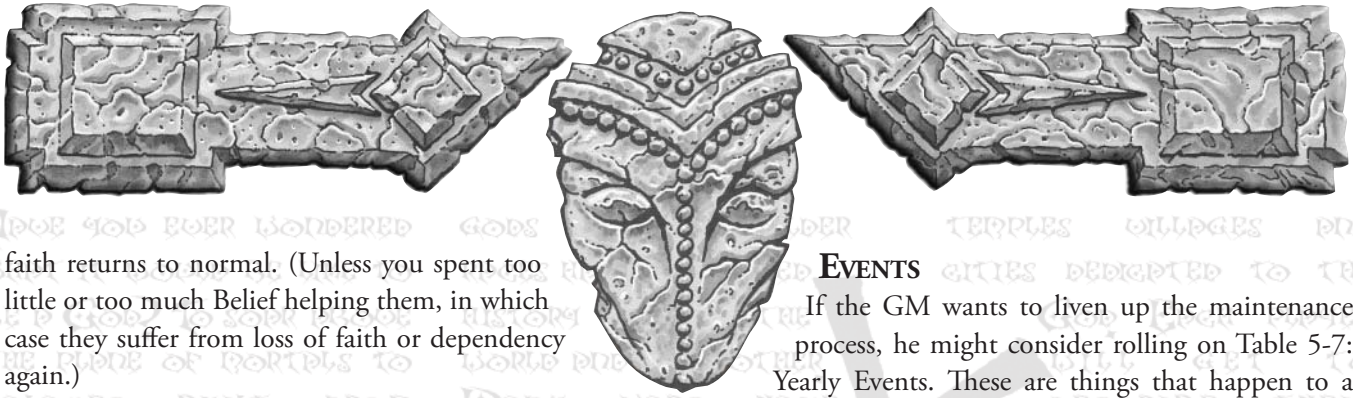
If you spent more than 6 Belief per 10 followers, you create dependency. For the next year, the followers are dependent upon such Miracles, and you must spend at

least 6 Belief per 10 followers on Miracles that directly help them or their faith waivers. If you do not spend at least 6 Belief per 10 followers next year, the followers suffer from loss of faith for the year after that; see below for more information.

After one year suffering from loss of faith, the followers'

TABLE 5 - 8: YEARLY EVENTS (CONTINUED)			
31-32	New tribe	Word of you has spread to a distant people; missionaries succeed in distant conversions	If you immediately spend 20 Belief on appropriately convincing Miracles, you gain a new tribe of worshippers. It is currently composed of one hundred people and may be far away from your current tribe; determine their location on Table #-4: Starting Locations. These people may be a subset of a larger population or may have left their society to create their own culture. Remember, having additional followers comes with its own set of problems.
33-34	New symbol	Priests grant you a new symbol; followers see your sign in a new way	You gain a new symbol. Choose whatever you like.
35-36	Pilgrimage	A segment of the population leaves on a Holy Journey	Ten people for every hundred followers leave your lands and are gone for the entirety of next year, generating no Belief next year (but normal Belief this year). If they return safely (which happens by default, but the GM may provide additional challenges), in the year after next you gain 3 Belief per 10 followers (rather than 2) as the pilgrims spread their word.
37-38	Famine	Wolves eat the sheep; drought; infestations; crop disease	You lose 3d10 followers.
39-40	All-powerful belief	Particularly stirring priest speeches or additional myths make the people believe you can do anything	If you immediately cast a Miracle, you are considered to be in harmony with its style no matter your inclinations.
41-42	New myth	New stories; new storytellers; new priests	A new myth arises about you. It might state that you have a particular task, like ensuring the sun rises or escorting souls across the river of death. You (the player) can invent a small myth about your god and write it down (no more than a paragraph or so); if you do, you gain 1 Belief per 10 followers.
43-44	Empowering faith	Followers believe you are all-encompassing; priests say you affect the world	The next time you cast a Miracle, reduce its cost factor by 1.
45-46	Disempowering faith	Your followers grow tired of you; priests are boring	The next time you cast a Miracle, increase its cost factor by 1.
47-48	False idols	People worship idols of other gods or concepts instead of you	You lose 1 Belief per 10 followers.
49-50	Fearsome aspect	Fire-and-brimstone speeches; pain and suffering attributed to you	If you immediately cast a terrifying Miracle, increase the multiplier by 1 when determining how much Terror you gain (see "Terror," above).
51-52	Technological failure	Plowshares break; oxen die; steel alloy mix is improper	The GM chooses a particular task, such as combat, farming, seeing distant objects, or something similar. Your followers take a -1 penalty on rolls to perform such tasks for the next season (three months), after which time they solve the problem.
53-54	Kindly aspect	Speeches extolling your mercy and generosity; prosperity and good fortune attributed to you	You may immediately lose up to 1 Terror per 10 followers. If you don't have any Terror when you roll this result, you gain 1 Belief per 10 followers.
55-56	Independence	Strong human spirit; sermons about taking one's own destiny	Any followers that would suffer from dependence next year do not do so.
57-58	Your hand	Prayers for upcoming contest; sermons calling for your blessing upon a particular task	If you win the next conflict that concerns at least 10 of your followers, you gain a +2 bonus on your roll to gain Belief at the end. If you lose the conflict, you take a -2 penalty on your roll to offset the loss of Belief (this penalty cannot reduce your roll to less than 1).
59-100	Nothing	Nothing of particular importance occurs	Nothing out of the ordinary.





faith returns to normal. (Unless you spent too little or too much Belief helping them, in which case they suffer from loss of faith or dependency again.)

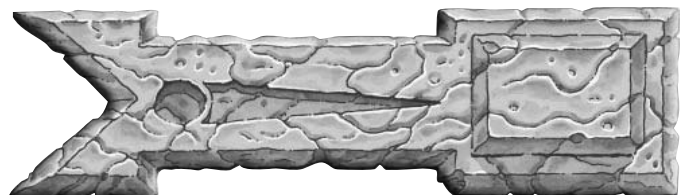
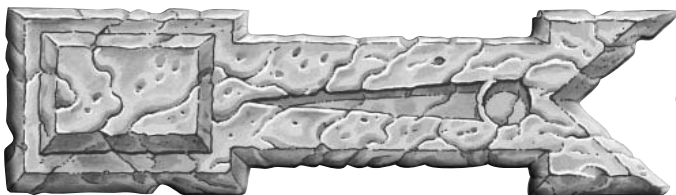
GAIN BELIEF

At the end of your holy season, you gain Belief from your followers. You gain 2 Belief for every 10 followers you have.

Only followers that you have had for the entire year generate Belief at the end of the year. If you acquired more followers over the course of the year (by conquering a neighboring village and taking its people as your own, for example), these new faithful members of your society don't generate Belief until the next year.

EVENTS

If the GM wants to liven up the maintenance process, he might consider rolling on Table 5-7: Yearly Events. These are things that happen to a tribe—both positive and negative—that might impact it over the course of the year. The specifics of the event are up to the GM. Of course, gods can use Miracles to influence these events. Roll on the table before generating Belief or determining loss of faith or dependency, and results on the table take precedence. For example, if your followers would normally suffer from dependence, but the table says they suffer from loss of faith, they suffer from loss of faith instead.



CHAPTER 6: NEW GODS OF MANKIND AS A STRATEGIC BOARD GAME



The salamander tyranny would end now, and it would end here.

Bartolis stood on the mountain ledge, staring down at the massed armies. He was higher than anyone could climb, for the sheer mountain face and lack of tunnels stopping anyone else. Yet his divine gifts, direct from Gnorr, allowed him to achieve such heights easily as long as he passed through the world's living stone on his way.

Bartolis cast his gaze on his own army: thousands of gnomes milling about, preparing for the battle that, Bartolis estimated, was only a few hours away. They gathered weapons, spoke tensely to each other, and readied their catapults and ballistae. Some still pounded on their field forges, crafting last-minute weapons and armor for their comrades. A line of wagons stretched back into the distance, supplying his troops with the finest equipment and metals. If they failed, it would not be due to lack of weapons.

Bartolis turned his gaze to the salamander forces. The view was much the same, except salamander priests and priestesses led their brethren in prayers and services in front of mobile monuments of bronze and fire. Bartolis raised his head and let his eyes reach the horizon. Off in the distance, the salamanders' great Statue of Dragons, an enormous, golden sculpture depicting all their despicable 'dragon gods', taunted him just as it inspired the salamanders.

Yet it would not be enough, Bartolis knew.

"Good afternoon, General," came a sibilant voice.

Bartolis spun. A dark-cloaked salamander rocked back and forth on the ledge, watching Bartolis. Two wavy-bladed

daggers protruded from her fists.

"What?" said Bartolis, taken aback.

"How- how did you get up here?"

The salamander spat. "Fool. Gnorr isn't the only one with champions." She leapt, blades flashing.

By default, *New Gods of Mankind* is a roleplaying game. However, the game lends

itself to aspects of a strategic board game as well. One can easily imagine mortal armies moving and clashing on a map, scouts exploring new territories, and gods throwing miracles around during these activities. This appendix provides rules for you to intersperse aspects of a strategic board game along with the roleplaying game that is the core of *New Gods of Mankind*.

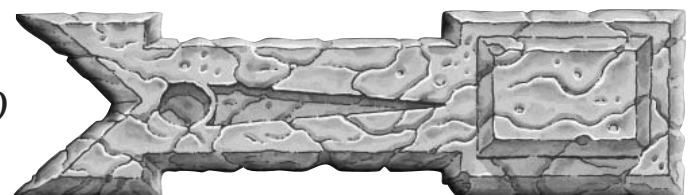
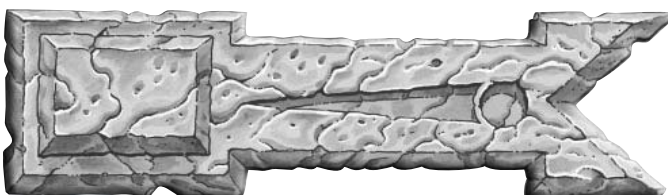
MORTAL RESOURCES

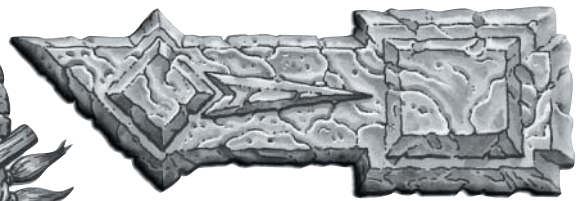
Mortals fascinate the Gods: the way in which these insignificant specks seem to share all of the emotions of their deities—love, jealousy, pride, and a myriad of others—seems almost inconceivable. No less so is the zest with which they live their short lives, seemingly oblivious to the crushing mortality that they labor under. The fact that, despite these handicaps, they can still devote themselves to abstract goals such as justice, cooperate by the hundreds or thousands to achieve great works (when divine pantheons of even half a dozen seem eternally cursed with clashes and factions), is a source of amazement to those Gods who pay attention to their charges.

Fewer Gods truly understand the importance of these mortals to themselves, for without them there would be no worship, no prayers, and no Belief to shape the impersonal universe into divine forms that the races can comprehend, bargain with, and venerate. All deities rapidly learn that the more worshippers they have, the more power they develop, but few press beyond that and come to understand that they themselves are entirely the product of these mundane creatures—for a being with the pride and power of a God, those are frightening thoughts.

TOKENS

For the sake of simplicity, a god's mortal followers are represented by *tokens*. (Don't confuse these with the same





tokens you use in a conflict.) A token represents about ten households, each of which includes about ten people. (Thus, a token represents about a hundred people.) Tokens are black, white, or red.

Black Tokens: Black tokens represent established and productive people. These are family units with the resources to both support themselves and to contribute to society, providing hands and capital to build greater works, fighters in times of war, or any other service which requires the participation of hundreds.

White Tokens: White tokens represent rudimentary households: People who must devote all their efforts to providing for themselves. In some cases, large swaths of rudimentary households are the results of recent expansion of the tribe, in others they are a symptom of a people sadly diminished by war, plague, famine, or some other disaster.

Red Tokens: Red tokens are armies. For more information, see “Red Token Activities,” below.

In order to differentiate between tokens controlled by different gods, you may wish to place a colored token that represents each player under each token. (So you know that all white tokens on top of green tokens belong to the green player, and so forth.) Another option is to use coins, with different coins for different players (one player might use pennies while another uses nickels, for example). If the coin is heads-up, that’s a black token; tails-up, that’s a white token. Place another marker, like a piece of paper, on it for a red token.

Standard, untrained mortals are assumed able to perform tasks that require little in the way of specialized training or equipment. They roll d6s in most conflicts. In cases that *do* require skills and outfitting, they take a –1 penalty on these rolls. In combat, they roll d6–1.

Note that some Elder races are particularly suited or unsuited to certain tasks and their dice are of different sizes.

TERRITORY

Mortals live on land. They farm it, raise livestock on it, erect buildings on it, and so forth.

If you incorporate strategic board game elements into *New Gods of Mankind*, you’ll likely use a game board or map, which depicts the countryside with an overhead, map-like view. The board is divided into hexes, each of which represents one territory. You place your black, white, and red tokens on these territories to show where your followers live.

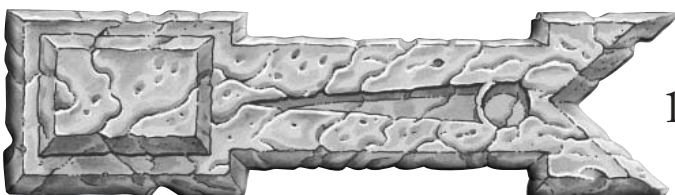
Of course, not all territories are created equal. A territory falls into one of four categories, which refers to how well it can support its population. Consult Table 6 - 1: Territory Classifications, for more information.

Territory Type	Tokens Supported
Lush	3
Ample	2
Harsh	1
Uninhabitable	0

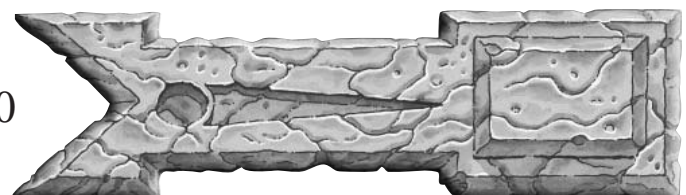
Lush: The land is rich and fertile, with open plains on which to build and farm, rivers to irrigate and cool, and forests providing lumber and game. In these environs a tribe can truly flourish, though it should always beware those who might try to take this idyllic land. A lush territory can support up to three tokens (300 people) without overcrowding.

Ample: Most mortals inhabit ample territories. These are lands largely suited to their needs—with work, the land provides all they need to survive and flourish. The territory may not be the legendary fields of plenty their priests promise, but with effort a community can provide for itself with some room to spare. An ample territory can support up to two tokens (200 people) without overcrowding.

Harsh: Perhaps these barrens are filled with rocks and mountains, or are arid plains where rain falls but a few days in a year, or are simply so overworked that the thin soil must struggle to push up even its feeble harvest. For whatever reason, mortals living here face a constant struggle against the elements. A harsh territory can support a single token (100 people) without overcrowding.



100





Uninhabitable: Whether due to physiological factors (such as humans trying to survive in the blistering desert), or because the land has been shattered and blasted by some terrible cataclysm, mortals are unable to scratch out even the barest living here without constant supernatural assistance. Hardy members of the race might trek across these regions if they have good reason, but the supplies they carry limit their stay. An uninhabitable territory cannot support any tokens.

Note that the Elder races (Salamanders and Undines and such) are suited to different environments than humans. Thus, what an Undine finds lush might be harsh or uninhabitable for a human.

Overcrowded Territories: An overcrowded territory imposes penalties on its population: it can turn black tokens white, and it stifles further population expansion. See “Seasons,” below, for more information.

Seasonal Activities

Gods have followers because followers provide them with Belief. In addition, followers can *do things* to further their god’s will in the Known World—they accomplish tasks that, the god hopes, will lead to him garnering *more* Belief and increasing his status as a god.

These *things* that mortals do to further their god’s will are called *seasonal activities*, because each season, you decide what activity your followers undertake to advance your cause. For all that some deities may deride them as weak and ineffectual, hundreds of mortals working together can accomplish impressive feats and tasks. Yet such projects are feasible only when supplies and manpower are available; when times are hard, mortals must focus on short-term survival. As such, white tokens can undertake only a limited number of seasonal activities (two: migration and nothing); they simply can’t spare the resources for others. Black tokens have more options.



Red tokens have their own set of activities; see “Red Token Activities,” below, for more information.

Each season, a token can undertake a single seasonal activity. You declare the activity at the beginning of the season and (hopefully) reap the reward later.

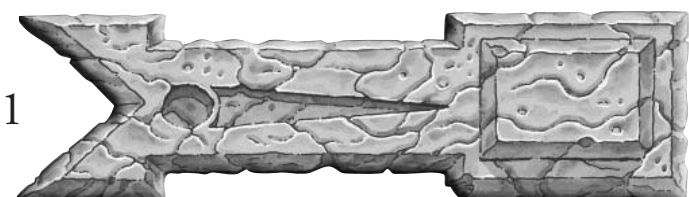
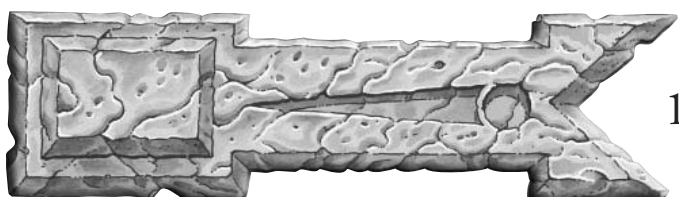
Table 6 - 2: Seasonal Activities includes a brief explanation of each activity. They are described in more detail below.

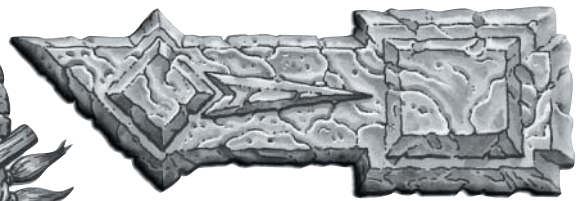
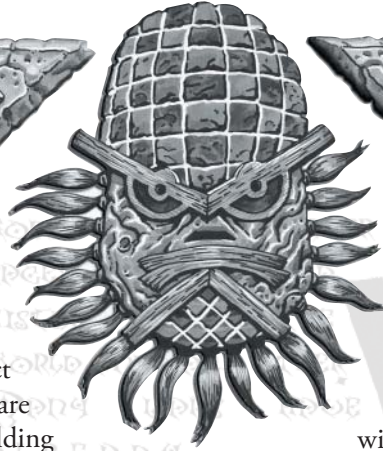
TABLE 6 - 2: SEASONAL ACTIVITIES			
Activity	Explanation	Benefit	Notes
Army service	Households work to supply and outfit soldiers.	The black token becomes a red army token, which can move and fight with d6s.	A red token has different options for seasonal activities; see below.
Construction	People work together to construct massive projects.	Creates a particular structure, which provides a benefit.	Some structures take more than one season to build.
Migration	The population uproots and moves.	The token moves to an adjacent territory.	White tokens can undertake this activity.
Nothing	The population has free time to celebrate and play.	The population could increase (generate a new white token or turn black).	White tokens can undertake this activity.
Worship	A season of rituals and holy days.	The token generates double Belief this season.	

ARMY SERVICE

For all its ills, war is constant in the mortal world. A black token devoting its resources to the army supplies about fifty soldiers, along with the weapons, armor, and food required to make them an effective force.

At the end of the season in which a black token undergoes army service, it becomes a red token. This red token





represents the army, and it consists of about a hundred soldiers (making for a household-scale conflict by default; see Chapter 5: Playing the Game — Conflict and Miracles, “Conflict”). The soldiers are trained in the basics of fighting and wielding sturdy weapons and armor; they roll d6s in combat conflicts.

While the red token moves and undertakes other activities, some people (about fifty) are assumed to remain behind,

though they can undertake no additional seasonal activities. The population’s most physically strong and healthy individuals are off soldiering, and their families spend their time and energy keeping them supplied with food and other resources.

Red tokens can also perform seasonal activities, but they have a different list of them than black and white tokens; see “Red Token Activities,” on pg. 90.

CONSTRUCTION

Tribes become civilizations by building structures.

All tribes are assumed to build the basics they need to survive: a collection of huts made from available materials, fences to keep their livestock from escaping, and wells to draw water, but that’s about it. If you want your tribe to advance beyond such things, task them with construction. People can build a number of structures, each with its own effects. Construction usually takes a long time; rarely do people begin and finish a construction project in a single season. The time a token needs to build a structure appears on Table 6 - 3: Construction. Some structures are actually upgrades to existing structures; these are also noted on Table 6 - 3, as is a brief explanation of each structure’s effects. For more information, see below.

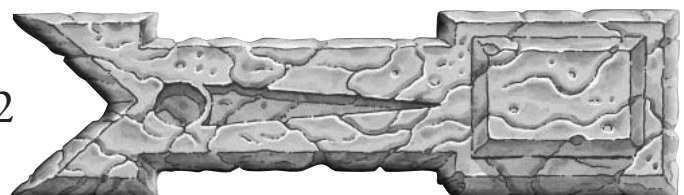
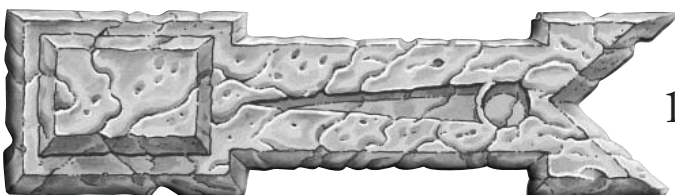
Construction Basics: Unless otherwise mentioned, a structure affects only the territory in which it is built. For ease of reference, you might write down which hexes contain what structures, or you might use special markers (even just scraps of paper with “temple” written on them) to denote structures on a territory.

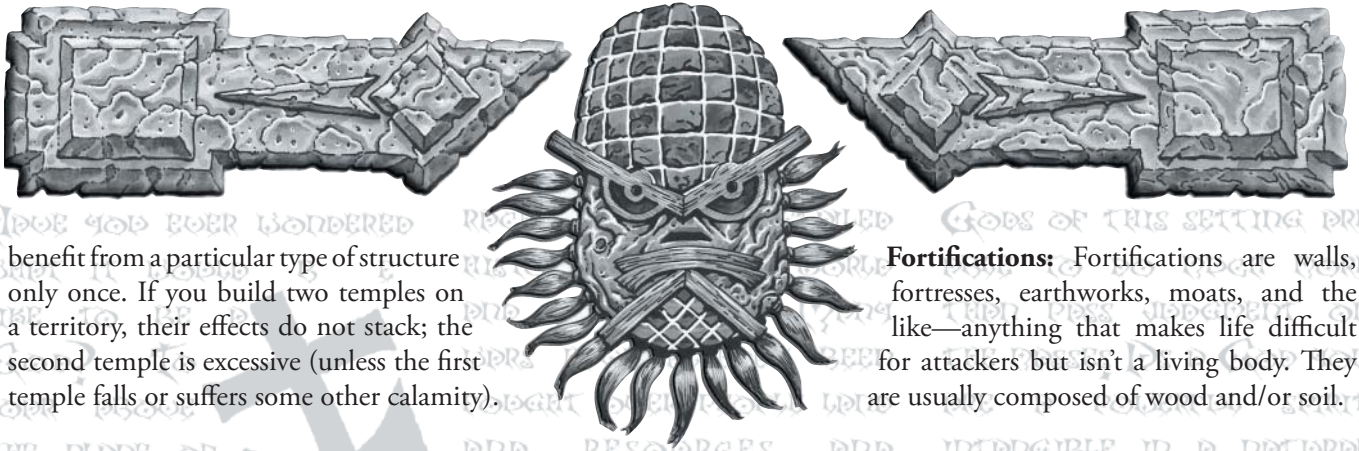
Assisting: Tokens can join forces to build a structure faster. If two tokens both spend the season building the same structure, the structure is two seasons closer to completion rather than one. (Additional tokens cannot assist; the extra people merely get in the way.)

Multiple Structures: Unless stated otherwise, a territory can

Structure	Time to build (in seasons)	Prerequisites	Effects
Advanced irrigation	4	Irrigation*	Increases a territory’s ability to support people.
Armory	3		Increases combat die size for red tokens the territory generates.
Fortifications	2		Increases die size during defensive combat.
Harbor	3		Increases an ocean-side territory’s ability to support people.
Heavy fortifications	2	Fortifications	Increases die size during defensive combat.
Irrigation	2		Restores depleted territory.
Lifestyle	3		Makes population more likely to increase.
Road	1		Allows easy travel between two territories.
Shrines	1		Black tokens generate an additional 1 Belief each.
Temple	4		Tokens generate an additional 2 Belief each and gain the edge during defensive combat.
Wonder	20		+1 on all of a population’s rolls; tokens generate double Belief; neighboring tokens generate an additional 2 Belief each.

* If necessary.





benefit from a particular type of structure only once. If you build two temples on a territory, their effects do not stack; the second temple is excessive (unless the first temple falls or suffers some other calamity).

Partially Built Structures: A token does not need to commit to building the entire structure. If a token spends two seasons building a temple, then performs other activities for a couple seasons, it doesn't need to start all over again on the temple: The temple has only two seasons of construction before it is complete. However, you do not gain any of a structure's benefits until it is complete.

Advanced Irrigation: A territory with advanced irrigation includes aqueducts, diverted rivers, and other such technology to provide its people with plenty of water for crops and livestock. It also has a number of other technologies to make it more effective and efficient, such as crop rotation, subterranean farming, and the like.

Advanced irrigation increases a territory's ability to support its population. An uninhabitable territory becomes harsh, a harsh territory becomes ample, and an ample territory becomes lush. A lush territory cannot be further improved.

If the territory has been depleted due to overpopulation (see "Seasons," on pg. 92), you must first create irrigation to return it to its original state before you can create advanced irrigation in it.

The effects of advanced irrigation and a harbor stack, but cannot increase a territory's status beyond lush.

Armory: An armory includes weapon and armor smiths and the technological developments to make superior arms and armor.

When a token on this territory undergoes arms training to generate a red army token, increase the die size the red token rolls in combat (by default, from a d6 to a d8).

Fortifications: Fortifications are walls, fortresses, earthworks, moats, and the like—anything that makes life difficult for attackers but isn't a living body. They are usually composed of wood and/or soil.

Fortifications increase your die size during defensive combat. Thus, if someone attacks the territory, your die size increases, but if you attack something within the territory, the fortifications have no effect.

Harbor: A harbor allows ships easy docking, which supports people who want to harvest the ocean's resources. A harbor allows fishermen and similar folk—lobster trappers, whalers, seaweed farmers, and so forth—to increase in both efficiency and population and make meaningful contributions to their tribes.

A harbor increases a territory's ability to support its population. An uninhabitable territory becomes harsh, a harsh territory becomes ample, and an ample territory becomes lush. A lush territory cannot be further improved.

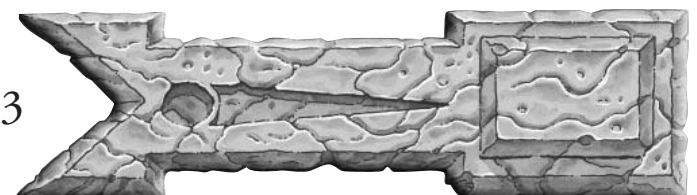
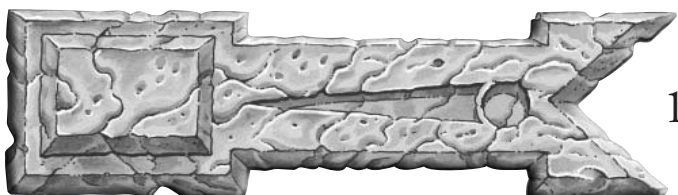
You can build a harbor only on a territory that borders the ocean or other significant body of water.

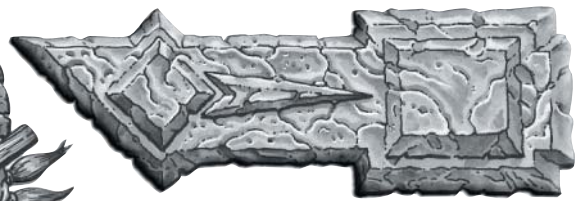
The effects of a harbor and advanced irrigation stack, but cannot increase a territory's status beyond lush.

Heavy Fortifications: Heavy fortifications improve upon basic fortifications. They are composed mostly of stone and include castles, high walls, battlements, watchtowers, and other developments.

Like basic fortifications, heavy fortifications increase your die size during defensive combat. This increase stacks with that provided by fortifications; therefore, increase your die size by two steps.

Irrigation: Basic irrigation creates canals and siphons natural rivers and streams to ensure sufficient water for





crops and livestock. It is especially useful if overpopulation and reckless land use has decreased the earth's ability to support people.

If the territory has been depleted due to overpopulation (see "Seasons," below), irrigation improves its ability to support its population: An uninhabitable territory becomes harsh, a harsh territory becomes ample, and an ample territory becomes lush. If a territory has been excessively depleted (a lush territory becoming harsh, for example), you can create irrigation several times, improving the territory by one category each time. A territory can benefit from irrigation until it has been restored to its natural level of productivity. (Advanced irrigation or a harbor can improve it even beyond that.)

Lifestyle: The people spend time improving their lifestyle: They build sturdier and larger houses and well-insulated public buildings. They weave blankets and fine clothing. They become overall happier and more robust.

A territory benefiting from a lifestyle improvement is more likely to increase during season in which you don't mandate an activity (see "Nothing," below). When rolling to determine if the population increases, reduce the die size by one step.

Road: A road links two territories, allowing swift travel between them.

The token builds a road that connects its territory with any neighboring territory that isn't outright hostile. Doing so has the following effects.

- During migration, moving to a territory connected by a road counts as moving one-half a territory. Thus, a token can move two territories in one season, as long as roads connect them both.
- Similarly, a red token on the march (see "Red Token Activities," below) counts each territory as half a territory if it is connected by a road.

- Roads allow trade between territories. If a territory has an army, neighboring territories connected to it by roads also gain the army's benefit. If a territory has advanced irrigation, neighboring territories connected to it by roads benefit from irrigation (but not advanced irrigation).

Shrines: A shrine is a small, humble place of worship. It can be as simple as a statuette or drawing in a household and is rarely more complex than a small, single-room building in a location sacred to a deity.

Shrines allow and encourage people to worship on their own or in small groups. Each black token in a territory with shrines generates 1 additional Belief at the end of each season.

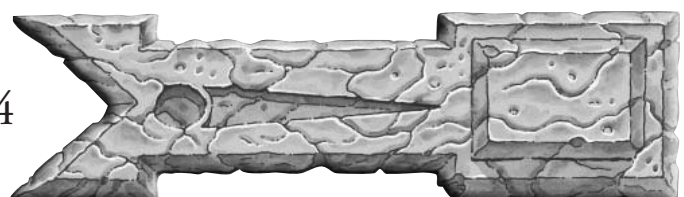
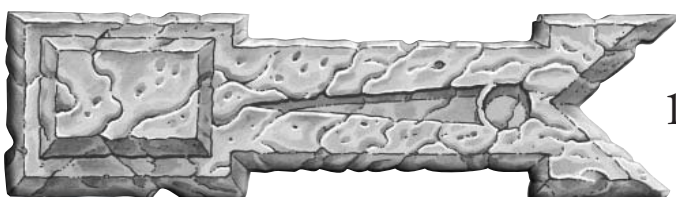
A territory cannot benefit from shrines and a temple at the same time.

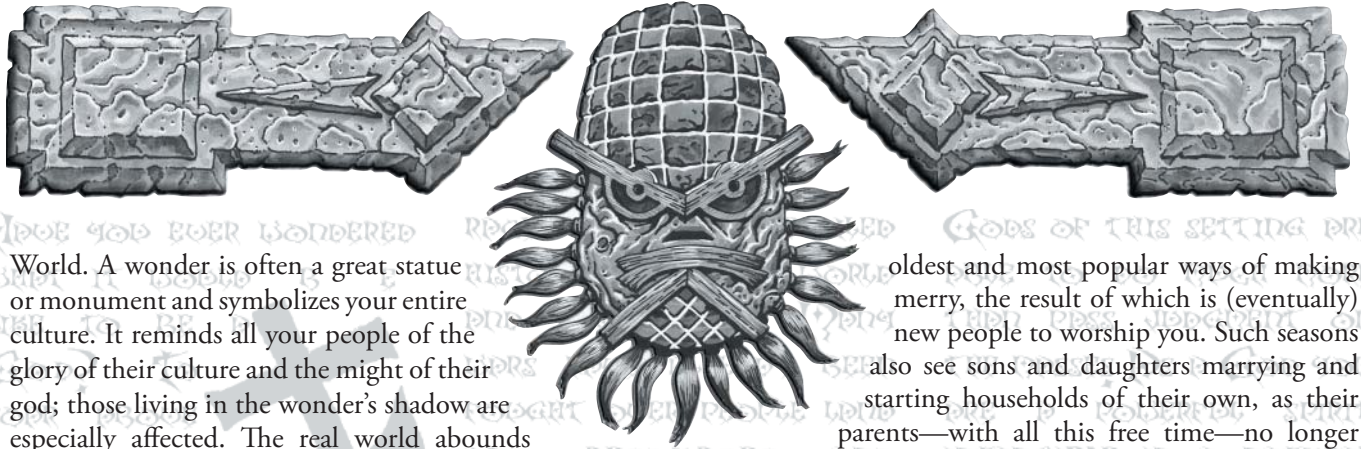
Temple: A temple is a grand and official place of worship. It also supports priests who lead the populace in their rituals. In addition, temples are constructed in such a way to serve as defensive structures as well—when their backs are up against a wall, the people can flee to the temple for a last stand.

Each token in a territory with a temple generates 2 additional Belief at the end of each season. Also, in defensive combat (i.e., if the territory is attacked), and the result in the conflict is a tie, the temple gives the defending territory the edge: It wins on a tie. (See Chapter #, Playing the Game — Conflict and Miracles, "Conflict" for more information.)

A territory cannot benefit from a temple and shrines at the same time.

Wonder: A wonder is an amazing and glorious structure. Word of its completion spreads far and wide, and it becomes known as one of the Wonders of the Known





World. A wonder is often a great statue or monument and symbolizes your entire culture. It reminds all your people of the glory of their culture and the might of their god; those living in the wonder's shadow are especially affected. The real world abounds with such marvels, both ancient and modern: The pyramids of Giza, the Great Wall of China, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Statue of Liberty, and the Eiffel Tower are just some examples.

All of your people, no matter where they are in the world, gain a +1 bonus on all rolls; knowledge and tales of the wonder inspire them, even if they have never seen it. Tokens on the territory that contains the wonder generate double (+100%) Belief; each token in a neighboring territory generates an additional 2 Belief each season. These bonuses stack with those provided by temples and shrines.

However, if the wonder is destroyed, the population loses heart and faith. For the next four seasons all your people, no matter where they are in the world, take a -1 penalty on all rolls, including those to produce Belief.

You can have only one wonder on the board at a time.

MIGRATION

When a territory gets too crowded, people want to move. People might also want to move to a new territory because it offers more opportunity for growth or to expand their nation.

A token undergoing migration can move to an adjacent territory. A territory connected by a road counts as only half a territory, so a token can move up to two territories if roads connect both of them. A token can cross through uninhabitable territories in this way.

NOTHING

During seasons in which you don't mandate an activity, the people get free time to do whatever they want. The result is days of celebration, feasting, and people making merry in whatever way they choose—and many choose one of the

oldest and most popular ways of making merry, the result of which is (eventually) new people to worship you. Such seasons also see sons and daughters marrying and starting households of their own, as their parents—with all this free time—no longer need their help in the fields or around the house.

Unfortunately, an increasing population requires more food, more game, more lumber and more of every other resource; if new land is not available, these needs can become dangerous.

At the end of the season, roll a d6 for each token that undertook this seasonal activity. If the result is a 1, the population increases: a white token becomes black, and a black token generates a new white token.

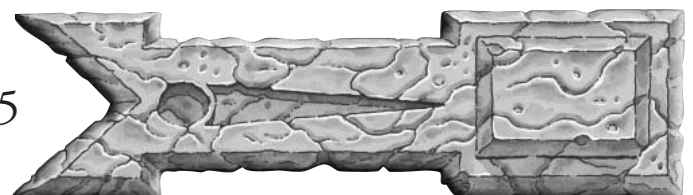
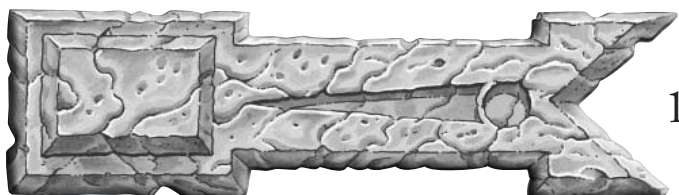
Increasing Die Size: If the territory is at or over capacity, the die size increases. It increases by an additional step for each token in the territory beyond its ability to support. For example, if five tokens are in a lush territory (which can comfortably support three tokens), the die size increases by three steps (one for being at capacity, and two more for the two additional tokens over its limit), meaning you roll a d12 for a token in that territory that undergoes no seasonal activity. If the same territory had only three tokens, the die size would increase by one step (to a d8), because the territory is at capacity.

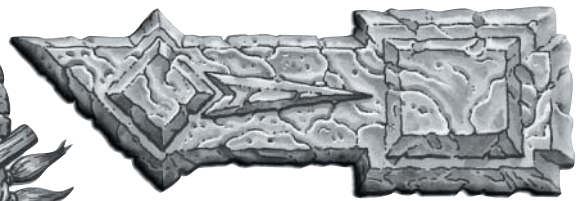
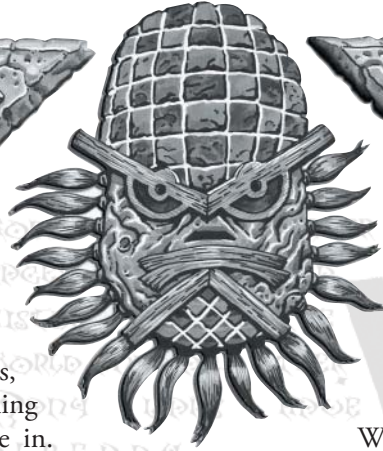
Decreasing Die Size: If the territory is under its capacity, decrease the die size by one step for each additional token it can support. For example, if one token is in an ample territory, it rolls a d4. If one token is in a lush territory, the die size decreases by two steps — to a value of “1,” which means the population automatically expands.

WORSHIP

The people's priests invoke a season of prayers and festivals. Extensive rites and rituals fill the days, ranging from private prayers to enormous celebrations where thousands lift their voices in song.

The token produces double (+100%) Belief this season.





RED TOKEN ACTIVITIES

Red tokens—armies—have a different set of seasonal activities, as shown on Table A-4. In addition to these activities, red tokens can attack enemies (or anything else) that occupies the territory they are in. Red tokens generate Belief, just like black and white tokens.

Activity	Explanation	Benefit
Attack neighboring territory	The army assaults a nearby territory.	Military conflict with people or creatures in that territory.
Build earthworks	The army erects crude defenses.	Increases die size for defensive conflicts.
March	The army advances.	The token moves up to two territories.
Rejoin populace	The army disbands.	The red token turns into a black token.
Train	The army conducts training to remain in top condition.	Increases die size for military conflicts, but must keep training to maintain it.
Worship	The army spends time praying for assistance.	The token generates Belief.

ATTACK NEIGHBORING TERRITORY

An army can attack anything within its territory and also, like black and white tokens, automatically defends its territory from attack (unless the player wishes otherwise). Attacking a neighboring territory is a seasonal activity.

If the attacked territory has defenders (red tokens that belong to a different side, for example), a battle breaks out. See Chapter #: Playing the Game — Conflict and Miracles, “Conflict” for mechanics to resolve it. If the red token wins the ensuing battle, it can automatically move into the conquered territory afterward.

BUILD EARTHWORKS

The army creates defenses out of anything available. Often this means it digs ditches and creates mounds of soil for use

as cover, but the army might also string up wires and wooden stakes for traps and to make the enemies’ lives generally difficult.

When the army defends its territory (someone else attacks it), increase the army’s die size in the conflict.

After an army leaves a territory with earthworks, the earthworks vanish (filled in or leveled by natives or environmental factors).

MARCH

The army moves. Armies, composed of robust soldiers, can cover much longer distances than families, which must transport a great deal of materiel as well as providing assistance for the old, young, and infirm.

The red token can move up to two territories when it marches. A territory connected by a road counts as only half a territory, so an army can move up to four territories in a season if roads connect them all.

REJOIN POPULACE

Remove the red token and replace it with a black token. The black token is available for seasonal activities in the next season.

TRAIN

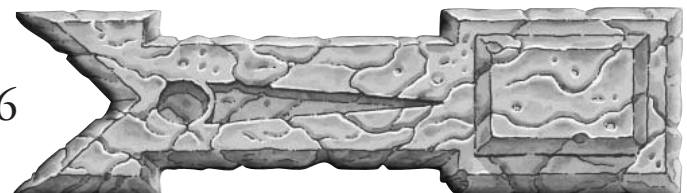
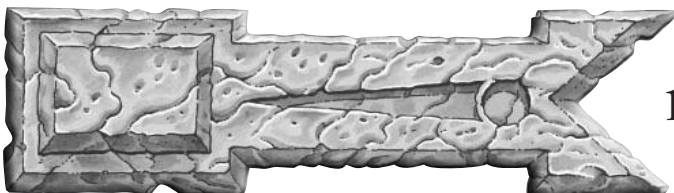
The army conducts rigorous drills, mock combats, and arms training. Increase the army’s die size in conflicts by one step.

The army must continue to train to maintain its edge. If two seasons pass in which the army did not train or fight in a significant battle (i.e., with a force on at least the same scale as itself), the soldiers’ skills dull and the training benefit no longer applies.

WORSHIP

Even though they’re in the field, soldiers can still take time to pray to their gods. Armies usually contain shamans who lead these services, and they are especially likely during the god’s holy season.

An army that spends a season worshipping generates +50% Belief.





SEASONS

If you would like to incorporate tactical board game elements, the game progresses in seasons rather than years. Each season is an actual season—winter, spring, summer, or fall—so four of them represent one year.

Note that at the end of your favored seasons, you still check in with your population and perform maintenance (see Chapter 5: Playing the Game — Conflict and Miracles, “Maintenance and Years”). However, when you play with the tactical board game rules, *you do not gain Belief at the end of each year*. Instead, you gain Belief at the end of each season.

In each season, each player does the following.

- 1) Rolls for territory depletion and recovery.
- 2) Determines seasonal activities.
- 3) Undertakes adventures.
- 4) Generates Belief.

Step 1: Roll for Territory Depletion and Recovery

Overcrowded territories become less able to support their populations, but depleted territories may recover.

Territory Depletion: For each territory that contains more tokens (of any color) than its maximum (three for lush territories, two for ample, and one for harsh), roll a d10. On a 1, you have two choices. You may discard a token of your choice (red, white, or black) as the mortals fall victim to widespread famine and hardship. Alternatively, the population *depletes* the territory, reducing its quality by one category (lush to ample, ample to harsh) as its people survive only at the cost of hunting game to extinction, pumping aquifers dry and otherwise doing immense damage to the region. If the quality of the land is already harsh, you cannot deplete it any further and must instead remove a token.

In a territory that suffers depletion of either kind, white and black tokens cannot undertake seasonal activities this season and do not gain the benefit of performing the “nothing” seasonal activity—they have no resources to spare while they recover from the ravages of the previous season.



Reduce the territory depletion die size by one step for each additional token in the territory. Therefore, if a lush territory has five tokens in it, reduce the die size by one step (being over capacity means you have to make a roll for depletion; being over by an additional token means you reduce the die size) to a d8.

Territory Recovery: In time, depleted territories can reestablish themselves.

For each territory that has been depleted by overpopulation, roll a d12. On a 1, the territory recovers by one category; a harsh territory becomes ample again, for example. Once the territory has returned to its original status, it is no longer considered depleted.

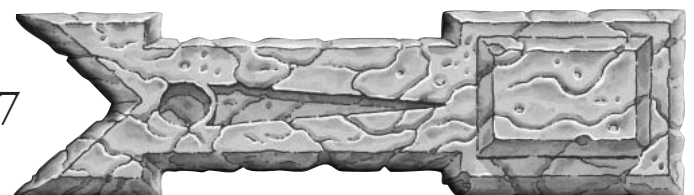
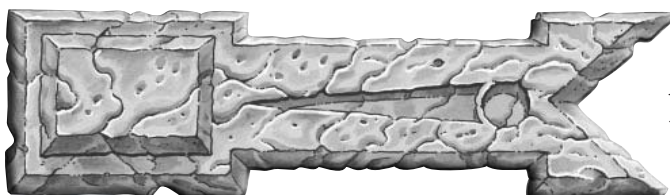
Roll this die only if the territory is not currently overcrowded. Also, territories that were depleted this season don't get to roll for recovery until the next season.

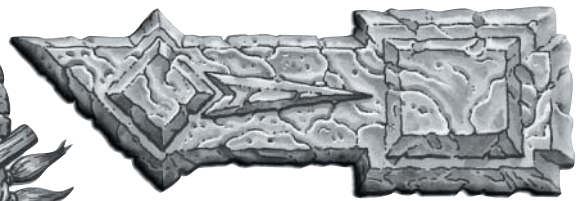
If the territory is not at its population capacity, reduce the territory recovery die size for one step for each additional token it could comfortably support. For example, an ample territory that was once lush has one token on it. Roll to see if it recovers, and reduce the die size by one step (because ample territories can support up to two tokens comfortably), to a d10.

STEP 2: DETERMINE SEASONAL ACTIVITIES

During a season, your followers do things. They construct buildings and roads, spend weeks in prayer, train some of their members as soldiers, or just have time to relax and have fun. You assign one seasonal activity to each token. See “Mortal Resources,” *Seasonal Activities*, above, for a description of seasonal activities.

The GM may allow the players to declare these seasonal activities in any order. That's fine if all the players are playing cooperatively (for example, if they are all part of the same pantheon). Alternatively, players may take turns declaring seasonal activities a token at a time, starting with the player with the most tokens (or most Belief, in the event of a tie). Another option (particularly valid in games in which





the players compete with each other) is for each player to write his activities on a piece of paper so one player's declarations do not influence the decisions of another.

STEP 3: UNDERTAKE ADVENTURES

If you incorporate strategic board game elements into your *New Gods of Mankind* game, you have two modes of play: tactical board game and roleplaying game. These modes are interconnected, and you experience both as you play the game. You'll play the board game for a while, and then something will happen to move you to the roleplaying style. This *something* is often an adventure.

The GM plans adventures that occur in the course of play. These adventures can be just about anything: A rival god could demand a duel in the Celestial Gardens, a Leviathan's dark cult could infiltrate one of your villages, one of your scouts could discover an ancient city, or anything else could happen. You usually learn of such events either directly (a god coming to your palace in the Celestial Gardens and getting uppity) or because your followers are praying for aid. You might also simply stumble into an adventure because your awareness was in the right place at the right time (you were watching the scout on his expedition, for example).

An adventure usually takes place out of the seasonal time frame. It's something you deal with more immediately. So, the season is put on hold while you and your appropriate followers undertake the adventure.

Some seasons—sometimes many in a row—pass without an adventure occurring. In this case, simply skip to the next step.

STEP 4: GENERATE BELIEF

If you do not use these optional rules, your followers generate Belief at the end of each year. If you *do* use these rules, they generate Belief at the end of each *season*.

At the end of a season, all followers (who survived to the end) generate Belief. A token must have been in existence at

the season's beginning and end to generate Belief. (Tokens you gain over the course of a season—because your population multiplied or because you converted some barbarians or whatever—do not generate Belief until the next season.) Any structures your population completed this season apply to the Belief they generate. So a token finishing construction on a temple generates +50% Belief—as do all other tokens in that territory.

Tokens generate Belief from the territory in which they dwell at the end of a season. So, a token that begins the season in a territory with a temple but migrates to a territory without one does not gain the temple's benefit when generating Belief. However, a token migrating *to* a territory with a temple gains its benefit immediately.

All tokens generate Belief: white, black, and red.

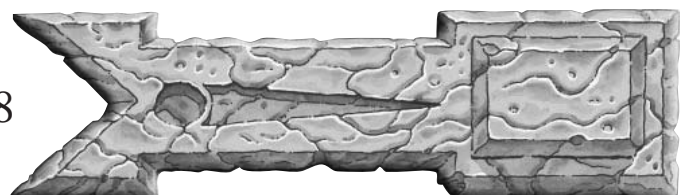
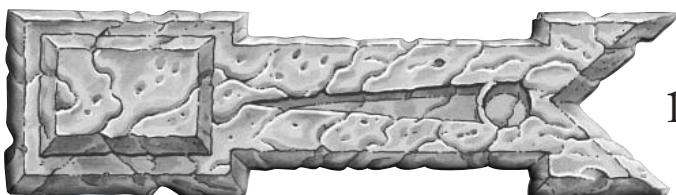
To determine how much Belief a token generates, simply roll its Spirit. For example, a normal human has a Spirit score of a d6. Therefore, to determine how much Belief a normal token (for a human population) generates, roll a d6; you gain that much Belief.

A number of factors—including structures—can affect how much Belief you gain.

<2> BELIEF IN YEARS AND SEASONS

A token represents one hundred people. If you *don't* use these optional board game rules, ten of these people provide you with 2 Belief at the end of the year, for a total of 20 Belief per year. In these seasonal rules, you roll the token's Spirit at the end of each season and gain that much Belief. Since humans roll d6s for Spirit, that's an average of 3.5 Belief per season, or 14 per year. That's not as much as 20—but in the board game rules your followers have a number of options to increase their Belief output. For example, if the token spent all four of a year's seasons in worship, it generates an average of 28 Belief at the end of the year—which is more than the 20 these people would produce using just the roleplaying game rules. However, since you're playing a tactical board game, you might want them to do something else.

In the end, it all balances out.



CHAPTER 7: SAMPLES OF MIRACLES, CHARACTERS AND PLAY



In order for new players to understand New Gods of Mankind better, the following sections have been included into this Handbook. Actions in this game can be very arbitrary and quixotic with the GM/Fate making many judgment calls. In order to avoid confusion and many frustrating sessions of play, read through this section at least once. Samples of play, miracle making and character creation have been provided so you may create a long lasting character that can fully interact with the world of New Gods of Mankind. There are many golden ideas here for you to take advantage of.

A total listing of forty miracles, ten from each type of miracle are here below for you to use with your new god. We hope these samples inspire you to create your own miracles.

The following Miracles do not include domain or inclination +/- values, and all locations are set to +1.

CREATION

Address the Faithful: The air shimmers, and an insubstantial, wavering image of the deity appears to deliver a message or commandment to those present before winking out of existence again. The image is clearly illusionary and not physically present.

Cost 4 (Trivial Innovation of Creation (4), Duration +0, Scale +0, Total 1)

Armor of God: A high, pure note sounds, and in an instant an army finds itself holding blades and clad in armor of shimmering silver metal of surpassing toughness. The swords are razor-sharp, while the armor deflects all but the mightiest blows with a musical clang. A force of up to

100 individuals gains +3 to its combat rating.

Cost 40 (Major Alteration of Creation(5), Duration +1, Scale +2, Total 4)

Call the Sky-Chariot: The clouds part, and a glowing chariot of pure sunlight swoops down to land gracefully on translucent golden wings. The chariot is large enough to hold up to six people comfortably, or twice that in discomfort, but has no yoke or horses – instead, it responds instantly to voice commands. The chariot can fly at up to 50 miles per hour and is surprisingly maneuverable.

Cost 18 (Significant Innovation of Creation(6), Duration +1, Scale +1, Total 3)

Food of the Gods: A field of a specific fruiting plant or grain, or a single fruiting tree appears from nowhere. The plant adapts to the immediate environment it is created in (cold/hot, wet/dry, barren/fertile), self-sufficient as a grown specimen. The plant breeds true with the same qualities as the crafted plant.

Cost 48 (Significant Innovation of Creation (6), Duration +2, Scale +2, Total 8)

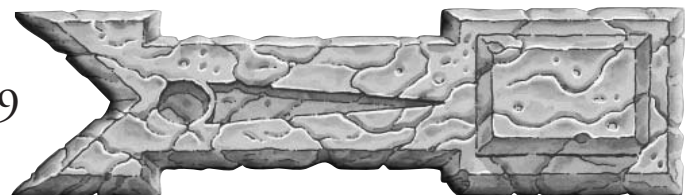
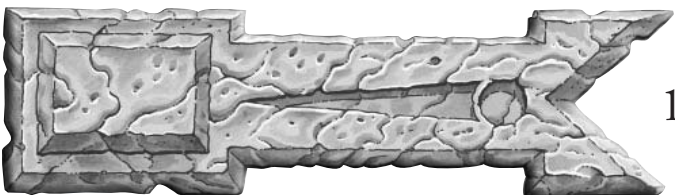
Godseed: A young virgin awakens pregnant, visited by the god in the middle of the night. In the event of a barren woman conceiving, it becomes a Major Innovation of Creation (7) and the cost is 28.

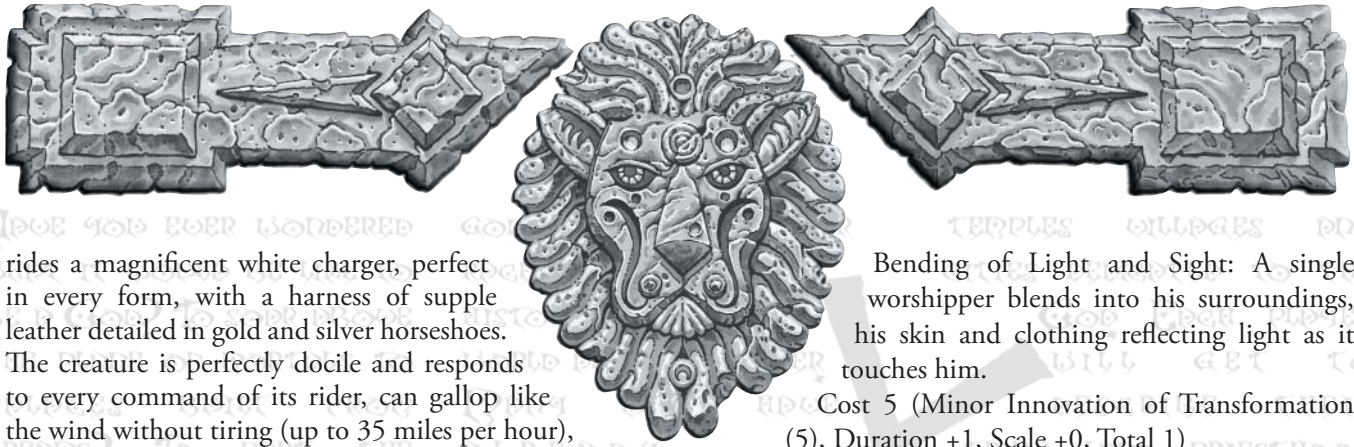
Cost 20 (Minor Innovation of Creation (5), Duration +3, Scale +0, Total 4)

Many from One: A single loaf of bread or drop of water becomes a never-ending supply until the last person in the village has eaten or drunk his fill. Alternate ways to represent this Miracle include manna from the sky, an always-filled stewpot or simply finding a broken-down wagon full of food.

Cost 20 (Major Alteration of Creation (5), Duration +1, Scale +2, Total 4)

Matchless Steed: From out of a lake or other body of water





rides a magnificent white charger, perfect in every form, with a harness of supple leather detailed in gold and silver horseshoes. The creature is perfectly docile and responds to every command of its rider, can gallop like the wind without tiring (up to 35 miles per hour), and in battle tramples enemies beneath it (counts as an individual combat resource with d12 Body). The horse will serve for one journey or conflict, before shaking free and riding away.

Cost 16 (Legendary Innovation of Creation (8), Duration +1, Scale +0, Total 2)

Rainbow Bridge: A rainbow erupts from the ground directly in front of the worshippers spanning the chasm or river that they need to cross. This rainbow is solid and non-slippery. Once the travelers are safely on the other side, the rainbow vanishes.

Cost 6 (Significant Innovation of Creation (6), Duration +0, Scale +1, Total 1)

Rain-bringer: A sudden downpour erupts from a cloudless sky, putting out the fires or supplying villagers with much needed water. After about five minutes of constant rain (about an inch of water), the weather returns to normal.

Cost 14 (Major Innovation of Creation (7), Duration +0, Scale +2, Total 2)

Shield of Light: A powerful force prevents all attacks or dangers from harming a village or army. It appears as a shining light surrounding the tribal members and stops lightning, fire, boulders, arrows, or other attacks just short of their target.

Cost 16 (Legendary Innovation of Creation (8), Duration +0, Scale +2, Total 2)

TRANSFORMATION

Animal Friend: A pet or beloved animal grows in both dedication and power. This can include changes in size or intelligence (adding up to two steps to Body and/or Mind), the ability to speak, or telepathy.

Cost 28 (Major Innovation of Transformation (7), Duration +3, Scale +0, Total 4)

Bending of Light and Sight: A single worshipper blends into his surroundings, his skin and clothing reflecting light as it touches him.

Cost 5 (Minor Innovation of Transformation (5), Duration +1, Scale +0, Total 1)

Blessing of the Faithful: Often used on the Heroes of a god, this Miracle provides a Hero with incredible might and power in his darkest time of need. A god casts this Miracle on his Hero beforehand, the effect waiting to occur. If a Hero loses a die roll that would end up defeating him or killing him, he immediately gains a +4 Bonus to his conflict rolls for the duration of the current conflict, infused with the might of his god. This bonus applies retroactively to the losing roll, swaying the conflict in his favor.

Cost 8 (Legendary Alteration of Transformation (8), Duration +1, Scale 0, Total 1)

Blessings of Wealth: Often used by a god who wishes to reward a mortal family that has shown him kindness while he incarnates in a hidden form, this Miracle allows the god to transform a bag of rocks into a bag of gems or other valuables.

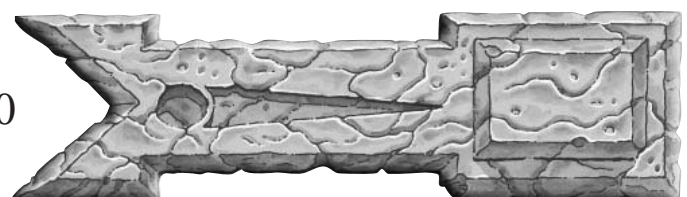
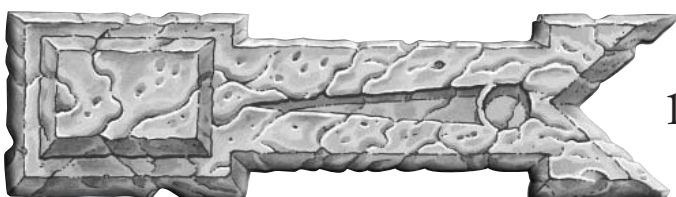
Cost 3 (Minor Alteration of Transformation (3), Duration +0, Scale +1, Total 1)

Blunting the Blade: A group of attacks transforms into harmless forms. A volley of sharp arrows becomes a volley of feathers; a falling boulder becomes a black mist that dissipates. This effectively makes a targeted force unable to injure others for the duration of this Miracle.

Cost 12 (Significant Innovation of Transformation (6), Duration +1, Scale +1, Total 2)

Casting Off Winter's Cloak: A harsh winter transforms into spring, allowing the plants to bud and snow to melt. The region stays warm until "real" spring arrives. The counterpoint of this Miracle is 'Fimbulwinter', which strikes the area with bitter cold until "real" winter arrives.

Cost 90 (Legendary Alteration of Transformation (6), Duration +2, Scale +3, Total 15)





Curse of Youth and Frailty: This Miracle can reduce a target to infancy or old age or anywhere in-between, maintaining his intellect but suffering the physical effects of such a change.

Cost 4 (Significant Alteration of Transformation (4), Duration +0, Scale +0, Total 1)

Redoubt: A mainstay of defense, this Miracle conjures a small fortification from existing materials: wooden palisades, sand berms and a moat are just some of the defenses created by Redoubt. This Miracle grants a +2 bonus to combat if those using it are fighting a defensive battle.

Cost 24 (Significant Innovation of Transformation (6), Duration +1, Scale +2, Total 3)

Touch of God's Might: The individual targeted with this Miracle finds himself with a short burst of power granted from his god. Such feats as lifting a stone trapping a relative or outracing a raging flood are a small sample of this Miracle's use.

Cost 2 (Trivial Alteration of Transformation (2), Duration +0, Scale +0, Total 1)

Unquenching Water: A curse against desert communities, this Miracle transforms a body of water such as a well, stream or other small source of water. Anyone drinking water from the tainted source suffers a terrible thirst. Water from this source does nothing to quench it and in fact makes it worse.

Cost 16 (Trivial Alteration of Transformation (2), Duration +2, Scale +1, Total 4)

DESTRUCTION

Blight: Over the course of a single day, farmers watch in horror as their crops sicken and die – by dusk once-healthy fields become rotting black mulch. New seeds will grow naturally if planted, but this Miracle destroys all unharvested, cultivated crops across a territory.

Cost 24 (Significant Innovation of Destruction (6), Duration +0, Scale +3, Total 4)

Coughing Curse: A village suffers a mild contagion: inhabitants break out in cold sweats, purple rashes, and a persistent cough, while feeling weak and vaguely nauseous. The ailment will run its course in about a week, after which it will gradually clear up of its own accord.

All individuals in the town have their Body die type reduced one step.

Cost 8 (Trivial Alteration of Destruction(2), Duration +1, Scale +2, Total 3)

Curse of Rust: When this Miracle strikes an army, any metal they carry including weapons and armor rust and decay as if with every second another year had passed. Within a minute, swords and armor will have crumbled away to red dust. This reduces a unit of up to 100 individuals' combat die type by two sizes for the duration of a conflict.

Cost 24 (Minor Alteration of Destruction(3), Duration +1, Scale +2, Total 4)

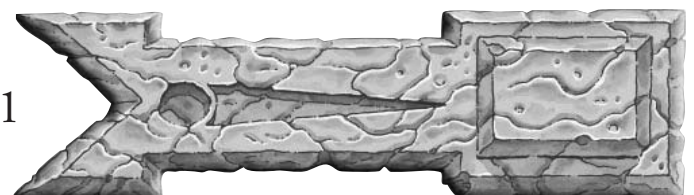
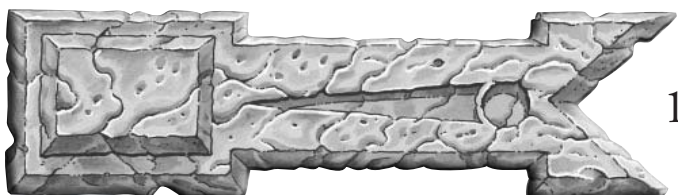
Damming the River: A large freestanding body of water vanishes, leaving only dying fish and whatever else lay beneath the surface. If the body of water feeds from a source, it will slowly refill.

Cost 16 (Significant Alteration of Destruction(4), Duration 0, Scale +2, Total 3)

Death-Wave: A wave of black-green cloud rolls across the landscape, killing everything in its path throughout the entire territory. The wave moves at the speed of a fast run, and is dense enough to block all sight — any living creature it engulfs dies instantly, leaving only twisted bleached skeletons and petrified plant fragments. The wave has no effect on any non-living material, both inorganic substances such as rock, or organic ones such as leather or cut wood..

Cost 64 (Legendary Innovation of Destruction(8), Duration +0, Scale +3, Total 4)

Eradication of the Blasphemous Shrine: A targeted temple or other building begins to smoke and tremble. Any statues or other religious iconography explode into fragments, before





every flammable surface simultaneously erupting into flames. Finally, unquenchable purple flames consume the entire structure until only a heap of smoldering ash remains. Cost 14 (Major Innovation of Destruction (7), Duration +0, Scale +1, Total 2)

Hunger Evermore: This Miracle devastates traveling armies as it hits them at their weakness: their stomach. The targets must eat three times their normal amount of food or suffer a one step penalty. If they actually run out of food, this becomes a three step penalty.

Cost 32 (Significant Alteration of Destruction(4), Duration +1, Scale +2, Total 4)

Smite: A Miracle that remains ever popular among all but the most forgiving deities. Lightning slashes down from the clear sky, striking an individual dead in an instant. Kills an individual with d6 Body.

Cost 5 (Minor Innovation of Destruction(5), Duration +0, Scale +0, Total 1)

Spirit's Mischief: An individual's belt, straps, buttons and other restraints on their clothing snap or tear suddenly and without warning, and an instantly later their clothing falls to the floor in a heap.

Cost 2 (Trivial Alteration of Destruction(2), Duration +0, Scale +0, Total 1)

Weakness of the Newborn Babe: Wispy, vaguely humanoid forms surround the target and caress him before whirling away as the target collapses to the ground. While non-fatal, incredible weakness and lethargy overcomes the individual, and only the mightiest will even be able to stand. With complete rest, the target will recover in a month. Mechanically, this reduces an individuals' body stat by four dice sizes to a minimum of 1.

Cost 12 (Legendary Alteration of Destruction(6), Duration +1, Scale +0, Total 2)

CONTROL

Animal Army: A pack of animals (die d4, anything smaller than a man) falls under the god's control. Their eyes glow red, and they actively seek to defend the god's tribe and attack the god's enemies. Although they still have animal intelligence, they use their instincts and keen senses to their fullest.

Cost 8 (Trivial Innovation of Control (4), Duration +0, Scale +2, Total 2)

Command the Beast: This Miracle affects the attitude of one animal or other non-sentient creature, making it feel hostility, fear, or affection towards a person or tribe. By using this Miracle, a god can protect his hero from a hungry wolf, help his hunters bring down a mighty stag, or send a rampaging bear after his enemies.

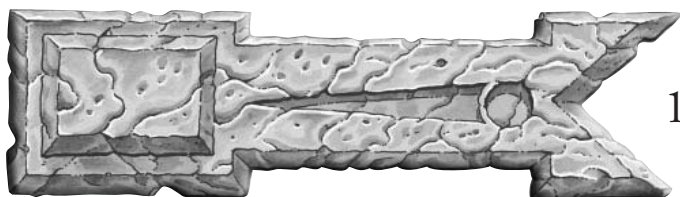
Cost 2 (Trivial Alteration of Control (2), Duration +0, Scale +1, Total 1)

Clouds of Light and Despair: The clouds part and a ray of glorious sunlight shines down on the God's worshippers, filling them with hope and joy. Alternately, black clouds roil across the face of the sun, flooding the people with a deep and holy dread. In any case, the Miracle changes the emotional state of up to a village of people, and increases or decreases their die type by two steps.

Cost 12 (Minor Alteration of Control (3), Duration +1, Scale +2, Total 3)

Divine Inspiration: One of the god's worshippers, usually a priest or other devout follower, awakens with detailed knowledge of some subject that he did not have when he went to sleep. The knowledge may be technical (how to make an irrigation system), strategic (where the enemies camps are), or even prophetic (a seven-year drought is on its way). The God may pour such knowledge into the servant from himself, or he may draw it from another mortal's mind.

Cost 20 (Minor Innovation of Control (5), Duration +3, Scale +0, Total 3)





Hand of the God: This Miracle gives the god total control over a mortal's actions. The god effectively takes possession of the mortal, unable to move or speak except as the god wills it. Autonomous actions (breathing, etc.) are not affected, but all conscious thought relies on the god's will. The god can give the target a simple task ('go here', 'kill him') and focus his attention elsewhere, but once the task is complete, the mortal simply stands and waits for the next command.

Cost 5 (Major Alteration of Control (5), Duration +1, Scale +0, Total 1)

History Rewritten: By using this Miracle, a God can "rewrite" the targets' memories to whatever he wants. He can turn enemies into allies, leaders into fools, and fools into heroes. For mortals, reality is what they remember it to be, even in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

Cost 90 (Legendary Alteration of Control (6), Duration +3, Scale +2, Total 5)

Pulling the Reins of Thought: By using this Miracle, a God can change a mortal's opinion on a single topic. It must a topic of which the mortal is aware. This change does not inherently change the mortal's opinion of related topics. For example, a mortal may hate his enemy tribe, but mysteriously like the enemy leader. How this potential cognitive dissonance is resolved is up to the mortal — and the GM.

Cost 16 (Significant Alteration of Control (4), Duration +3, Scale +0, Total 3)

Word of God: This Miracle of conversion does away with the need for a prophet. Instead, the god speaks directly to the targets (in a booming voice of thunder, perhaps, or in the buzzing of a thousand locusts — whatever works best for his domain), and demands that they worship him. While his impressive display of supernatural power impresses their rational minds, the Miracle reaches into their hearts and wrenches them towards worship.

Cost 64 (Legendary Innovation of Control (8), Duration +3, Scale +1, Total 4)

Words of the Prophet: This Miracle works through the words of a god's prophet to convert non-believers to worshipping the god. As long as someone is instructing the targets to convert, the Miracle implants in their hearts and minds the idea that they *should* worship the god. The Miracle turns them into followers — at least until their previous god turns them back.

Cost 48 (Significant Innovation of Control (6), Duration +3, Scale +1, Total 4)

Written on Water: A single target suffers total amnesia. She forgets her name, her tribe, her enemies, and even her god. The Miracle may leave the target's basic skills (speaking, walking, etc.) intact or, at the god's discretion, she may be reduced mentally to an infant state. The memories are destroyed, and cannot be brought back outside of another Miracle.

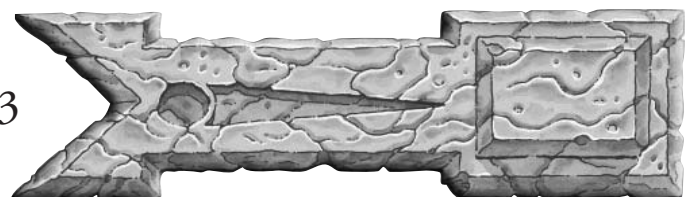
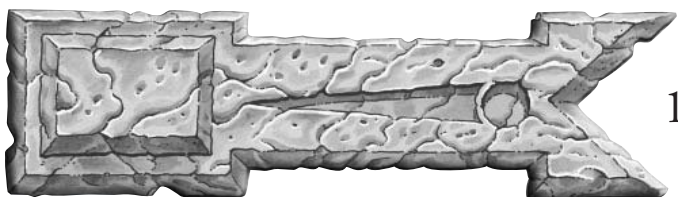
Cost 28 (Major Innovation of Control (7), Duration +3, Scale +0, Total 3)

THE GODS OF JURAI: A SAMPLE PANTHEON

This section provides a pantheon of five gods. Players may use these gods as PCs in the introductory adventure, "Wolves at the Door," or as inspiration for their own original gods.

The gods of this pantheon are all worshipped by the Jurai tribe who live in the Croesus region of Naalgorm. Once highly revered members of the Jurai, they ascended to godhood after their deaths. The gods may have occasional disputes, but they all want the best for their people. They never let their squabbles endanger the tribe that worships them.

Jurai is an established tribe with one major village and several outlying camps that may become settlements someday. Its people raise crops and livestock, and do some iron working in the smithy. The number of players determines the actual size of the tribe; for each player, there are 100 active tribe members (this doesn't include children or the elderly). For





example, if there are four players taking on roles of gods in the pantheon, then the tribe of Jurai has 400 active members.

If the players are using Jurai and its gods in the introductory adventure, they are encouraged to add details to personalize the tribe to their liking.

The Gods of Jurai are as follows:

- **Annodares**, God of War and Wisdom. While he is aggressive, and his followers warriors, they seek wisdom as well as victory.
- **Cozares**, Goddess of Twilight. Her domains include healing, and the mysteries of life and death. She is mid-wife, doctor, and angel of death. Some love her, some fear her, but all respect her.

Enok, Lord of Labor. He blesses those who work hard to improve their lot, and provides joyful celebration when those labors are through.

- **Jattera**, Goddess of Domesticated Animals. Also holding dominion over the concepts of instinct and nature, she is both the shepherd and the mother bear protecting her young.

- **Rassat**, Master of Arcane Power. He is a god of arcane power, isolation, sacrifice and the seeing of esoteric knowledge. He offers his followers obscure truths and power over the physical realm in exchange for their worship.

Below, each of these gods is described in detail.

ANNODARES, GOD OF WAR AND WISDOM

Primary Domain: War

Additional Domains: Wisdom, Education, Knowledge

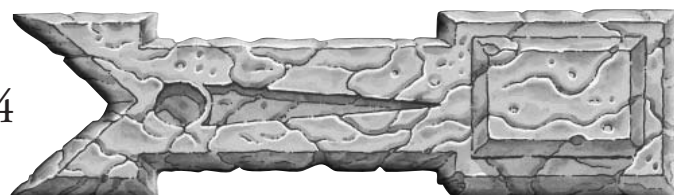
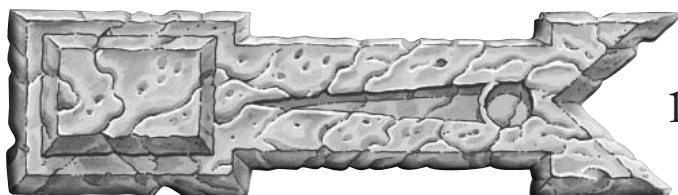
Inclinations:

- **Harmony:** Control
- **Balance:** Destruction, Transformation
- **Opposition:** Creation

Belief: 50

Appearance: Annodares incarnates as the ultimate Jurai warrior. He appears in the finest gleaming armor, a shining sword in hand, and shield at his side. His voice is supernaturally commanding and resonant. Between his voice and appearance, Annodares is an inspiration on any battlefield or training ground. Even in the spirit realm, the God maintains this same appearance; it is what he strove for as a mortal, and he hasn't found a reason to give it up.

Personality: Generations ago, Annodares was a tribal elder who rallied the Jurai against a salamander invasion. They repelled the invaders, Annodares became chieftain, and he instituted a tradition of education and military service for all the men of the tribe. The Jurai continued to revere Annodares after his death, and he ascended to Godhood.





While other war Gods may dedicate themselves to the destruction of their peoples' enemies, Annodares focuses on the *ability* to wage war, rather than the waging of the war itself. He is a drill instructor, a veteran general, and a military scholar all in one. He encourages patience, learning, and discipline: traits that help create not just good soldiers, but also good citizens.

Unless trying to inspire or rebuke, Annodares is quiet. He speaks calmly and patiently, not easily provoked. When action is required, he takes it decisively and without warning. And when his tribe is threatened, action is definitely required.

Symbols: The most common symbol of Annodares is a flaming sword against the field of black. This represents the light of knowledge illuminating—and burning away, if necessary—the darkness of ignorance.

Celestial Home: On a wind-swept plain in the realm of Endless Summer that is not unlike those of Croesus, Annodares makes his home in a fortress of stone. Carved in the walls of the fortress are the teachings of generals, scholars, and sages from throughout history. Even the words of other gods appear on the walls; when Annodares discovers something worthwhile, he adds it to the walls. When the walls are full, he expands the fortress.

Once a year, Annodares creates two shadow armies: one to attack the fortress, and one to defend it. He controls the defenders directly, in order to test out his latest military tactics and theories. He sometimes invites another god to control the attackers, and the shadow battle becomes something of a game between them.

Heroes and Artifacts: Annodares prefers to empower his followers through training, discipline, and scholarship, so he has no Heroes, and but a single artifact. The artifact is referred to as the “staff of knowledge,” and was his wooden walking stick when he a mortal. The staff serves as repository for the most important lessons the tribe has learned. A

priest blesses the staff, then hands it to the one who has learned the lesson, who then describes what he has learned (how to flank a salamander scout, where to set up an ambush, how to forge a stronger blade, etc.). The staff “remembers” the tribesman’s words. Later, another tribesman may grasp the staff and, with a prayer to Annodares, request to hear those words of wisdom. *Cost: 6 (Significant Innovation (6), Scale 0, Duration +3, Inclination -1, Location 0, Domain -2)*

Worship: The priests of Annodares are the closest thing the Jurai have to a standing army. They are teachers as well as warriors, and all Jurai children are required to spend time with the priests learning the history of the tribe, combat basics, and the discipline and problem-solving skills that make them good citizens. Those who excel in their lessons and training may become warrior-priests, called Paragons.

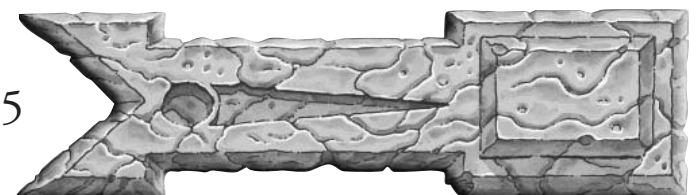
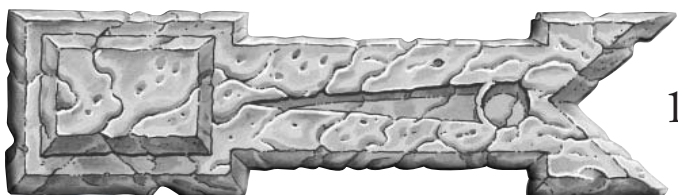
Annodares maintains a single permanent temple in the main Jurai village, a combination library and martial training hall. The temple also serves as the tribe’s armory and, if necessary, fortress.

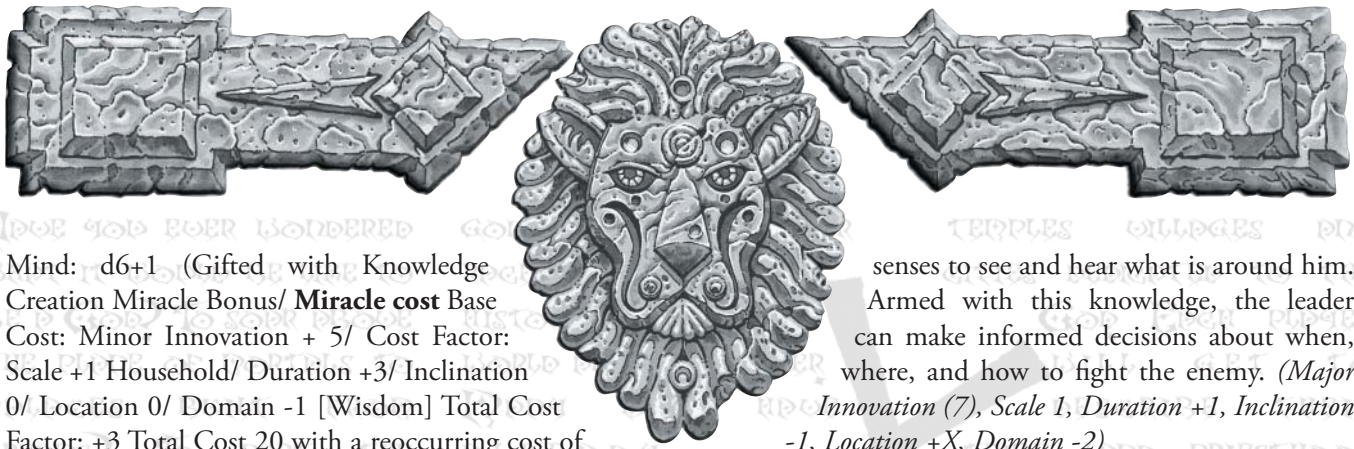
At the height of summer, the Jurai celebrate the Feast of Annodares. This three-day festival honors the god for saving the tribe from the salamanders so many years ago. The Feast is marked with the telling of the story of Annodares, displays of combat prowess and wisdom, and children engaging in mock battles.

Followers: The followers of Annodares from the tribe of Jurai are mostly warrior-priests called Paragons who have sharp minds blessed by the god and physical prowess unmatched in the other tribes. Other followers have human base stats.

Followers of Annodares in the tribe of Jurai

Total number of followers: 100
 30% Warrior Priest, 0% others
 Paragons of Annodares: Warrior Priests (Total 30)
 Body: d8





Mind: d6+1 (Gifted with Knowledge Creation Miracle Bonus/ **Miracle cost** Base Cost: Minor Innovation + 5/ Cost Factor: Scale +1 Household/ Duration +3/ Inclination 0/ Location 0/ Domain -1 [Wisdom] Total Cost Factor: +3 Total Cost 20 with a reoccurring cost of 19 Belief per Year) Spirit: d6 Other followers: d6 with no modifiers

Commandments: Annodares has many small laws for his Paragons to memorize and follow, but for the whole tribe, he has but three major commandments:

- **Teach your children the ways of the tribe so they may be good citizens.** Most Jurai obey this commandment by sending their children to learn under the Paragons' from the time they are about four year old until they turn 10. Such lessons don't take up all the children's time, allowing them to work at home and the fields.

- **Start no war without the blessings of Annodares.** This doesn't restrict the tribe from defending itself, of course, but the tribal leaders will not initiate any aggressive acts without the full support Annodares' high priest, the First Paragon. This isn't just an act of obedience, however, as the Paragons are the tribe's best warriors. Attacking an enemy without their help would be foolish.

- **Take trophies from your enemies as reminders of what you have learned, and at what price.** These trophies may be weapons, armor, or even bones, but are ideally something that will last for generations. Trophies are brought to the temple for safekeeping, where the tales of the battles are inscribed on scrolls for future generations.

FAVORED MIRACLES

- **Whisper of the Scout (Control):** A war leader is only as effective as the intelligence he gathers. This Miracle bonds a leader to one of his scouts. While the scout is out on patrol, he and the leader can communicate telepathically and, by concentrating, the leader can even use the scout's

senses to see and hear what is around him. Armed with this knowledge, the leader can make informed decisions about when, where, and how to fight the enemy. (*Major Innovation (7), Scale 1, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

- **Banish Fear (Control):** One does not need to kill an army in order to defeat it. One needs only to break its spirit. This Miracle protects the warriors of Annodares from having their spirits broken. Even in the face of overwhelming odds, the Miracle keeps their fear at bay and lets them focus on the job at hand. The Miracle increases the die type of an army in combat by three steps. (*Significant Alteration (4), Scale 2, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

- **Flames of Knowledge (Transformation):** While the light of learning is usually a metaphor, this Miracle turns it into a literal battlefield truth, as the swords of the Jurai burst into flame. While the flame itself doesn't do much extra damage in combat, the sight of fire-wielding enemies is enough to give even the salamanders pause. The Miracle increases the die type of the army in combat by four steps. (*Major Alteration (5), Scale 2, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

COZARES, GODDESS OF TWILIGHT

Primary Domain: Boundaries of Life and Death

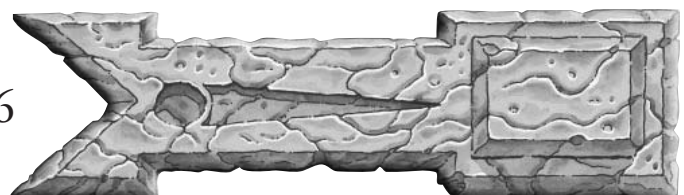
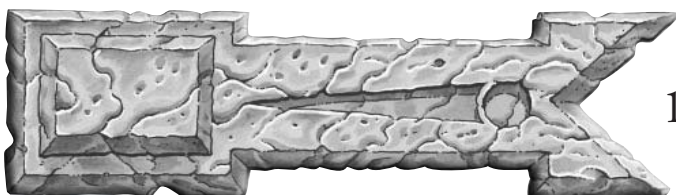
Additional Domains: Shadow, Healing, Birth / Death,

Inclinations:

- **Harmony:** Transformation
- **Balance:** Creation, Destruction
- **Opposition:** Control

Belief: 50

Appearance: When Cozares incarnates, she does so as an unnaturally pale, four-armed woman wearing a heavy cloak that absorbs light. Regardless of lighting conditions, she casts a dark and animated shadow that seems to influence others shadows around her to move on their own. In the spirit world, Cozares appears as an enormous stone portal wide enough for six men to pass side-by-side. Sometimes the stone of the circle is onyx, and the interior





space glows an intense white. Other times, the stone is gleaming alabaster, and its interior is a roiling blackness that crawls over the skin.

Personality: Cozares is quiet and solemn, with no real sense of humor. She can be kind when she wishes, but centuries of listening to mortals beg for their lives has hardened her heart. Cold and aloof to all but those who truly know her, she is not malicious or capricious, but merely carries out her duties as mechanically as possible.

Symbols: Black and white patterns, especially those that balance the two colors, are sacred to Cozares. Other symbols include stylized doors, and anything divided in half.

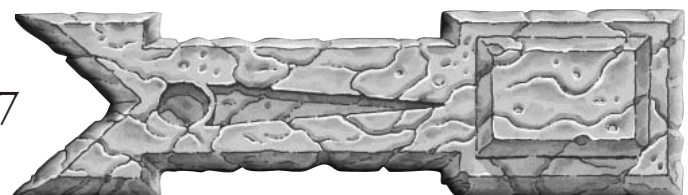
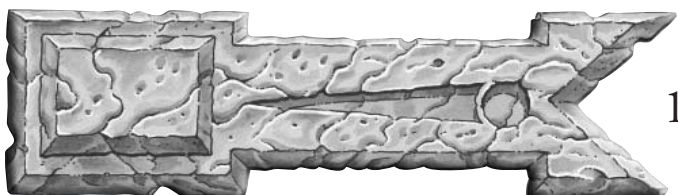
Celestial Home: Deep in the forests of Perpetual Autumn, where the sun glows through the red-orange leaves, there is a clearing that seems to burn in the light of the setting sun. The sun never truly sets here, a land of eternal twilight, the home of Cozares.

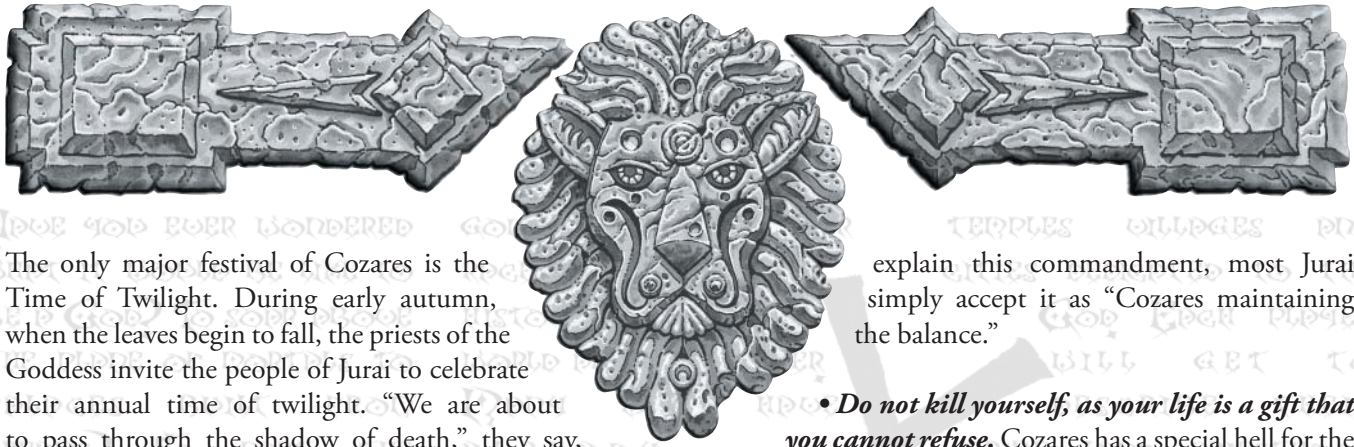
The Goddess of Twilight's home is a maze of black and white stones. At the center of the maze is a tower, and atop the tower is a beacon. The beacon either burns with a pure white light, or exudes the cool darkness of the void, depending on the mood of its mistress.

Heroes and Artifacts: Cozares has neither Heroes nor artifacts. In ages past, she had a Hero, a brilliant philosopher who understood that death is not the end of human existence. He dedicated himself to pushing the boundaries between life and death, to bring to the living the wisdom that Cozares shared with him as he stood at the threshold. The Hero eventually pushed too far, and could not return to the land of the living. Cozares pled with Fate, as so many mortals had pled with her, but Fate's answer was firm: the mortal could not return to the realm of the living, though he could stay with Cozares if she wished. She declined, and her former Hero returned to the Well of Souls.

Worship: The priests of Cozares are mostly women. They have all had a brush with death, through either illness or injury, and that brush has left them changed. They understand better than others do the myriad threads of life that bind a human to the physical world, using this knowledge to act as healers.. Cozares has no temples. Instead, her priests work out of their homes, where they maintain small apothecaries and store their ritual elements.

The two most common rites of Cozares are funeral rites and birthing rites. Cozares's priests handle all funerals among the Jurai. As well, the priests of Cozares are the tribe's midwives, helping life into the world as they see life leave. Those who are dying, and those who are expecting children pray to Cozares for mercy, peace, and the strength to face what is to come.





The only major festival of Cozares is the Time of Twilight. During early autumn, when the leaves begin to fall, the priests of the Goddess invite the people of Jurai to celebrate their annual time of twilight. “We are about to pass through the shadow of death,” they say, referring to the winter to come. “And when we emerge, it will be into the light of life.” As part of this festival, the people remember all those who died in the past year, as well as all those who were born. During this time, some of the more devout (or curious) imbibe a concoction known as *Namate*. This secret of the priests of Cozares brings the drinker to death’s door where, if they are faithful, Cozares meets them and gives them wisdom.

Followers: The priestesses and priests of Cozares are very spiritual people who have touched on the threshold of death. Known as Twilight Walkers, these chosen followers of Cozares take care of the birth and death rituals for the tribe of Jurai. Other followers of Cozares are usually family members who have a loved one who has experienced a brush with death or has lost a loved one and are still grieving.

Followers of Cozares in the tribe of Jurai

- Total number of followers: 100
- 30% priestesses, 0% other
- Twilight Walkers of Cozares: Priest of Cozares (Total 30)
- Body: d6
- Mind: d6
- Spirit: d8
- Other followers: d6 with no modifiers

COMMANDMENTS:

Cozares has a number of commandments she expects the whole tribe, not just her priests, to follow:

- **Do not bury or burn your dead until they begin to decay.** Traditions vary by geography, but most Jurai have their dead lie “in state” at their homes for several days.
- **It pleases the Goddess if you step on the shadows of her priests in the morning, but it angers her if you do so during the evening.** While the priests have tried to

explain this commandment, most Jurai simply accept it as “Cozares maintaining the balance.”

- **Do not kill yourself, as your life is a gift that you cannot refuse.** Cozares has a special hell for the

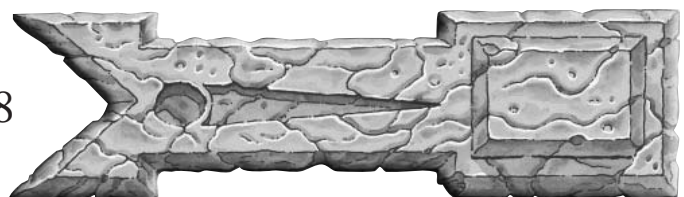
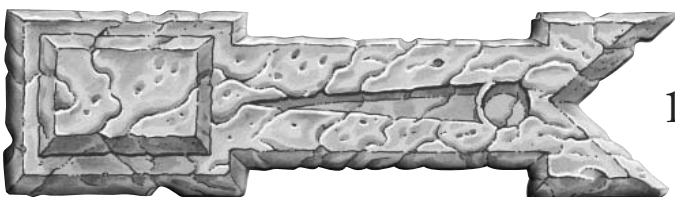
Jurai who kill themselves: she turns them into stones in her maze, where they go mad from tedium and isolation.

FAVORED MIRACLES

• **Healing Touch (Transformation):** As a goddess of life, much of what Cozares does is bring life to those who need it most: the ill and injured. She heals those who call out to her, and those for whom her priests pray. If the subject is far-gone, and Cozares’ touch brings him or her back from the brink, the subject often becomes the goddess’s newest priest. This Miracle restores one person to perfect health. (*Major Alteration (5), Scale 0, Duration 0, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

• **Control Shadow (Transformation):** This Miracle allows Cozares to control shadows and give them substance. This Miracle converts any shadows into a liquid blackness that can manipulate objects or attack those nearby. In game terms, she creates a tentacle or hand with a base die of d6 that lasts for ten minutes. (*Minor Innovation (5), Scale 2, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

• **Crossing the Threshold (Creation):** She does not do it easily or often, but Cozares can raise the dead. Specifically, she can reunite the souls of the recently departed with their physical bodies—at least for a little while—if Fate has not yet marked them. When Cozares raises the dead (with a base die of d4), she does so for a reason. She usually gives the deceased a message of hope, comfort, or warning, or may have a task for the newly revived to carry out. Only once has a reanimated messenger kept his new life; most return to death within a few days of life. (*Trivial Innovation (5), Scale 0, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)





ENOK, LORD OF LABOR

Primary Domain: Labor

Additional Domains: Improvement, Justice, Celebrations

Inclinations:

- **Harmony:** Creation
- **Balance:** Transformation, Control
- **Opposition:** Destruction

Belief: 50

Appearance: Enok incarnates as a broad-shouldered, muscular man twice the size of a mortal, with bronzed skin that seems to have a halo about it. His green eyes sparkle, his smile is quick and friendly, and his hair is long and dark. Enok wears no shirt, favoring a simple pair of loose pants with a belt. On the belt he wears a large pouch from which he can produce any tool that his people may need..

Enok maintains the same appearance in the spirit world, where he busies himself improving his own home.

Personality: Enok is a boisterous, good-natured god. He's always good for a joke, though usually not at someone else's expense—and never the expense of his followers. Enok works as hard as his followers do, and plays just as hard as well. While he is slow to take offense, Enok is proud, and fights to defend his honor. Once his honor is satisfied, however, Enok is quick to forgive and forget.

While Enok encourages his followers to improve their lots, he wants them to do so gradually and naturally through hard work. In this way he is quite conservative, not believing in short cuts or relying on windfalls. He considers those who rely on such things to get ahead as lazy, and there are few greater sins against Enok than laziness.

Symbols: Enok's symbol is a pair of crossed tools. The specific tools vary by geography and what worshipper is seeking his favor: blacksmiths may have crossed hammers, while farmers may use crossed scythes.

Celestial Home: Enok's home is a vast manor in the realm

of Eternal Spring. The God is often working on the grounds: building extensions onto buildings, replacing roofs, even adding decorative touches—all by the power of his own hands rather than with his godly might.

Likewise, Enok plants, tends, and harvest the acres of crops in front of the manor grounds, and cuts lumber from the forest behind.

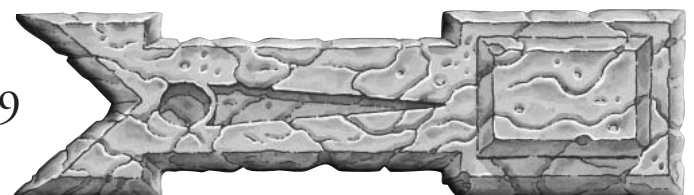
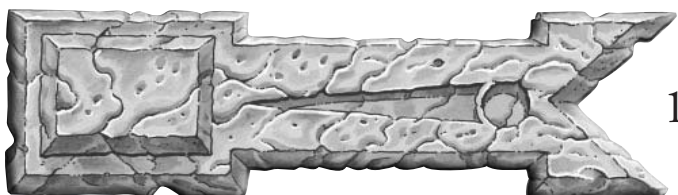
Heroes and Artifacts: The followers of Enok proudly self-sufficient—a trait their god likes to encourage—and have no need for Heroes to serve as exemplars of virtue. Still, the God of Labor has given them one Artifact: an anvil. Any tools made or repaired on the anvil stay stronger, sharper, and more durable than any tool could. This effect does not work on weapons. (*Minor Alteration (3), Scale 0, Duration +3, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

Worship: The metalworking smiths of the Jurai are all priests of Enok. The mysteries of the priesthood pass from one generation to the next alongside the mysteries of forging metal. The village smithy is the unofficial temple of Enok and the most likely place to find the God's priests.

The tribe performs a small, simple ceremony honoring Enok whenever it begins or completes a construction project. The farmers of the tribe have their own rites before planting, during the growing season, and just before the harvest. By offering these rites, they implore Enok to reward their work with the just fruits of their labor.

In the autumn, after the harvest is in, the tribe celebrates a multiple-day feast of Enok. This feast celebrates the harvest, and the God's blessings. The feast is a wild, exuberant event, with much drinking of the local wine. While the feast itself only takes two days, the third day is set aside for recovery.

Followers: The priests of Enok are intelligent individuals who pride themselves on their intuitiveness, work ethic, and engineering feats. In the tribe of Jurai they are relied on to build temples for all the gods, and make the weapons and tools. Some of the most brilliant and hard-working





members of the tribe come to worship, but only a few are chosen to become priests.

Followers of Enok in the tribe of Jurai

Total number of followers: 100

30% Priest, 0% other

Engineer Priests of Enok: (Total 30)

Body: d6

Mind: d8

Spirit: d6

Other followers: d6 with no modifiers

Commandments: Like everything else he does, Enok keeps his commandments simple, reasonable, and in line with common sense:

- ***Do not withhold a fair wage from those who work for you. Likewise, if you agree to a price, you must keep your word or risk the wrath of Enok.*** As a God of hard work and just reward, Enok has decreed that work must be compensated. Those who promise a reward for work and then renege on that promise may be calling the God's wrath upon themselves.

- ***Earn your keep. Demand no reward beyond that which you have earned through your own labors.*** This commandment is the flip-side of the above: if you promise to do the work, do it. Fairness and honesty create good faith, which is the cornerstone of a simple, growing economy.

- ***Be not satisfied with your lot, but continually strive to improve it.*** Plant more crops, build onto your house, refine your stone-cutting skills. Whatever you do and whatever you have, try to make it better. In this way, your very life is an act of worship to Enok, and your descendants will have lives even better than your own life

FAVORED MIRACLES

- **Divine Celebration (Creation):** Enok believes that after working hard, his people deserve to play hard. But after days, weeks, or even months of hard work, his people may not have the energy to put together a satisfactory celebration.

When this happens, he uses this Miracle to create a celebration feast: tables spread with mouth-watering food, barrels of ale, and songs of joy floating on the air. Such celebrations usually start at sunset and vanish at midnight. (*Significant Innovation (6), Scale 2, Duration +2, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

- **Bounty (Transformation):** Sometimes, even though a farmer does everything right, his crops still do poorly. Despite the farmer's work, harsh weather, poor soil, and bad luck can ruin the crops of the faithful. This Miracle allows Enok to breathe new life into crops, allowing for a proper harvest. (*Major Alteration (5), Scale 2, Duration +3, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

- **Helping Hands (Creation):** While Enok prefers to let his people do their own work, he is willing to give them a hand in times of urgency: getting the last crop in before the winter rains, hammering out swords to defend against invading salamanders, etc. This Miracle creates one or more "shadow workers" to help with the labor. They are gray-black homunculi with no facial features and just enough intelligence to take simple orders. Seeing a batch of shadow workers helping with a task fill the Jurai with both faith and fear; while the sight means that Enok is watching over them, it also means the situation is rather dire. (*Major Innovation (7), Scale 3, Duration +2, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

JATTERA, ANIMAL QUEEN

Primary Domain: Domesticated Animals

Additional Domains: Protection, Defense, Nature

Inclinations:

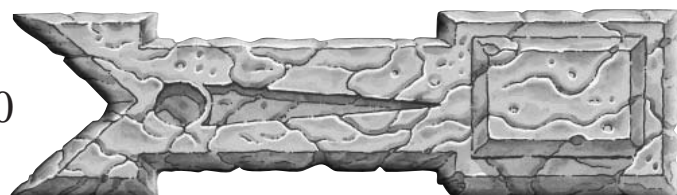
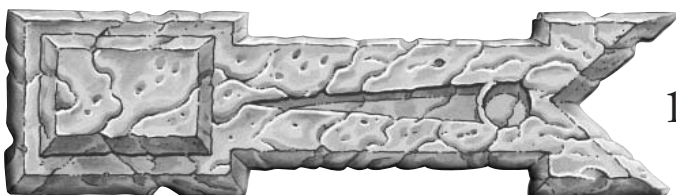
- **Harmony:** Control

- **Balance:** Creation, Transformation

- **Opposition:** Destruction

Belief: 50

Appearance: In the physical world, Jattera typically appears as a plain-looking young woman in dirty work clothes that suggest she has been working in a barn; mortals that have





seen her had no idea they were talking to a god. When angry, Jattera grows to half again her size, ages to middle-age, and sprouts the fangs and claws of a bear.

In the spiritual world, Jattera rarely wears a humanoid form. Instead, she wanders the realm as a cat, dog, cow, or any other animal that strikes her fancy.

Personality: Jattera is passionate about her charges (the domesticated animals of Jurai) and those who care for them. She is quick to defend them—almost too quick—and has a bit of a temper. Jattera denies any claim that she only cares about her animals and shepherds, and is quick to point out how much they and the tribe depend on each other.

Many domestic animals are bred to be slaughtered. Jattera accepts that as the animals' fate, and does her best to make sure the slaughter is quick, painless, and peaceful. What she does not accept is cruelty. Whether it is to her animals, her servants, or anyone else who is weaker and undeserving, such cruelty inspires her to grim vengeance on the victim's behalf.

Symbols: The symbol of Jattera is an animal footprint (the cloven hoof of a goat, the paw of a dog, the claw of a chicken, etc.) in white, placed upon the walls of barns and pastures. A less common symbol for Jattera is the bear, a symbol of her protective nature.

Celestial Home: Jattera's home in the realm of Endless Summer is a vast farm on the prairie, populated by all the animals domesticated by the Jurai. With green and sweet grass, and a bright and warm sun, this is paradise for these animals.

Heroes and Artifacts: Jattera has but a single Hero, the wandering animal doctor Rodikai. The son a farmer, Rodikai grew up caring for animals, finally becoming a priest of Jattera. When a disease ravaged whole flocks of Jurai sheep, Jattera raised her priest to Hero status, and gave him the mystical ability to speak with and understand

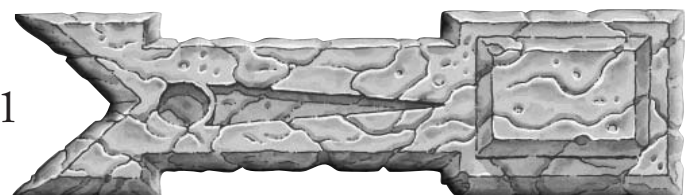
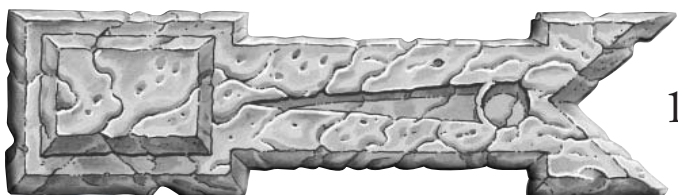
animals. Since that time, Rodikai wanders the Jurai territory, healing animals wherever he comes across them.

Rodikai Hero of Jattera

Body: d6,
Mind: d8+2, Animal Speech, Miraculous Knowledge of Animals
Spirit: d6

(Note priests of Jattera start off with a Base d8 for mind)

(Creation Miracle for Rodikai's Animal Speech and Knowledge: Base Cost Significant Innovation +6/ Cost Factors/ Scale 0/ Duration + 3/ Inclination 0/ Location 0/ Domain -2 Total Cost Factor +1 / Total Cost: 6 Initial with a renewing cost of 5 Belief Per Year)





Worship: Many of Jattera's priests are animal healers, with broad, practical knowledge of animal illness, birthing, and herbal remedies. She has one temple in the main Jurai village, which serves as an office, apothecary, and classroom for her priests. Other priests work out of their homes.

In the spring, Jattera's priests lead the people in a large rite that celebrates new birth. During the rite, children wear masks of the various domesticated animals that have given birth since autumn.

Whenever a domesticated animal is slaughtered, the butcher is to perform a small ritual of thanksgiving directed both to Jattera and to the animal. If this ritual isn't carried out, or is just a mumbled, rote part of the process, the Goddess is displeased. The butcher may find himself tormented by the spirits of the animals he killed dishonorably.

Followers: Jattera's followers consist of shepherds, cattle ranchers, butchers, and others who deal with nature and animals. Her priests are a dedicated group using their skills to protect animals and their environment.

Followers of Jattera in the tribe of Jurai

- Total number of followers: 100
- 30% Priest, 0% other
- Animal Priests of Jattera: (Total 30)
- Body: d6
- Mind: d8
- Spirit: d6
- Other followers: d6 with no modifiers

Commandments: Jattera has a few simple commandments she expects the people to follow:

- **Honor the Slaughtered.** While each chicken that gives its life to become stew does not get a funeral, Jattera does want the bodies of the slaughtered burned or buried with respect. They are not to be thrown with the village rubbish, but disposed of separately, with a short prayer said over them.

- **Leave not your animals in the rain.** Domesticated animals must be brought into the barn or house if it begins to rain.

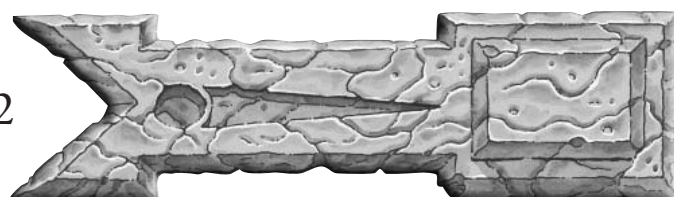
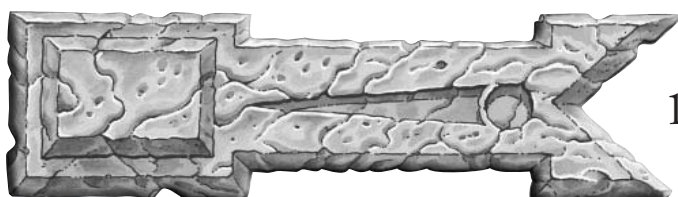
- **Waste not the flesh and produce of your animals.** Milking a cow is necessary. Slaughtering a cow is acceptable, so long as nothing is wasted. But if one has more milk and beef than one needs, then one must share with others.

FAVORED MIRACLES:

- **Pacify (Control):** With a gentle word, Jattera can instantly tame any animal, no matter how wild. Her Miracle calms the beast so it will allow humans to touch or even carry it. This tameness is only temporary; it is up to the humans to permanently domesticate the animal. In game terms, the Miracle reduces the animal's die type by three steps for the purpose of domesticating it. (*Significant Alteration (4), Scale 0, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

- **Defending the Den (Control):** When the need arises, Jattera can turn her charges into an army of claws, hooves, and gnashing teeth. She rarely uses this Miracle as it puts her animals in harm's way, but doing so fills a number of animals with courage, energy, and the burning desire to defend their homes by any means necessary. This Miracle does not change the animals' dice, but gives them a mind to fight on their masters' behalf. (*Significant Alteration (4), Scale 2, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

- **Be the Beast (Transformation):** Sometimes, the best way to teach someone how it feels to be an animal is to make him an animal. This Miracle transforms a human into an animal of the same size or smaller. The human keeps his intelligence but must content with overwhelming animal instincts. (*Significant Alteration (4), Scale 2, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)





RASSAT, MASTER OF THE ARCANE

Primary Domain: Power

Additional Domains: Isolation, Sacrifice, Seeking the Esoteric

Inclinations:

- **Harmony:** Transformation
- **Balance:** Creation, Destruction
- **Opposition:** Control

Belief: 50

Appearance: Rassat typically incarnates as a handsome, clean-cut young man of noble bearing. He wears fine clothing and a wry smile that suggests he's above it all. The only part of his physical form that hints at his divinity is his voice, which purrs and roars like no mortal voice can. In the spirit realm, he is constantly changing form: a wise old man, a fearsome dragon, an abstract collection of two-dimensional shapes orbiting a floating obelisk, etc.

Personality: Rassat is nothing if not charismatic. He uses his voice as a fine and subtle instrument, being seductive, commanding, diplomatic, or inspiring as the need arises.

Rassat is also the most ambitious of the Gods of Jurai. He makes no secret that he dreams of worshippers not only amongst the Jurai, but also throughout all of Croesus... and eventually all Naalgrom. His plan is raise up a handful of zealots, and then move those zealots into places of power and authority across the region. When the time is right, his zealots will use their power to make *everyone* worship Rassat.

While isolation is part of Rassat's domain, the god himself is a rather social creature. He enjoys talking with his fellow gods and communing with his followers. Because he is the youngest god of the Jurai, the other gods consider Rassat and his dreams foolish. They are willing to let him have his fun for now, sure he will learn the danger and folly of his naked ambition soon enough.

Symbols: Rassat has adopted a stylized eye as his symbol. It represents looking for knowledge and seeing through

the illusions of mundane life. His followers often etch the eye onto their ceremonial materials and paint it onto their skins.

Celestial Home: Rassat maintains a palace in the realm of Perpetual Autumn where he lives in luxury, attended by spirit servants who scurry throughout the palace at his command. The God is proud of his home, and often invites the other Gods of Jurai to visit. A gracious host, he usually has some new trinket or trick to display.

Heroes and Artifacts: Artifacts don't interest Rassat, but Heroes are the key to his success. While only a handful of his worshippers are Heroes, they are role models for the rest of his worshippers. They all *want* to become Heroes... and if they continue in their zeal of Rassat, some day they may be. Rassat's three most famous Heroes are Tellis, Shara, and Zenaphon. The God can speak directly into the minds of his Heroes without spending any Belief, and often does, as they are his pawns in the Known World.

- **Tellis** is a bold and charismatic Jurai, similar to his god. Rassat has gifted him with the ability of mind reading, which he uses to help him as one of the Jurai's first politicians. He speaks to the tribal elders on behalf of his "clients" in order to help those elders make "informed decisions." Tellis loves his tribe, but can't wait to get out in the world and use his power on those he doesn't love.

Tellis Hero of Rassat of the Jurai Tribe.

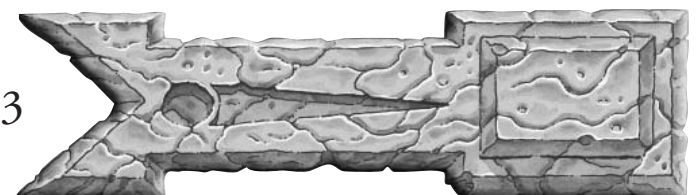
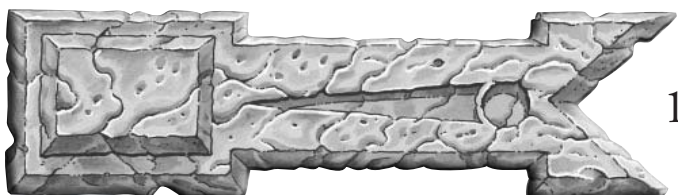
Body: d6

Mind: d8 +2 Mind Reading

Spirit: d6

(Note: Priest of Rassat start off with a base d8 for Mind)

(Miracle Cost for Mind Reading Miracle for Tellis *Base Cost Significant Innovation +6/ Cost Factors/ Scale 0/ Duration +3/ Inclination 0/ Location 0/ Domain -2 Total Cost Factor +1 / Total Cost: 6 Initial with a renewing cost of 5 Belief Per Year*)





Shara is a force of destruction. She was born angry, she says, and never got over it. Any perceived slight fills her with rage, which she releases in a storm of eldritch fire. Shara lives at the edge of the Jurai, raising sheep, worshipping Rassat, and practicing her fire magic in isolation. The other Jurai ignore her unless they need her fiery touch to handle some external problem.

Shara Heroine of Rassat of the Jurai Tribe.

Body: d6

Mind: d8 +3 Throwing Arcane Fire

Spirit: d6

(Note: Priest of Rassat start off with a base d8 for Mind)

(Miracle Cost for Throwing Arcane Fire for Shara *Base Cost Major Innovation +7/ Cost Factors/ Scale 0/ Duration + 3/ Inclination 0/ Location 0/ Domain -2 Total Cost Factor +1 / Total Cost: 7 Initial with a renewing cost of 5 Belief Per Year*)

Zenaphon is an old, old man. His Hero status has kept him alive for centuries. He has no inherent magical powers, but his wisdom is legendary. He lives in the main Jurai village, where the elders provide for him in exchange for his wisdom. His home is the unofficial temple of Rassat; those who want to follow the esoteric god often come here first to learn what Zenaphon can teach them.

Zenaphon Major Hero of Rassat of the Jurai Tribe.

Body: d8 Eternal Life

Mind: d10 Legendary Wisdom

Spirit: d6

(Note: Priest of Rassat start off with a base d8 for Mind)

(Miracle Cost for Eternal Life Miracle for Zenaphon *Base Cost Significant Innovation +6/ Cost Factors/ Scale 0/ Duration + 3/ Inclination 0/ Location 0/ Domain -2 Total Cost Factor +1 / Total Cost: 6 Initial with a renewing cost of 5 Belief Per Year*) (Miracle Cost for Legendary Wisdom Miracle for Zenaphon *Base Cost Major Innovation +7/ Cost Factors/ Scale 0/ Duration + 3/ Inclination 0/ Location 0/*

Domain -2 Total Cost Factor +1 / Total Cost: 7 Initial with a renewing cost of 6 Belief Per Year) Total Cost per year upkeep 11 Belief

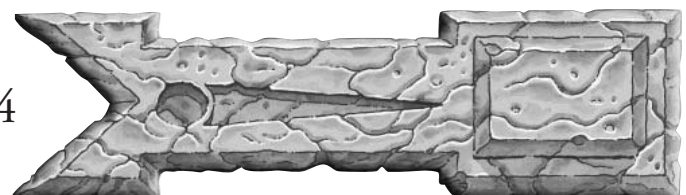
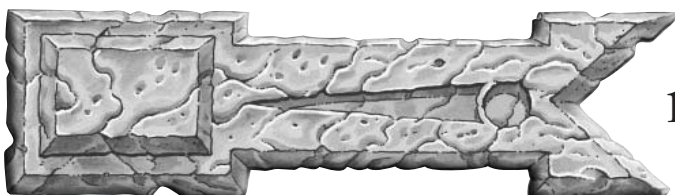
• **Choose wisely those who would follow the Path of the Arcane.** While Rassat wants his people to recruit new believers, it is essential that the new believers have the capacity for devotion he needs. And of course, the more believers he has, the harder it is to maintain the all-important secrecy of the religion.

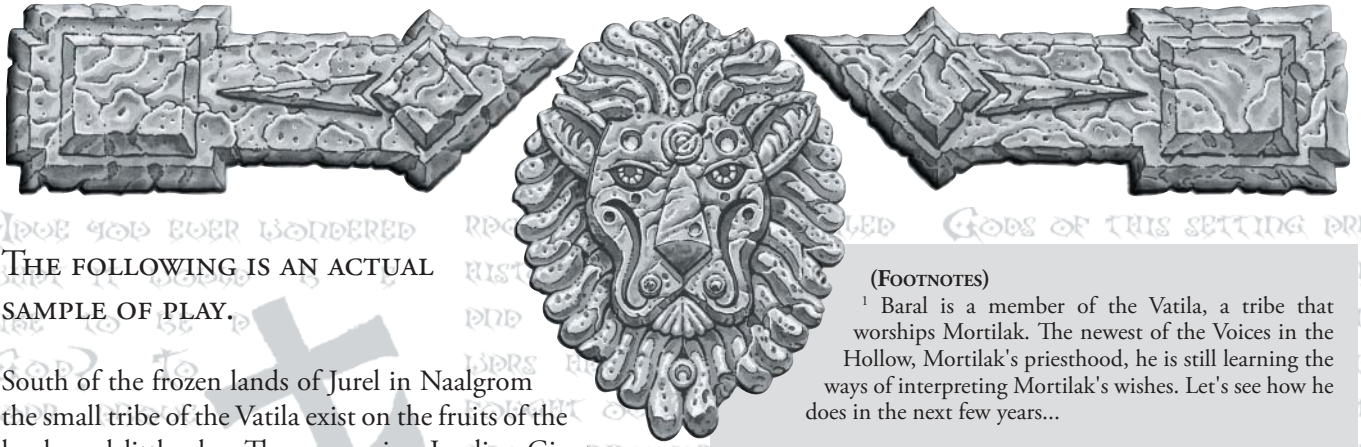
FAVORED MIRACLES:

• **Heart's Desire (Transformation):** Rassat has a very business-like relationship with his followers: they offer him Belief, and in return, he gives them what they most desire. This is a Miracle of self-improvement. It enhances the target in whatever fashion he desires (smarter, stronger, more attractive, etc.). In game terms, the Miracle increases the servant's die type by one step for about a month. In order to make it last longer, the believer must provide more Belief. (*Trivial Alteration (2), Scale 0, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

• **Daily Bread (Creation):** While Rassat encourages his people to isolate themselves from distractions in order to focus on the important, cryptic matters, he knows they still need to eat. This Miracle provides food for a small group of believers. (*Minor Innovation (5), Scale 1, Duration +2, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)

• **Smite Thine Enemy (Destruction):** Many turn to Rassat's mysterious magic because they feel powerless against their enemies. This Miracle smites those enemies with boils, vomiting, and massive bleeding. Multiple uses of this Miracle will kill. In game terms, it's a simple Miracle that reduces the target's die type by three steps. (*Significant Alteration (4), Scale 0, Duration +1, Inclination -1, Location +X, Domain -2*)





THE FOLLOWING IS AN ACTUAL SAMPLE OF PLAY.

South of the frozen lands of Jurel in Naalgrom the small tribe of the Vabila exist on the fruits of the lands and little else. The rampaging Jurelian Giants threaten the village and its people by their relentless raids into other territories. Thuun Lord of Destruction and god of the Giants send out his people every year for this sole purpose. Mortilak, god of the Vabila people has a plan and tells it to his chosen followers.

I am Baral, Voice in the Hollow, of the Vabila what your people might call a priest. I am new at this, so forgive me if my speech seems simple. My intent, however, is to show you the passing of these times so you may understand the glory of Mortilak the Hidden and the struggles my people have faced, as taken from my journal, written as though it were happening now...¹

It all began a little over two years ago. We saw the flames, heard the screams and maniacal laughter, and smelled the burning flesh that was no further than five miles to the north. The Jurelian Giants were on a rampage by order of Thuun but they'd never ventured this far south. We had never seen such devastation. Our neighboring god, The Great Cloud, demanded his followers build taller and taller buildings in tribute and we suspected it attracted the ire of those beasts. Their chants to Thuun shook the snow from the trees and sent avalanches pouring down the mountains. We all feared for our lives that they may decide to take their campaign a little further south next time Thuun orders a rampage.

To our south, the Undines made their homes and dangerous bands of savage humans roamed. We all prayed to our god, Mortilak the Hidden², for guidance; His instructions shocked us. Stories circulated about Mortilak having dominion over the soil as well and now He told us to migrate to The Great Cloud's fallen village. Here, He would grant us an earthen kingdom. The tribe was hesitant to move closer to the destruction of the giants but Mortilak insisted that we could hide under the giants noses in the ruins of the old village and make traps to guard against the giants venturing too close unexpectedly.

(FOOTNOTES)

¹ Baral is a member of the Vabila, a tribe that worships Mortilak. The newest of the Voices in the Hollow, Mortilak's priesthood, he is still learning the ways of interpreting Mortilak's wishes. Let's see how he does in the next few years...

² Mortilak the Hidden

Primary Domain: Hunting

Additional Domains: Disguise, Trickery, Heat

Inclinations:

• **Harmony:** Transformation

• **Balance:** Creation, Control

• **Opposition:** Destruction

Belief: 100

Appearance: Mortilak incarnates as a humanoid with bark for skin and seven sharp branches growing from his back. Each branch represents one of the traps Mortilak conquered to defeat the leviathan known as Axpeloc. He has no pupils and great tangles of moss hang from his arms.

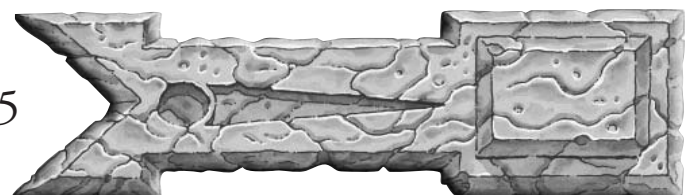
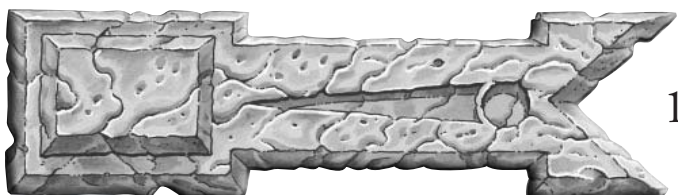
Personality: Once a hermit, Mortilak led a humble life. The population of a nearby village slowly dwindled because the climate was too cold for farming and the prey too strong and deadly to hunt with bow and spear. The villagers puzzled as to how the hermit, who was weak and didn't farm, survived, sought his council. Mortilak kindly taught them that if your enemy is stronger, you need only be smarter. The hermit's teachings saved the tribe and he became their god after death. He is kind and prides himself on being clever.

Symbols: Mortilak is frequently represented by a spiral drawn with straight lines.

Celestial Home: Deep within the ground under an icy forest in Everwinter. It is a place so deep that its tunnels pass through icy caves and into a cavern lit by **Worship:** Once a year Mortilak's followers perform a re-enactment of the story of his conquest of Axpeloc. During the summer season children often play games revolving around Mortilak and dress up as him by applying mud, tying branches to themselves and rolling their eyes back into their heads. Every month followers spend 4 days in isolation as a form of meditation

Commandments:

- One must exercise intelligence over brawn.
- Never journey over large bodies of water.
- Set harmless traps for other members of the tribe. This will make you alert and more clever.
- To take a wife one must pass through a gauntlet of seven traps set by the village elders. hot magma. Earthen trap doors on the surface hide tunnels that lead to where he rests.





We migrated the short distance and were alarmed to find ten giant earthen statues. They were in the likeness of the Jurelian Giants with the markings of our god³. Although we were afraid, the priests said they would come to life and trick any real giants that may stumble across our village. We also found ten pits with no bottom in sight, sure to kill even a Jurelian Giant should it fall into its depths. If this were not proof of our god's dominion over the land below, we needed no further proof after our trip into the tunnels hidden beneath the grainery. Below the ruins of the the village sat a vast underground city molded from the earth itself and bearing the markings of our god⁴. Many were the plants that grew even underground, and our hunters were overwhelmed with the choice of burrowing mammals and lizards as prey. It could house a population ten times the size our tribe! We spent the remainder of the year celebrating our good fortune and seeking to fill our new city⁵.



³ **Underground City** (legendary alteration base cost 6)

Description: Huge caverns are carved out of the earth and connected by passageways. An underground stream provides water.

Duration: Instant +0

Domain: Neither +0

Inclinations: In harmony -1

Location: The miracle occurs in a location no god controls +1

Scale: Territory +3

Cost factor: 3

Total Cost: 24

Underground City's Guardians (significant alteration base cost 4)

Description: The earth is pushed and molded to form 10 statues that look like giants.

Duration: Instant +0

Domain: Neither +0

Inclinations: In harmony -1

Location: The miracle occurs in a location no god controls +1

Scale: Household +1

Cost factor: 1

Total Cost: 4

Underground City's Traps (legendary alteration base cost 6)

Description: The earth is pushed aside to create deadly pits.

Duration: Instant +0

Domain: Neither +0

Inclinations: In harmony -1

Location: The miracle occurs in a location no god controls +1

Scale: Household +1

Cost factor: 1

Total Cost: 6

⁴ **Timeline for First Year token activities**

Mortilak begins with one white token and 100 belief.

**Yearly Event:* New Domain. 34 belief spent on an underground city, 10 earthen statues, and 10 pits.

- Migrate to The Great Cloud's destroyed village.
- Nothing. Rolls a 1 on a D6 and his followers reproduce creating another white token.
- Both tokens turn black.
- Both do nothing. Only one token creates another white. 21 Belief is generated. No territory depletion.

⁵ **Ari "Smokeless Fire"**

Human Heater: Minor alteration miracle with base cost of 3.

Duration: Permanent +3

Domain: Within Secondary -1

Inclinations: In harmony (Transformation) -1

Location: Within his territory +0

Scale: Village +2

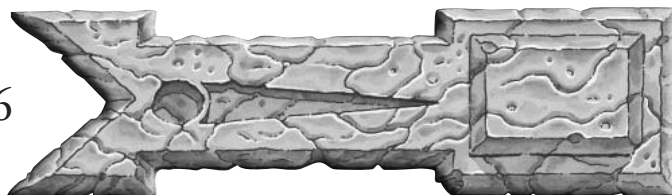
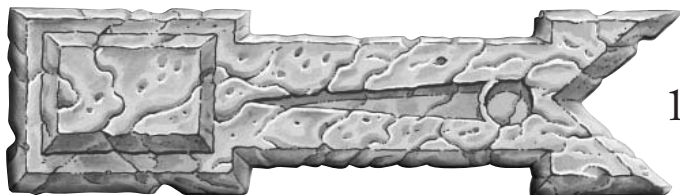
Cost Factor: 3 (multiply base by 4)

Total Miracle cost: 12 belief

Heat Blast: Legendary innovation miracle with base cost of 8.

Duration: Permanent +3

Domain: Within Secondary -1





The next year two people received the blessings of Mortilak. A hideous artist by the name of Ari caught attention through the intricate detailing she began to add to the earthen statues of giants.

Despite her great skill, her tribe shunned her due to her disfiguring scars from a terrible fire. Mortilak took pity upon her and blessed her with supernatural abilities.

People no longer avoided her and sought the comfort of the warmth she emitted and could create in an instant, granted the name Ari the Smokeless Fire. Even in her fame, she remained humble and redoubled her worship of Mortilak⁶.

Mar was the other of the blessed. Handsome and favored among the tribe for his strength, incredible strength that would come and go at the will of Mortilak. His great deeds included the building of a temple with the speed of a hundred men.⁷

By the end of the second year our tribe had grown to three hundred, had a hidden city, defensive measures, two touched by Mortilak, a temple and the land was holding up well.⁸

All of that was two years ago though. Now we hide in our underground home and I am the only one bold enough to peek out of the rubble of one of the old buildings. The scrape and rumble of marching giants etches itself into my mind again.. I hear crying and praying coming from the tunnel behind me. I look down, see my knuckles white around the haft of my axe.

Why have they returned so early?

It was daylight only a minute ago. Now, a large ominous cloud has blown in low in the sky and blocked out the sun. Small funnel clouds threaten to reach down and destroy the rubble of the old village that hides our tunnel entrances.⁹ I jump and hit my head on a plank of wood when the earthen statues suddenly crackle to life and raise from their slumped positions.¹⁰ They roar and grab planks from the rubble, smashing the ruins around us. Fires erupt in front of many of the buildings, igniting the unimportant ones. I smile, realizing with the dark sky hiding the details of the statues, it appears we were already under attack and defeated. Praise be to Mortilak, for His tricks will fool many, just as it may still fool the giants without bloodshed.

Something is wrong. The cracking of branches increases, faster, louder... the giants are in a full run. They burst forth from the forest, snapping trees and grabbing the pieces to wield in each of their four hands. There are so many, they are a wall

Inclinations: In harmony (Transformation) -1

Location: Within his territory +0

Scale: Individual +0

Cost Factor 1

Total Miracle cost: 8 belief

Ari the Smokeless Fire

Body: 6D *Mind:* 8D *Spirit* 6D

Human Heater: Gives off enough heat to keep those within 100 yards warm in the coldest winter.

Heat Blast: D12 attack on a single target. Also used for firing pottery.

⁶ **Mar**

Hulking form: Significant alteration with base cost of 4.

Duration: Permanent +3 One Conflict +1

Domain: I would say this falls under neither. 0

⁷ **Timeline for Second Year token activities**

**Yearly Event: Apotheosis.* The belief generated by the event was spent along with 20 more to create Mar, a new Hero. An additional 20 belief is used at start to create Ari the Smokeless Fire, another Hero.

- Ari finishes statues. One token turns black. Mar and one token work on temple. Other token worships.
- One token finishes temple. Other two worship.
- All three worship. Mar works on fortifications.
- All three worship.

94 Belief generated

Total Belief: 133 then loses 60 to keep Mar and Ari around. No territory depletion.

⁸ **The Great Cloud** (significant alteration base cost 4)

Description: A giant low-lying cloud forms covered with cloud-talons and tiny funnels. It takes up a great deal of the sky, blocking the sun. This miracle is meant to be terrifying. Roll D8 against the Spirit of Mortilak's followers. If The Great Cloud succeeds, roll a D6 and multiply by 3 to see how much terror The Great Cloud receives.

Duration: One conflict +1

Domain: In primary -2

Inclinations: In harmony -1

Location: within Mortilak's territory +2

Scale: Village +2

Cost factor 2

Total Cost: 8

⁹ **Animate Statue** (legendary alteration base cost 6)

Duration: +1

Domain: -1

Inclination: -1

Location: 0

Scale: +1

Total Cost: 6

¹⁰ **Jurelian Giants Base Stats**

Body: d10 +4

Mind: d6

Spirit: d6

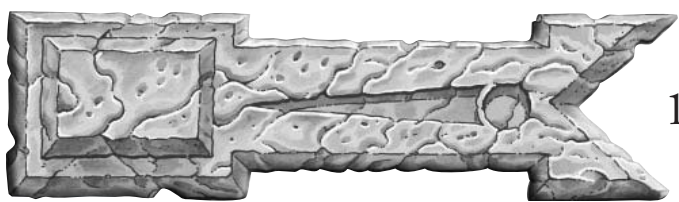
Animated Statues

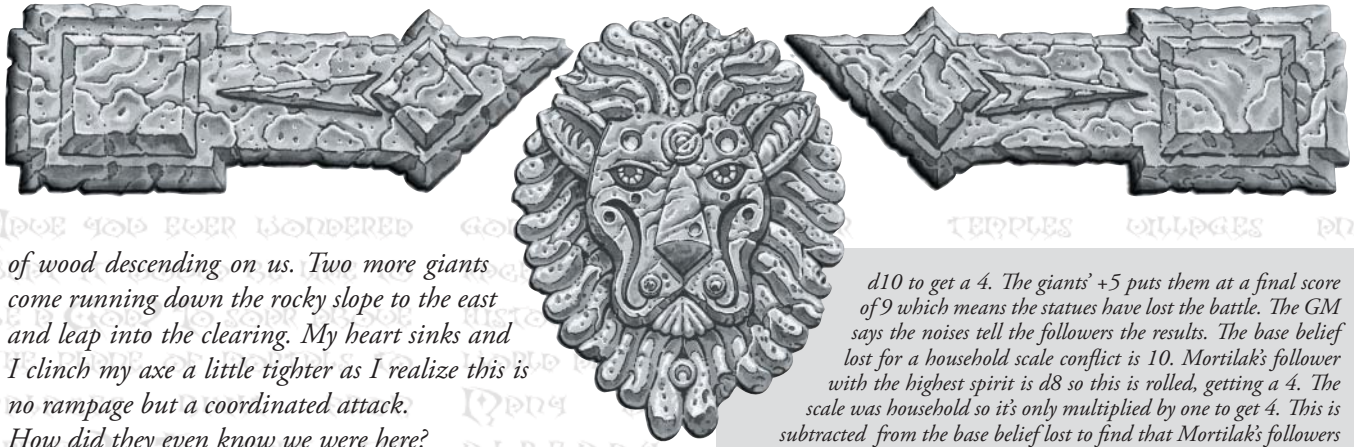
Body: d12

Mind: 1

Spirit: 1

There are 10 giants and 10 statues so the conflict is on a household scale. The statues roll their d12 and get a 6 while the giants roll their





of wood descending on us. Two more giants come running down the rocky slope to the east and leap into the clearing. My heart sinks and I clinch my axe a little tighter as I realize this is no rampage but a coordinated attack.

How did they even know we were here?

The animated statues turn to their enemies with expressionless faces and stand their ground. Howls of pain deafen me as our earthen defenders crush bones with their blows. The statues lose an arm, a portion of the head breaks but they continue until they are overwhelmed. There are just too many giants...¹¹

Mortilak, what have we done wrong?

My hearing finally returned with the crackling of flames and then the low grunts of the giants picking over the remains of the statues. I snap out of my trance, scrambling for the tunnel entrance. The giants spin to face me, eyes tearing into me as I run. I hear a piercing screech that makes me cover my ears and roll to look to our south. Ten large kyphaws¹² fill the sky, carrying boulders in their talons. They are the birds bred for The Great Cloud...

I thought he died with his followers!¹³

Boulders rain down among the flaming buildings, sending up mounds of snow that hiss into steam from the fires that still burn. A boulder lands not 30 paces from me; the ground breaks, the boulder falling through the ceiling to our underground village.¹⁴ A giant immediately leaps over and reaches into the darkness to pluck out some poor villager. Hopefully, Motilak will bless me with strength...

Wait... the beast screeches and stumbles backwards, his arms nothing more than bloody nubs. The other giants grunt and shuffle around, none daring to investigate what could do such thing. Mar bursts from out of the hole, his two hatchets slick with blood, breath standing still in the air as he lunges forward. Mar staggers about with no seeming purpose, but it soon becomes clear: Mar is backing them towards the pitfall traps.¹⁵

Ari's fire lights the sky, one of the falcons plunging from the sky. Her satisfaction turns to horror as the flames dance through the wind, lighting the surrounding forest. The fire forms unnaturally from tree to tree and the smoke shapes the clawed cloud symbol that represents The Great Cloud.¹⁶ From behind

d10 to get a 4. The giants' +5 puts them at a final score of 9 which means the statues have lost the battle. The GM says the noises tell the followers the results. The base belief lost for a household scale conflict is 10. Mortilak's follower with the highest spirit is d8 so this is rolled, getting a 4. The scale was household so it's only multiplied by one to get 4. This is subtracted from the base belief lost to find that Mortilak's followers have wavered enough to cost him 6 belief.

¹¹ **Bird Call** (significant alteration base cost 4, D8)

Description: The Great Wind calls on the birds that were bred for him by his followers.

Duration: One conflict +1

Domain: Within secondary -1

Inclinations: In balance 0

Location: birds have fled to neutral territory +1

Scale: Household +1

Cost factor 2 (x2)

Total cost: 8

Kyphaws of The Great Cloud

Body: d8 +1 (with claws and beak)

Mind: d4 (animal intelligence)

Spirit: d4 +1 (protective)

The Great Cloud rolls one d8 against the mind score of the 9 birds which is a d4 (different scale) and wins. So The Great Cloud has 9 Kyphaws under his control for the conflict. He has asked them to fetch boulders.

¹² **The Great Cloud**

Primary Domain: The Sky

Additional Domains: Birds, Beauty, Prosperity

Inclinations:

• **Harmony:** Creation

• **Balance:** Transformation, Control

• **Opposition:** Destruction

Belief: 50

Appearance: The Great Cloud appears as a giant silver owl that shines like metal.

Personality: The Great Cloud has never known the mortal life and sees them as nothing more than a tribute to her greatness. She's extremely vain and wants nothing more than to have her followers bow to her all day. She often knowingly makes it so that her followers depend on her to survive.

Symbols: Followers often have an image of an owl beak and eyes carved onto the structures. A crude drawing of a cloud over five dots also represents her.

Celestial Home: She makes her home in the ice peaks of mountains in Everwinter.

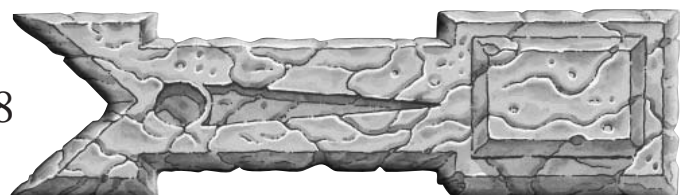
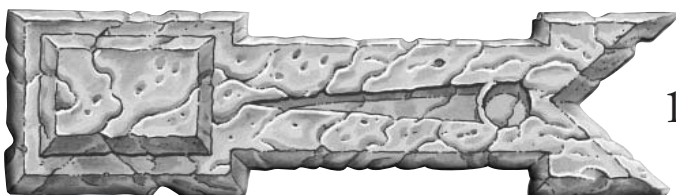
Worship: The village has an altar covered with feathers for them to worship The Great Cloud daily. When sending up especially important prayers, someone will be selected to climb the tallest of the giant trees of the area. From the peak, they will pray and meditate until a bird lands within reach. During her worship season there is a contest to build the tallest structure capable of holding three men.

Commandments:

• Thou shalt wear white.

• Thou shalt be kind to the animals of the sky.

• Thou shalt worship no other gods.





Ari I hear a gasp from the other followers. The Great Cloud is now a leviathan, seeking terror to feed itself!

The ground shifts and I'm pushed against the wall of a shattered house. Slowly, a corpse claws its way out of the rubble, a knife in its rotted hand. It was... is one of the Sirocco, The Great Cloud's priesthood, wearing torn and grimy red and white-feathered robes. More rise from the ground, their death wounds visible. ¹⁷ I don't remember much after this... something grabbed at my heart, squeezing and shaking me. I caught glimpses, though, through the terror that overcame me.

Ari refuses to abandon the opening as eight of the corpses close in on her. Mar runs back to her, his giants finished. Still, he is too late, the sacrificial blades of the Siroccos slicing into Ari. A gentle wind blows extinguishing the flaming trees and corpses. The cloud overhead dissipates, and the air sits cold and still.

Ari has fallen to save us. ¹⁸ Mortilak has called her to Him, to stand by His side as His wife.

Mar gathers the giants that are still hanging to life and offers them as a sacrifice to avenge the murder of The Great Cloud's followers. Then he tells us to search the rubble for the bodies of The Great Cloud's tribe so that we can bury them properly.

I do not know what else the years shall hold for my tribe.

Still, Mortilak shall watch over us, and I shall be the Voice in the Hollow.

- Thou shalt bow to my image daily.
- Thou shalt build your homes to reach the sky.
- Thou shalt stay outdoors except when sleeping or ill.

¹³ The GM decided the boulders could do d8+3 damage while the ground has d8 to resist. Since the birds had no way of knowing where exactly the caves were, they would need four successes in a bombing run to successfully open up the cavern.

¹⁴ The conflict between Mar and the giants is on village scale due to the active miracles on Mar. He'll roll a d12+4 and since the giants' party is one scale below him, their die size is decreased by 2 steps. The giants roll a 2 on their d6 and Mar rolls a 6 on his d12; the giants lose with a final number of 7 against Mar's final number of 10. This is a village-scale conflict so there is a base gain in belief of 20. The average follower's spirit is a d6 so he rolls that and gets a 4. The multiplier for village scale is two so Mortilak gains 28 belief.

¹⁵ **Wind** (trivial alteration base cost 2)

Description: The Great Cloud uses the wind to blow the flaming pieces of his birds into the trees.

Duration: One Conflict +1

Domain: Within primary -2

Inclinations: in balance 0

Location: within Mortilak's territory +2

Scale: Individual 0

Cost factor 1

Total Cost: 2

¹⁶ **Raise Dead** (minor alteration base cost 3, D6)

Description: The Great Wind raises his dead followers to seek revenge for desecrating their graves. Meant to be terrifying. Roll a D6 against Mortilak's followers spirits. If The Great Cloud wins roll a D6 and multiply by 2 to see how much terror she gets.

Duration: One conflict +1

Domain: 0

Inclinations: In harmony -1

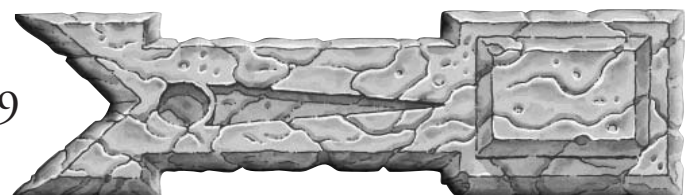
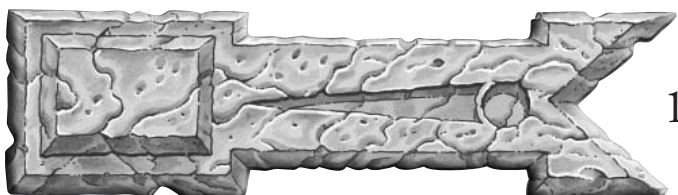
Location: within Mortilak's territory +2

Scale: Household +1

Cost factor 4 (x8)

Total cost: 24

¹⁷ Ari is reduced 4 die steps because she is two scale levels below the zombies. She's using her heat blast to fight and will be reduced to rolling a d4 while the zombies roll a d6. She holds them off on one round and drops the zombies down to household scale. She then gets to move back up two die sizes to a d8. Then she loses the next roll and is defeated. This was a village scale conflict so the base belief lost is 20. Mortilak rolls his followers spirit and gets a 6. The multiplier for a village scale conflict is 2 so Mortilak subtracts 12 from the base of 20 to find his followers lost 8 belief.



CHAPTER 8: OTHER RACES OF THE KNOWN WORLD



eyes range from a bright, inhuman yellow to a hollow black.

In the water, undines transform into mammalian sea creatures such as dolphins, whales, or porpoises. Those who worship Plthunlos take on predatory animals such as giant squid and sharks. The specific type of creature an undine changes into depends on the individual's origin. Those from some regions turn into smaller dolphin-like creatures while those from other regions may turn into creatures similar to whales or other larger aquatic mammals. Undines are similar to these animals, much as they are similar to humans while on land, but their skin tones, streaming kelp hair, and intelligent yellow eyes mark them as a breed apart.

The humans are the newest race to gain sentience on the Known World; the existence of mankind can be measured in centuries. The older races live in every section of the Known World and have done so for millennia. Four of these races are considered “major” or the elder races, and have advanced civilizations and great cities. There are also several minor races. These beings are considered “minor” only in population and technology; their ancestry goes back almost as far as the elder races.

The chapter begins with detailed descriptions of the four Elder Races: the Undines, Sylphs, Salamanders, and Gnomes. Then it continues on to the four minor races, including the two varieties of Wood Nymphs, the Jurelian Giants, and the Forest Giants.

Both in the ocean and on land, undines have breathing holes in the backs of their necks. They can open or close the hole at will, and keep it closed while on land, choosing to breathe through their noses and mouths as humans do.

In humanoid form, undines dress in flowing, multicolored robes for important ceremonies or when meeting with those from outside their race. Amongst themselves, they wear no more clothing on land than they do while swimming in the ocean—that is, ornamental strings of shells and pearls, and the occasional strap-belt to hold tools or weapons.

ELDER RACES

UNDINES

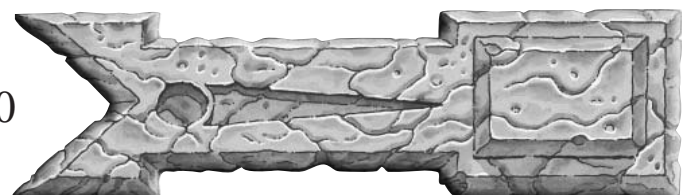
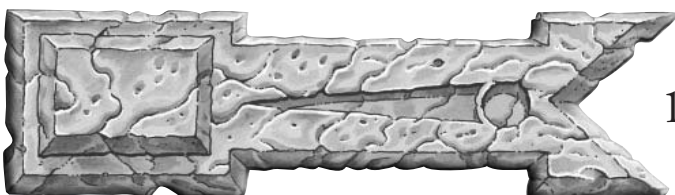
Undines are a peaceful race inhabiting the sea and ocean cliffs around the world. Unlike the other races, they have two different forms: one they wear on land, and another they wear in the water.

On land, undines resemble humans with sleek skin ranging from silver-blue and silver-white to purples and deep blues, webbed hands and feet, and no natural hair. It is customary for Undines to let an aquatic plant, such as seaweed or kelp, grow on their scalps and infuse with the skin. This helps protect their scalps from the drying effects of the sun while on land. Undines' eyes, lips, and mouths are larger than those of humans. Their teeth are pointed, and their

ABILITIES

Even in their humanoid forms, undines are excellent swimmers. They can hold their breath for up to an hour and withstand water pressure and pressure changes that would kill a human. In their aquatic forms, they can swim even deeper and go half a day without coming up for air.

It is the undines' shape-shifting ability that sets them most apart from the other races of the Known World. The transformation is relatively slow, taking several hours of exhausting effort, and requires consuming vast amounts of food (usually fish) beforehand to provide the energy needed.





Undines usually transform in water, since doing so on land is uncomfortable and awkward. They can still swim during the transformation itself, when they often appear as humanoids with fins and other aquatic body parts.

Undines are graceful in every way. Their movements on land are as smooth and elegant as those in the water. Their mannerisms are fluid and courteous; everything they do has a touch of refinement to it, as if their whole lives were part of a spontaneous, yet formal ceremony. They respect wisdom above all else and constantly seek to improve their own intelligence and understanding.

As such refined creatures, undines are a peaceful people. They avoid conflict when possible, and almost never turn to war. When conflicts do arise, they are often resolved through games of thought.

Only the temple guardians of Celundynn practice any sort of violence. These temple guards practice a form of fighting using hands and feet with small sharp handheld objects such as daggers or razor-sharp shells. Due to the rise of humanity and increasing number of salamander attacks the number of temple guards has increased.

The undines have been blessed by their gods with the ability to shape the stone, coral, and other undersea substances using little more than their hands, some simple tools, and their voices. They call this talent “stone singing.” It allows them to add fine, intricate details to their buildings without compromising their structural integrity. They also use stone singing to form tools, artwork, armor, and even weapons from the bounty of the sea.

HABITAT

Undines love their cities.

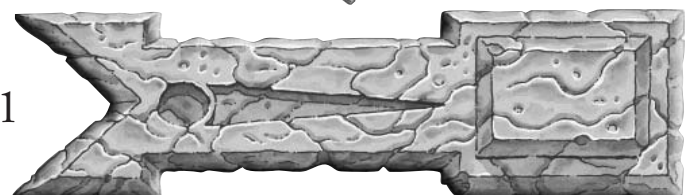
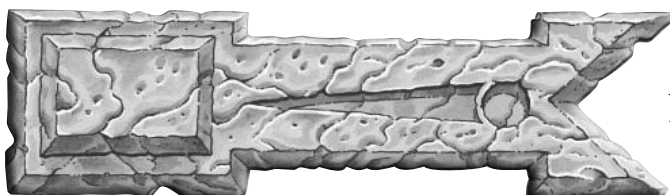
Ancient and ornate, undine cities are found in the seas and along ocean cliffs throughout the Known World. Most

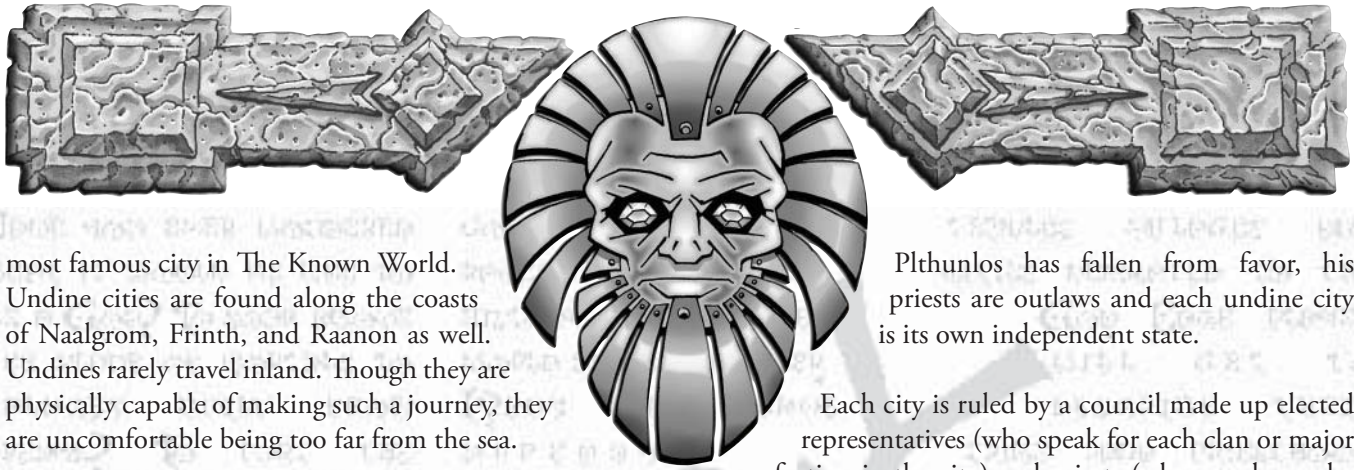


cities have both underwater districts and those that are above water. Walls of stone and coral make the cities extremely defensible—especially those that lie a few miles off-shore. The cities themselves are mazes of streets, family apartments, small temples, and halls of education, debate, and diplomacy.

Most cities have a thriving commercial district, usually centered on their harbors.

Ar-Celdynn is home to the largest undine population in the known world. Surrounded by coral reefs and underwater caverns, Ar-Celdynn has many natural habitats for the undines in the seas. Its capitol, Celune, is the oldest and





most famous city in The Known World. Undine cities are found along the coasts of Naalgrom, Frinth, and Raanon as well. Undines rarely travel inland. Though they are physically capable of making such a journey, they are uncomfortable being too far from the sea.

The exiled undines who still worship the rejected god, Plthunlos, have found solace in the underwater mountains called Plthunlos' Teeth. Their vicious god has blessed them with the ability to remain underwater far longer than the rest of their race, so they can actually live most of their lives beneath the waves.

CULTURE

Fish are the main staple of undine diet. Even on land, they eat more fish than anything else, though they cook the fish while living on shore. Undines supplement their diet with vegetables, and their cities have communal gardens both above and below the water. While some "surface food" like bread is considered a delicacy, meat from land animals is repulsive to undine sensibilities, and it isn't found inside their cities.

Undines mate for life in elaborate marriage ceremonies. They live with their extended families that, since they live up 300 years, can become quite large. They are a matriarchal society and the males traditionally leave their parents to live with their wives' clans. Family lines are traced along the female side, and females are the primary inheritors.

Undines can conceive in either their aquatic or humanoid forms, but once a female is pregnant enough to affect her mobility on land, she adopts her aquatic form and remains in the ocean until the child is born. The gestation period is roughly a year and a half. Their children are born in their aquatic forms, and don't learn to transform until their second or third years of life.

According to legend, the undine race was once united as a single nation under the priesthood of Plthunlos. Since

Plthunlos has fallen from favor, his priests are outlaws and each undine city is its own independent state.

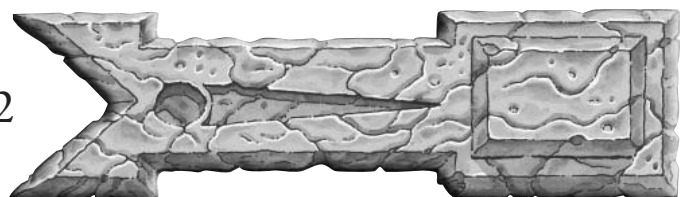
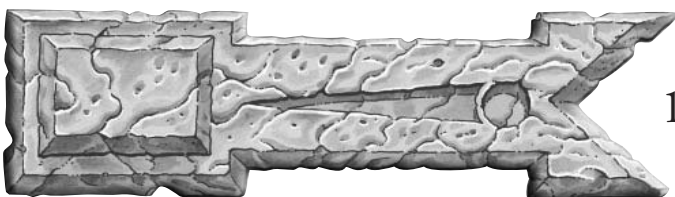
Each city is ruled by a council made up elected representatives (who speak for each clan or major faction in the city) and priests (who are chosen by Celundynn herself). This council creates and interprets the laws, which are enforced as necessary by the Celundynn priesthood. The undines are committed to the ideals of democracy. They believe that every citizen has the right to a voice in his or her government.

Undines are known for their finely crafted items made of stone, coral, and shell. Through the power of stone-singing, they can give these items extraordinary strength. Shells thin enough to be translucent are sturdy enough to be used for furniture. Weapons of ocean stone are strong and sharp enough to be used in battle, and yet are no heavier than their iron counterparts. While some undines work with wood and metal, they are uncommon, and found only where those substances are plentiful.

As an advanced culture, undines have a written language, which all their young are taught to read and write. They do not write lightly, however. Writing is a sacred task, performed mostly by priests and the elders of the clan. Paper is uncommon among the undines, and "writing" is actually a form of intricate stone-singing. Their words are carved into stone tablets or into the walls of the temple to serve as reminders for generations to come.

Instead of relying on the written word, undines have developed amazing memories. They have an excellent oral tradition. Their history has been passed down, virtually unchanged, from one generation to the next for thousands of years.

Undines have several different relationships with the elder races. Salamanders are still not tolerated within any of the undine groups, but they are not attacked on sight (except by followers of Plthunlos). Gnomes have good relations





with the undines, who often trade food and materials for gnome-crafted weapons. The giants are ignored unless they threaten one of the temples, in which case the Temple Guardians are called forth. Relations are also cordial with the nymphs of the woods; they share no trade, but a mutual enemy in the salamanders. The sylphs have been known to interact with the undines, and often live in the same cliff faces they do.

Humanity is treated with kindness or even sympathy—like for a lost pet searching for a place to live. Most attacks made by the humans are quickly forgotten as humans have yet to do any real damage to any of the undine temples. On occasion trade will occur with friendly tribes who show progress in thinking. Very rare is a human actually allowed to visit one of their temples.

BELIEFS AND GODS

Undines recognize two gods as the mother and father of their civilization: Celundynn, Goddess of the Ocean Waters and Cliffs; and Plthunlos, God of the Ocean Depths. Other gods (such as Gnorrr, Lord of the Earth) are recognized, but not worshipped.

Celundynn is currently the only god allowed to be worshipped by the Undines. All other gods, including Plthunlos, are outlawed with the punishment of excommunication from the group. There are a few social outcasts who do worship the Father of the Deep, but are too violent to be let back in to society. This schism of gods took place hundreds of years ago just before the Battle of Dragons.

Celundynn is the goddess of peace, prosperity, the shallow waters and the shore. She was the partner of Plthunlos for many years until just after humanity came to the Known World. It is said their relationship was at odds for millennia with neither side giving way. Plthunlos wanted the undine tribes to leave the shores and isolate themselves in the deep. The priesthood of Plthunlos encouraged this action by

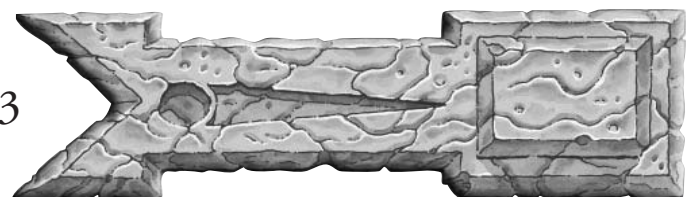
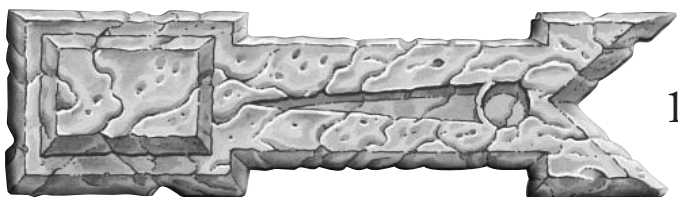
telling every undine this is the way life will be. Celundynn and her priesthood broke off relations with Plthunlos and his rival priests. Eventually the goddess of peace won out and all those who still followed Plthunlos were asked to leave. Disgusted, the priesthood left to deeper waters to create their own lives. Very few non-priests joined them, as most Undines were tired of war, embracing the wisdom of Celundynn.

Plthunlos is the God of the Ocean Depths, Sea Storms, and Battle. He is a purist God with thoughts that only the undines are fit to rule the earth. Social outcasts who do follow him are violent warriors who go into berserker rages in battle. His followers stay away from those of Celundynn but will go after anyone who is not undine, making war in his name. Often attacks from followers of Plthunlos are mistaken as attacks from Celundynn's followers, with humans and other races not understanding the difference.

CUSTOMS

The Great Tournament: Once every 10 years, undines from around the Known World converge on one of their cities (the city changes each time) for a month-long competition known as the Great Tournament. Challengers in the Tournament compete in contests of athleticism, knowledge, and wisdom. While the contests vary slightly from one Tournament to the next, traditional challenges include swim races, wrestling matches, diving contests, history quizzes, logic puzzles, and feats of creative engineering. Each city-state is allowed to send 50 undines to represent it at the Tournament, and competition to being one of those 50 is fierce. The winning city-state is given honor for the next 100 years, and the winning teams are rewarded beyond measure by their sponsoring cities.

Stone-Raising: An advanced form of “stone-singing,” stone-raising allows a large group of undines to literally sing a building into existence. The process is exhausting and takes a day or longer, depending on the size and complexity of the building. In general, a group of a hundred or more





undines gathers on a patch of stone or coral in a rough circle around where they want the building to appear. They then join their voices in the mystical song of creation, and “call up” stone or coral from within the circle, slowly shaping it as they wish. A circle of stone-raisers needs a strong leader who not only leads the singing, but creates and maintains the vision of the finished building. Experienced leaders are highly valued.

Song of the People: Education is a vital part of undine culture. A core component of this education is the *Song of the People*, a series of epic songs and poems that detail the history of the undine race. This is the root of undine oral tradition. When an undine is finished with his or her formal education, he or she must recite this history (which can take days) in order to “graduate” and be accepted as an adult and a citizen.

Peace of Celundynn: Shortly after the exile of Plthunlos, the undine city of Prothe was destroyed by underwater seismic activity. There was a terrible rumbling, a fissure, and suddenly the water was boiling, the city was flooded with magma, and Prothe was little more than a memory in a matter of hours. To prevent this from happening again, Celundynn blessed her followers with a powerful ritual that can relieve the pressures of the ocean’s floor before they erupt. Today, when an undine scout sees steam or other signs of impending seismic activity beneath the waves, he or she immediately reports it to the temple of Celundynn, and the God’s priests go perform the ritual over the site.

Undine Base Stats:

Body: d8 +1

Mind: d10 +1

Spirit: d8



SYLPHS

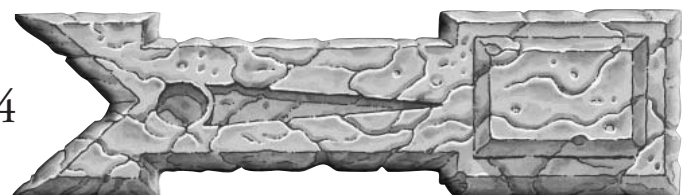
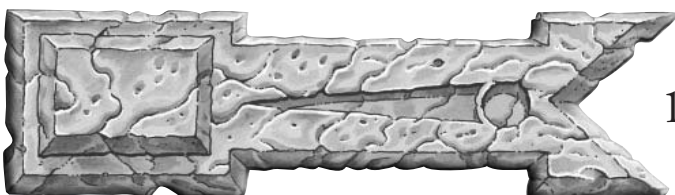
While the Sylphs have no central realm or government to call their own, their innate drive to explore and collect has spread their race and culture to the farthest corners of the Known World. Their insatiable curiosity is both a curse and their race’s greatest gift.

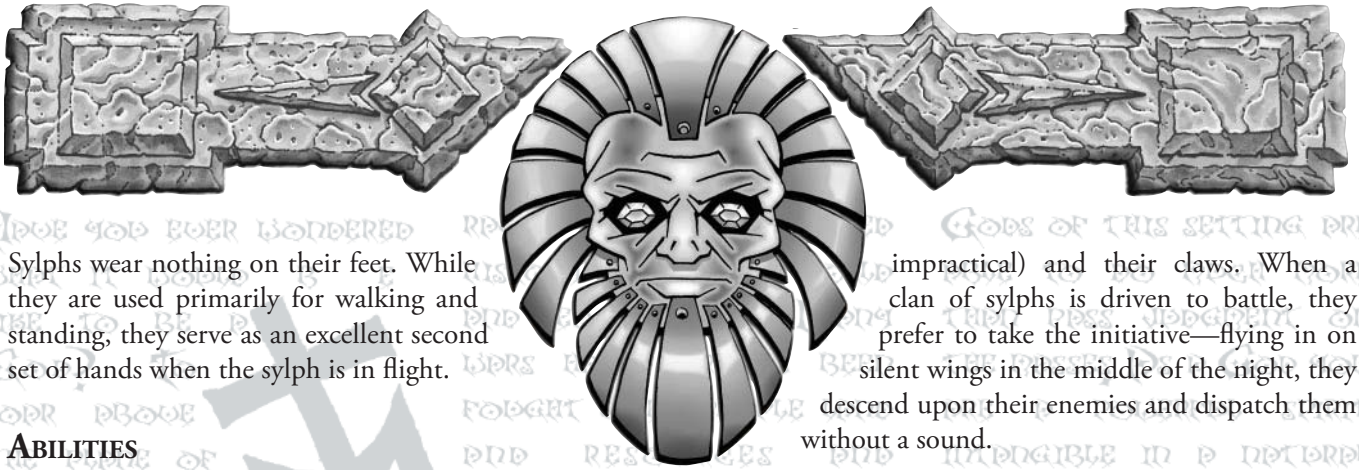
Sylphs are small, humanoid creatures about half the size of a man. Each sylph has a pair of leathery wings, each as long as the creatures’ bodies, sprouting from his back. Their skin is covered in fine, short hair that ranges in color from dark blues to inky blacks, and even deep browns. Sylph hands and feet each have three digits (two long fingers and an opposing thumb), and all twelve digits are tipped with sharp, retractable claws.

Their heads are small with sharp features, pointed jaws, and round skulls. Sylph ears are longer and more muscular than those of humans; they can be “flapped down” for protection when not in use, or stretched wide and erect to catch an inhumanly wide range of sounds. Sylph noses are sharp and long, with small fine nostrils. Their mouths are large, thin-lipped, and occupied by two pairs of small fangs. Their eyes are larger than those of men, with a bluish glow surrounding a black pupil.

Male sylphs dress plainly in order to attract as little attention as possible. Most wear drab-brown leather tunics with short or long sleeves, and matching short leather pants that cover the knee. Both tunic and shorts are covered in pockets. Sometimes they wear leather helmets if they travel a long distance. No jewelry is worn since this is kept at their home for display.

Female sylphs wear jewelry and make hair weaves from other animals. Their leather clothing tends to be more elaborate and is designed for appearance and as well as utility. Sylph women carry their young with them in small leather pouches that can be worn on the back. It is not uncommon to see a female going to a gnome marketplace with their young to purchase goods.





Sylphs wear nothing on their feet. While they are used primarily for walking and standing, they serve as an excellent second set of hands when the sylph is in flight.

ABILITIES

Above all, sylphs are collectors. Their culture is driven by a compulsive need to explore, investigate, and go where no one else has gone—or at least, where no one wants them to be—and bring back treasures from their journeys.

These “treasures” can be physical items (coins, artifacts, tools, etc.), but are just as often information, such as troop movements on the eastern front, secrets between lord governor and his magistrate, rumors in the local brothel, and the true history of the ancient temple in the swamp. No treasure of any type is ever discarded. They are hoarded, traded, sold, and form the backbone of the sylph economy and culture.

Sylphs gladly trade or sell their treasures (usually information) to outsiders. In this way, they have become an important asset to all the major cultures of the Known World. In exchange for their intelligence reports, the sylphs receive protection and whatever resources they need to support themselves.

Occasionally, a sylph rejects his race’s obsession with collecting. He is invariably pitied and eventually cast out of his clan as a sad abomination.

Small, quiet, and wiry, sylphs are well-suited for their lives of slipping into places that other races cannot reach. Their bones are hollow and wrapped tightly with what little muscle they have. Sylphs are not fragile—they can withstand abuses such as high altitudes and narrow breathing spaces with ease.

Sylphs prefer to avoid combat whenever possible, since they have wings to escape. If forced to fight, they do with short knives (since flying with anything larger would be

impractical) and their claws. When a clan of sylphs is driven to battle, they prefer to take the initiative—flying in on silent wings in the middle of the night, they descend upon their enemies and dispatch them without a sound.

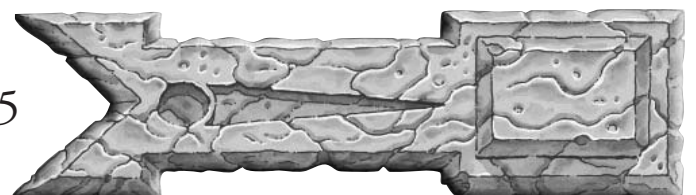
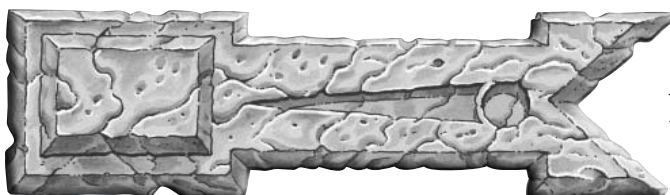
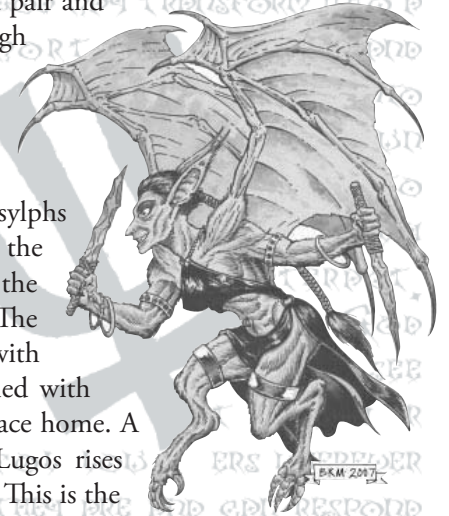
HABITAT

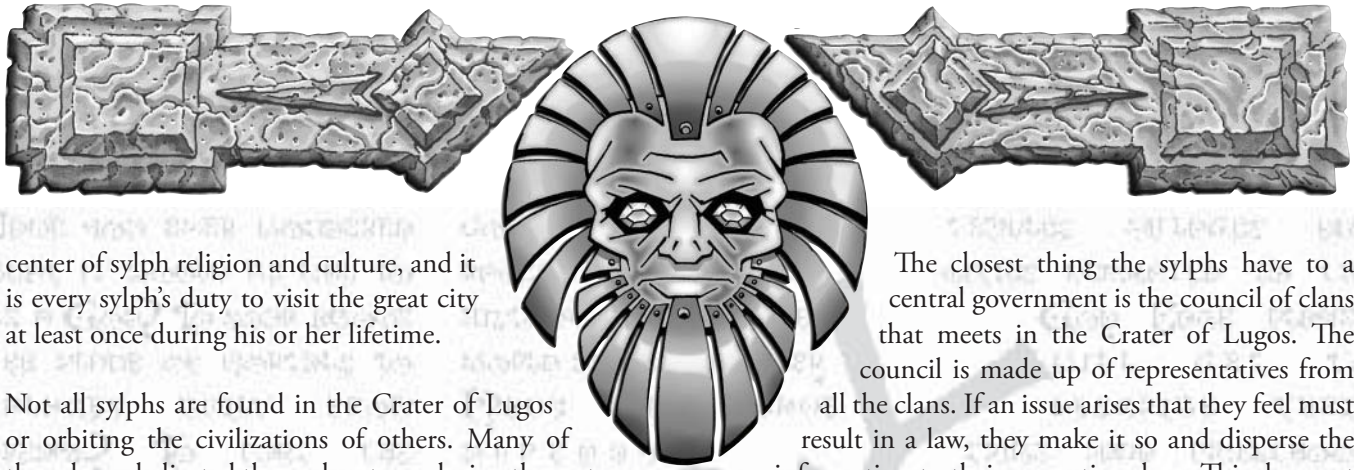
Sylphs hold few lands as their own, but are found throughout the Known World. Wherever human or elder race culture thrives, the sylphs are found nearby. Entire clans settle on the outskirts of cities, temples, and other hubs of civilization where they can find both customer for their treasures and an ample supply of new treasures to add to their collections.

This is the image that most outsiders have of sylphs: spies, merchants, and scavengers living at the edges of civilization. Most clans live in trees, caves, and other natural habitations nearby. Some live in the cities of other races, usually in their own neighborhoods, in houses that are only accessible from the second floor.

Sylph homes are simple and crude. They usually consist of little more than two rooms: one to live in, and one for storing the family’s treasures. A home is occupied by a single family (a mated pair and their offspring), though other members of the family’s clan usually live nearby.

The only realm the sylphs claim as their own is the Crater of Lugos on the vast plains of Jasinu. The crater is riddled with caves and tunnels, filled with sylphs who call the place home. A vast glass temple to Lugos rises above the crater’s rim. This is the





center of sylph religion and culture, and it is every sylph's duty to visit the great city at least once during his or her lifetime.

Not all sylphs are found in the Crater of Lugos or orbiting the civilizations of others. Many of them have dedicated themselves to exploring the vast reaches of the Known Worlds untouched by other races.

Alone or in mated pairs, these sylphs vanish for years at a time, but always return with the most fabulous treasures and stories.

CULTURE

Sylphs are omnivores. They have a wide palate and eat whatever the races around them eat. They do not farm, but gather fruit, and occasionally hunt if they have to. Those that live around other races often trade for whatever food they need.

Clan and family are important to sylphs. Family lines can be traced through either male or female lines, depending on one's clan. Clans can be large with thousands of members, but families are small, consisting of the mated pair and up to two offspring. Mothers are primarily responsible for caring for the young.

Sylphs live to be around 200 years old, and achieve maturity at around 15 years. When their collection of treasures is large enough to justify their own homes, sylph youngsters are encouraged to leave their parents' home to establish their own nests.

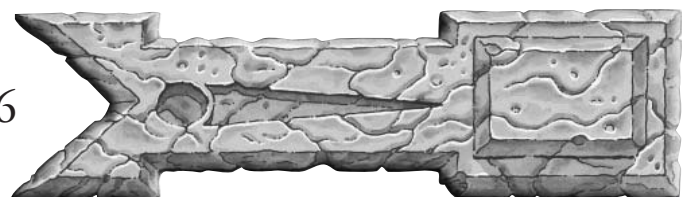
As dispersed as they are, the sylphs have no central government. If living amongst another race, they abide by that race's laws as much as they can. For internal affairs, the clan member with the largest collection of treasures is considered the "Great Gatherer," and is the informal leader. In times of shortage or danger, the Gatherer coordinates the clan's efforts and collects spare resources to supply the whole clan as necessary. In time of peace and plenty, the position is essentially ceremonial.

The closest thing the sylphs have to a central government is the council of clans that meets in the Crater of Lugos. The council is made up of representatives from all the clans. If an issue arises that they feel must result in a law, they make it so and disperse the information to their respective clans. This does not happen often.

The council also maintains a network of sylph agents who spy and carry out other secret missions on behalf of the race and their god Lugos. This network is known as the Silver Scroll Gatherers, named for the scroll of Lugos that first brought them together. The existence of the Gatherers is an open secret, though none outside the group actually know who is an agent, or those agents' missions. A sylph may sometimes claim to be a Silver Scroll Gatherer just to impress outsiders.

Sylphs are known for their tight, condensed written language. The language is so efficient it can convey a page of information in just a few characters. Sylphs typically write (using durable ink and parchment of their own creation) by dipping their claws directly into the ink and scratching out the text. They are skilled enough to write with either hand or foot.

Every Elder Race has had dealings at one point or another with the sylphs, whether for good or ill. Sylphs are looked upon as a "necessary evil," since they get into everything. Sometimes gnomes, salamanders, and undines find a sylph poking around in someone's home or work area. These activities can easily lead to bad reactions and possible ejection of the sylphs in the community. This is where the Great Gatherer or another sharp individual sylph steps in, using bribery, coercion tactics and sometimes blackmail to "smooth things over." Sylphs have no desire to leave the other races as they are the main source of secrets and treasures. Sylphs are generally allowed to stay; they provide valuable information on the other races and will give up some secrets.





Humanity also has a mixed reaction to sylphs. Some admire them and seek their training in the arts of spying and secret-gathering. Others attack sylphs on sight, considering them untrustworthy and dangerous. Some human priests and scholars have developed a valuable, if costly, relationship with sylphs who sell them whatever knowledge they seek.

BELIEFS AND GODS

Lugos, God of the Sylphs, is the only acknowledged or spoken deity. No priesthood exists for Lugos, but each person shows him proper respect in their home altars. A simple sacrifice of goods is often made, with the Great Gatherer holding these items in a very select location. These treasures amount to 10% of each sylphs gathering total, but this number can vary greatly from 1% to well over 50%. A select group of watchers in the community look after the community treasure along with the Great Gatherer. This wealth is redistributed for special projects in the community or dealing with other races in sponsorship of a few select sylphs in a new community. These matters are directed by the god himself, as he is the Greatest Gatherer of them all.

CUSTOMS

Journey to the Tower: It is Lugos' will that every sylph make a pilgrimage to his temple in the center of the Crater of Lugos. Here, the pilgrim sylph is ushered into the Tower of Whispers, the holiest part of the temple. This crystalline structure is etched with the secrets and stories of sylphs from the past millennia. It is the history of the world, and it is still being written. Inside the Tower, the pilgrim meditates until Lugos inspires him with a story or secret from his life to share. The story is etched on the wall by the sylph's own claw.

Scavenger Hunt: Each clan has its own set of rituals and traditions, but a common tradition is the scavenger hunt. Usually conducted as part of a larger celebration, the hunt sends the whole clan out into the region to find a

certain number of treasures (either items or secrets). The hunt may have a time limit ("You have until noon tomorrow!") or it may go one for days, until one player collects all the required treasures. The winner of the game is given great honor, and is sometimes made the Great Gatherer for this feat alone.

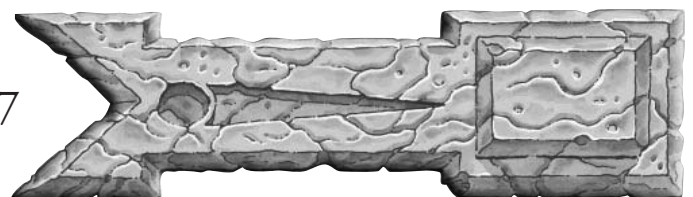
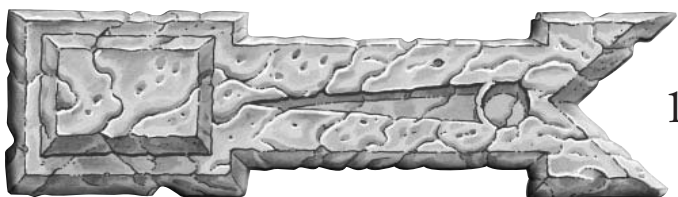
Telling Tales: Sylphs are fantastic storytellers, but they never tell their stories to outsiders for free. After all, stories are information, and information has a value. They will, however, tell stories amongst themselves, especially during times of feasting or mourning. These stories are considered communal treasures that are being shared with the whole clan. Outsiders would like to hear these stories (and some are willing to pay for the privilege), since some tell of lost treasures and forbidden secrets—which are even more valuable than the stories themselves.

Life Trade: Everything has its price—even life itself. If a sylph saves someone's life, that person owes the sylph a life debt, which can be called in at anytime. The same is true of a sylph's life is saved, of course. Furthermore, sylphs will accept "life trades" for services rendered. This is usually for a major undertaking, such as discovering the secrets to put a new king on the throne or recovering a dragon's egg.

Seeding the Nest: When a young sylph sets out on his own for the first time, he is sent off with a clan-wide celebration. At this celebration, each of his clan-mates brings a treasure from their own hoard to "seed" the youngling's new hoard. Even if the sylph already has a sizable hoard of his own (which he is moving from his parent's nest), he is required to gracefully accept all the offered gifts. The quality of the treasures received is a mark of honor or shame upon the young sylph and his family.

Sylph Base Stats:

Body: d6
Mind: d10 +2
Spirit: d6 +2





SALAMANDERS

Fierce competitors and brutal warriors, the lizard-like salamanders have carved out for themselves an empire of blood, iron, and fire. Under the watchful burning eye of the Dragon Gods, the salamanders view those around them as inferior beings whose ultimate destiny is to serve as salamander slaves.

Salamanders are thinner than humans but stand at least a head taller. The skin of the salamander is covered with leathery scales that are shaped in diamond patterns, and range in color from red and brown hues to white and black. Their hands are thin and bony, each with three claws and an opposing thumb claw for grasping. Their feet are clawed and widespread to give stability. Their legs are different from other humanoids, as their knees are reversed like a horse with huge thigh and hindquarter muscles. Their arms and torsos are long and muscled. Salamander facial features are long and angular with frill appendages on the neck and back side of the head. Their eyes are black coals with yellow slitted pupils. A salamander's whole body balances on a heavily spiked tail.

Salamander males are well groomed and proud to show off their physique to anyone. The frills on a male's neck encircle his head and are displayed in battle, for sport, or to catch a female's attention. These frills can be dyed in various colors and patterns. Warriors wear metal armor over small sections of their bodies to mostly protect parts of the feet, hands, arms, legs, and torso. None of these armor pieces protect the whole body part, but just flat areas to reinforce the thick leathery skin. Males who hold a high position often wear a cloak with no hood, along with a very long loin cloth, to display their status.

Females of the species do not flash their small gills except for when truly angered. Most females do not like to display much color, preferring to wear warm-colored silks in simple patterns. The main physical difference between males and females come in the size of the head and tails: Females have smaller heads, but longer tails with no spikes.



ABILITIES

Salamanders are fiercely competitive. They have honed their abilities to help them thrive in their constant war against the environment, their enemies, and even each other.

Salamanders are incredibly hardy. Desert heat that would kill a human in minutes is actually invigorating to a salamander and icy winds that would burn thinner skin can't touch a salamander's leathery hide. They can go weeks without food or water if necessary. Their thick scales serve as simple armor against most small weapons.

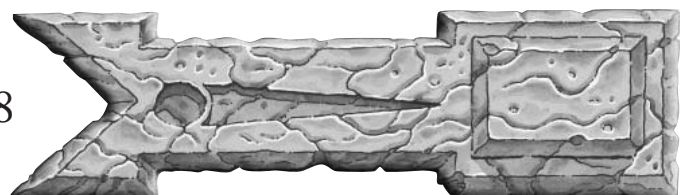
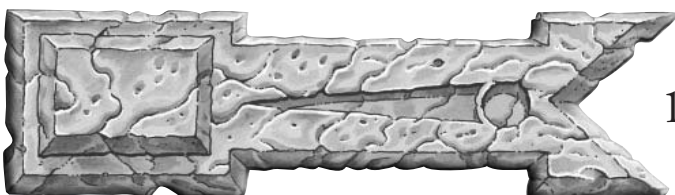
Metal holds few secrets for the salamanders. Copper, iron, brass—even strange new compound metals unknown to the other races—all these have been bent to the mighty salamander will. Most metal is formed into weapons, armor, and other equipment for the salamanders' constant war of conquest.

Even without their metal arms and armor, salamanders are fearsome warriors. There is a militaristic culture, in which everyone has at least a little martial training. Their warriors are not citizen-soldiers; they are soldiers and know nothing but the violence and glory of battle. Furthermore, because of their mastery of metal-working, salamanders are armed with some of the highest-quality weapons available in the Known World.

Of course, not all a salamander's enemies are outside her own race. Politics are just as brutal as any battlefield, and can be just as deadly. Salamanders are experts at diplomacy, subterfuge, and back-room dealings. While salamander nobles rarely use their subtle wiles against outsiders (who they prefer to simply crush), they keep them finely honed in their constant duel of wits against each other.

HABITAT

Salamanders are at home in the desert. Their colony cities can be found in arid wastelands across the Known World. These cities are invariably large walled affairs, with





numerous flame-like towers reaching up as if to burn the sky. It is from these cities that the salamanders march their armies and send forth their raiders for fresh slaves.

Life in the cities is comfortable, even pleasant, for the salamanders who live there. The nobles play politics in the beautiful temples and civic buildings, while the merchants work their shops and stalls, and the soldiers drill in the sun beneath the cities' walls. But for the countless slaves who do the work to keep the cities running, it is nothing short of a living hell. Their days are filled with drudgery and pain, and their only hope is for the release of death.

CULTURE

Salamander culture is based around a single belief: "Only the strongest survive."

This belief fosters an intense, viciously competitive spirit that permeates everything they do. From competing for rank, competing for a mate, or even just competing with a merchant when haggling over the price of lunch, every challenge is taken with deadly seriousness. Salamanders never surrender. Mercy and humility is for the weak. Respect is only given to an opponent who cannot be beaten.

This belief, when combined with the salamanders' belief in their inherent superiority to all other races, makes it no wonder that they have so many enemies.

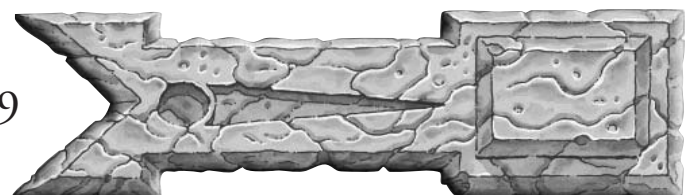
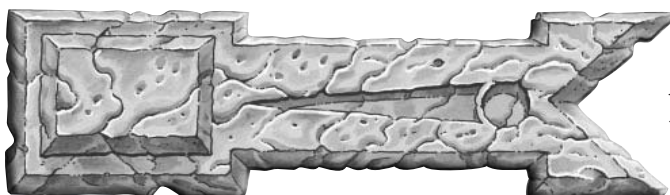
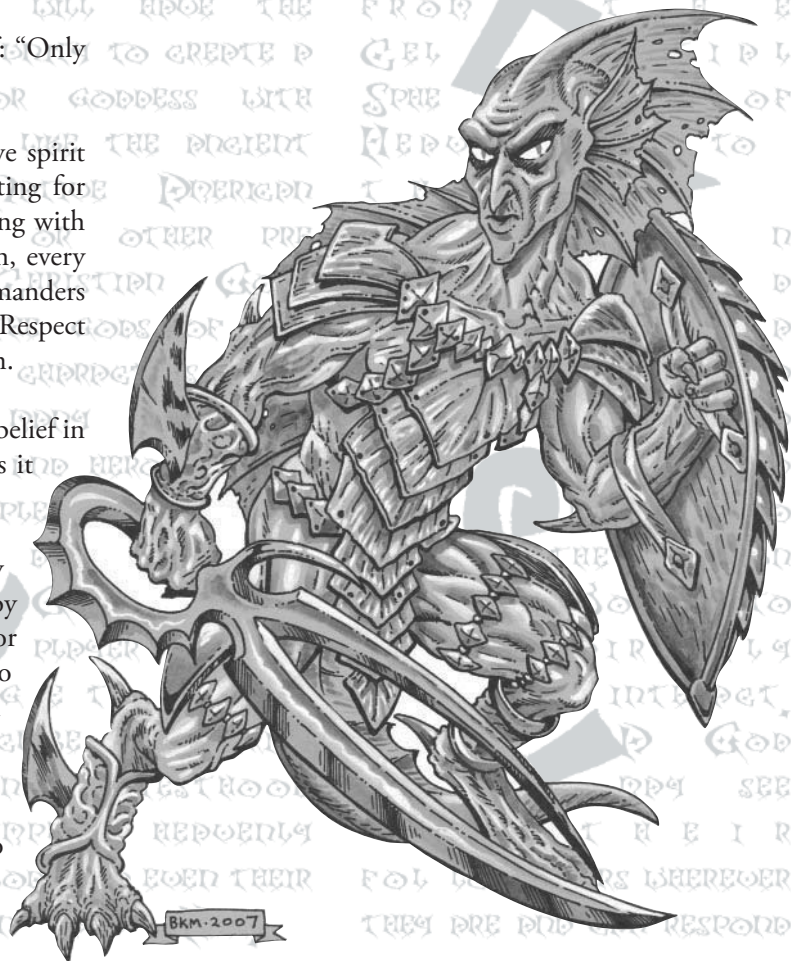
Salamanders are primarily carnivores, though they do eat some fruit and grain. Meat is provided by the cities' hunters. If the city is particularly large or game particularly scarce, they may raise livestock to be slaughtered. Grain and other crops are raised in and around the cities to help feed the slaves (and other livestock).

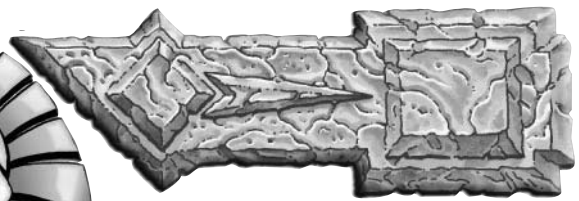
Competition is particularly fierce when it comes to mating and reproduction. Since females rule the society, they have their choice of mates when their



breeding time arrives (once every three years). A female makes it known that she is looking for a mate. For the next moon, males petition her for a chance to compete to be her mate. Those who she accepts meet in a contest of her choosing (usually gladiatorial combat), and the winner becomes her mate. Of course, because these are salamanders, many of the suitors are eliminated by their competition before the day of the contest.

Females typically dispose of their mates after fertilization. This is usually a simple banishment, but it could mean the death of the male if he is particularly obnoxious. Two





moons later, the female lays a clutch of 10 to 20 eggs, then returns to her pre-mating life.

When the eggs hatch, the hatchlings are raised as a brood by the female's servants. The hatchlings are taught to compete for their mother's approval. Those who earn it are rewarded. Those who don't are punished. Roughly half of all hatchlings are killed within their first five years due to this competition. Those who survive can expect to live for up to 200 years—though few last that long before meeting a violent end. While the salamanders control large areas of land, they have no central government. Instead, each colony has its own queen, and no single colony is considered the race's "homeland." Under the Queen is her Consort, and her council of ladies called the *Nathraa*, created from eight prominent houses in each colony. To balance the powers in a colony, a unified action from the Council is equal to the Queen in terms of power. This unified action rarely happens since political infighting is the norm. Executing the wishes of the Queen and the council is the General of that particular colony's army, called *Xdthomaansrr* (pronounced 'Kith-o-man-cher'). Salamander governments are steeped in secrecy and paranoia from the Queen down, as everyone is out to reach the top no matter who they step on.

Salamander society is ruled by the females of the species. Noble females hold the hereditary offices, while lesser females control the government public offices. Male salamanders are relegated to military and labor roles; while they may achieve greatness within those roles, it is the duty of males to serve.

Slavery is the unspoken backbone of the salamander economy. Slaves are everywhere: in the fields, in the kitchens, in the temples, in the government offices—even in the queen's private chambers. It is the slaves who carry out the most "menial" tasks, freeing the salamanders to focus their energies on fighting with their neighbors and amongst themselves. Slave revolts are uncommon. At the first sign of unrest, the salamanders cull any troublemakers—or

potential troublemakers—before they can do any actual harm.

As masters of metal, the salamanders have forges and smiths more advanced than any except the gnomes. They make more than just arms and armor, however. Their smiths work the metal into fine jewelry, sculptures, and mundane tools. While most outsiders consider salamander craftwork to be crude and blunt, some pieces are actually quite delicate and lovely.

The salamanders have no friends amongst the other races of the Known World. They believe themselves to be above everyone else in thought and deed. This arrogance, combined with their love of competition, fame, and power leads to inevitable conflict. Pacts are made with the gnomes, sylphs, and giants only to dissolve at the earliest opportunity the salamanders have to advance themselves, usually at the other race's expense. The undines, gnomes and nymphs are the salamanders' mortal enemies. The three races attack any salamander on sight.

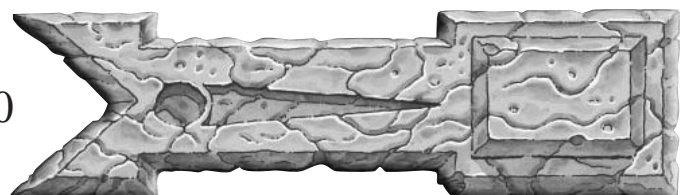
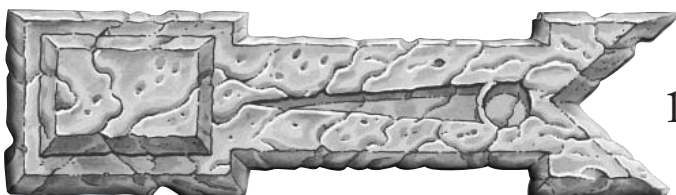
To Salamanders, humans are soft and weak. They are rarely considered anything more than potential slaves. The only time salamanders think of allying themselves with humans is when they have a common enemy who grossly outnumbers them. Once the enemy is no longer a threat, the salamanders betray their allies and collect a new generation of slaves.

BELIEFS AND GODS

Religion in salamander society is a complex affair. The queen and her eight ladies each represent one of the nine Dragon Gods, and serve as priestesses of nine different temples. Salamander society revolves around these nine gods as they also represent the nine houses in each colony. Sometimes in smaller colonies, a house may represent more than one of the Dragon Gods.

The nine Dragons are:

- Kanos, Dragon God of the Fires Above
- Xtheni, Dragon God of the Flaming Sky





- Maathenos, Dragon God of the Burning Moon
- Thaminx,, Dragon God of the Burning Earth
- Xethalchoate, Dragon God of the Fires Below
- Draax, Dragon God of the Boiling Sea
- Kalamandi, Dragon God of the Flaming Spirit
- Moorhanos, Dragon God of the Melting Ore
- Tukonos, Dragon God of the Searing Thought

In theory, each god is held in equal esteem, but in practice the salamanders hold the Dragon God of their own Houses in more reverence than the other gods. Each time a new queen ascends to the throne her corresponding god will be more favored than the other gods for that period of time.

CUSTOMS

Racing the Flames: This ritual is part of many salamander religious celebrations. It is equal parts competition, pageant, and sacrifice. To prepare for the ritual, the salamanders set up a long path of burning coals, wide enough to accommodate 20 or more people walking abreast. They then force a number of slaves to stand at the edge of the coals, strip naked, and race to the far end of the coal bed. Those slave who refuse to run (and there are always a few) are killed on the spot. Those who stumble on the coals are left to burn and those who survive the race but don't cross the finish line first are rewarded with a quick death. The winner, however, has his wounds bandaged and is heralded as the greatest of all slaves. He is allowed to recover in luxury and given a permanent, comfortable position of authority over his fellow slaves. It is this hope of reward that forces the runners onto the coals.

Blade Blessings: Salamander craftsmen take great pride in the weapons they create. As with all other aspects of salamander life, such creation is a competition between the various craftsmen. Once every few years, the craftsmen present their best swords, daggers, and other weapons to their queen for judgment. The queen turns the weapons over to testers who pit the weapons against armor, stone,

and even each other. The weapon that rises to the top as the very best is then blessed by the queen—and sometimes by the god she represents—thus transforming it into an artifact. The weaponsmith who crafted the blade is celebrated throughout the city, and is sure to receive a fat contract from the city's army before the next moon.

The Culling: One way the salamanders ensure that only the strong survive is by systematically doing away with the weak. Only queens can declare a culling, and may do so at any time for any reason, though more than one a year is considered rash. When a queen declares a culling, she chooses a class of people—soldiers, merchants, hunters—and calls for the members of that group to produce the weakest of their number. Since salamanders are constantly competing and ranking themselves against each other, they usually know who the worst soldiers, poorest merchants, and least-productive hunters amongst them are. These “weakest” are, depending on the will of the queen, either exiled from the city forever or executed outright. Because the stakes are so high, there is an incredible amount of back-stabbing and politicking that goes into calling a cull, as well as the culling itself; those who are eliminated are not necessarily the worst at what they do, but they are always the least liked and least powerful.

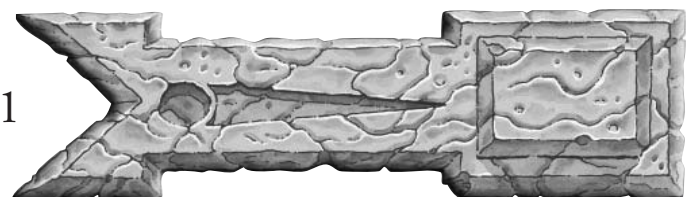
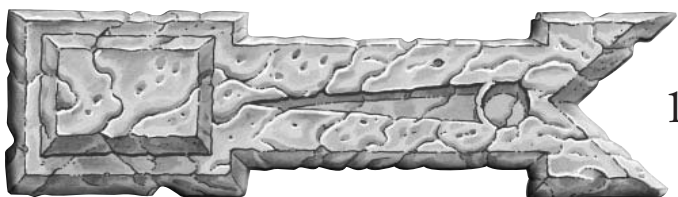
Salamander Base Stats:

Body: d8+3
Mind: d8
Spirit: d6

GNOMES

Gnomes are industrious, intelligent extensions of the deep earth. With their stone flesh and large mass, they are mountains unto themselves: quiet, patient, and immovable.

Gnomes stand a head shorter than man, though their wide bodies weight nearly twice as much. They have rock-like skin in several different hues of mottled brown, black, white, red, and green (similar to granite or marble). Their





hands are as large as their heads, and shaped like shovels with three fingers and a large opposing thumb. Gnomes' feet are larger than their hands, with four very large toes that are crusted with extra layers of rock-skin for added toughness. Their hair resembles thin soft wires of gold, silver, and copper. Their eyes appear to be two small gems of diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds set into black onyx eye sockets. Gnomish facial features are broad, but generally similar to a human, with a large nose, mouth, chin, and very small ears.

Male gnomes grow their body hair—especially their beards—as long as possible. They care little for their appearance: their matted hair and stony skin are often covered in grime, stains, chips, and dust or pebbles from whatever project they're working on. They bathe only for special occasions. In the heat of their labors, gnome males wear little clothing. In combat or dangerous environments, they wear special suits of leather and metal that protect their legs and torsos.

Female gnomes are more fastidious about their appearances. They do their best to keep their rocky skins free of dust and dirt, and bend their malleable hair into various clever designs that other races would have to use special greases and animal fats to achieve. When practical, they wear simple white dresses so as not to distract from their hair styles. When working in the earth or going into battle, they wear their own versions of the male armor suit.

ABILITIES

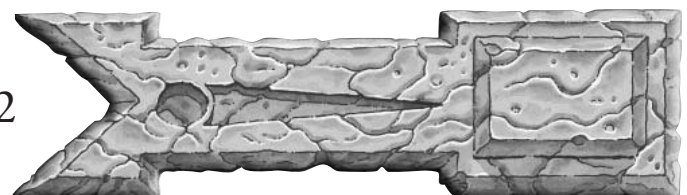
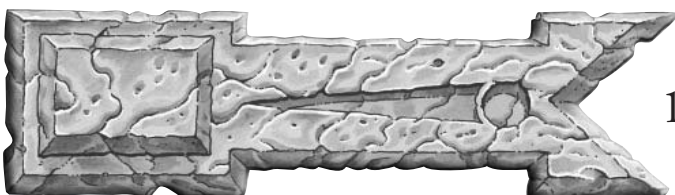
Gnomes are creatures of earth and stone. Their skin is literally made of stone, but it is *living* stone: it has a form of nerves, and bends and flexes as necessary for movement. Beneath these shell of rock, a gnome's internal body is made of softer, warmer rock (a form of magma) that serves as its muscular system. At their cores, gnomes have miniature furnaces that generate incredible heat. Their cores are actually molten rock, which is slowly pushed outward to replenish the stone in their muscles and, eventually, their skin.

Skin of stone is, as one would expect, quite resistant to damage. Sharp swords hold little fear for gnomes, though heavy hammers can still shatter their shells. Lesser weapons and accidents can chip away at a gnome's stone skin. If sufficiently pricked, gnomes bleed the thick, hot liquid rock that serves as their blood. Stone muscles also give the gnomes strength twice of that of any human their size.

When called upon to fight (as they often are), gnomes are armed with some of the finest weapons in the Known World. As a race of craftsmen, smiths, and engineers, they pride themselves on wielding weapons that are as sharp and durable as they are beautiful. But while most gnomes know how to swing a sword, and will gladly do so in defense of their homes, they are not a warrior race. They are builders and makers, and only those of the warrior guilds are trained and drilled as soldiers.

As part of their elemental connection to the earth, gnomes have the ability to meld into stone surfaces. This is not a fast process. It takes half a day for a gnome to reach his hand into a stone wall; it takes two days to step completely into the stone. Melding like this gives the gnome an inherent knowledge of the stone: its weak spots, its mineral content, any water, tunnels, or other features lurking inside it. Gnomes meld when mining, to figure out the best path to take. They also meld completely from time to time in order to meditate and commune with their gods.

Gnomes are easily the longest-lived of the elder races. A careful gnome can live for up to 500 years. When fully melded into stone, gnomes don't age, so a gnome who spends enough time in this "stone sleep" can live for thousands of years. (There are stories of a deep cavern filled with gnomes who melded millennia ago and have yet to emerge.)





HABITAT

Gnomes live in the mountains of the Known World. Most of them live inside the mountains, in great subterranean cities surrounded by feats of engineering, architecture, and stone craft. Rhovma, a city-state in the Rhok-Drunnor mountain region, is the capitol of the gnomish nation and home to their god's high temple. There are newer, younger cities in Frinth and Raanon, where gnomes are less conservative and devout than their Naalgrom cousins.

Inside the cities of the gnomes, residential areas are made up of a labyrinthine system of tunnels and caves. Each clan has its own "neighborhood" and is free to dig where ever it wants to create new homes, streets, and public areas for its members. Outsiders from the surface world—or even other tribes—are likely to get lost if they try to find a certain home without a guide.

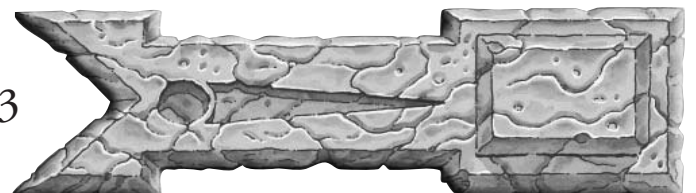
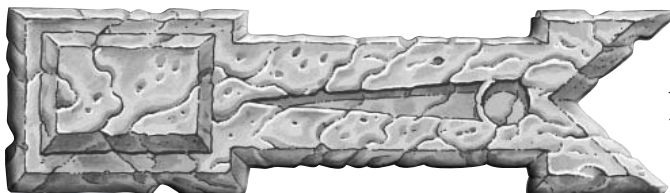
Public spaces in gnomish cities are vast, open caverns crisscrossed with broad streets that are well-labeled, if not orderly. Large, ornate buildings rise from the cavern floor. Some of them are built up with generations of stone and metal. Others are carved from floor of the earth itself. All of them are bedecked in jewels, carvings, and other graceful, delicate ornaments that are the gnomes' mark of pride. The most impressive building in any gnomish city is the temple to Gnorr, God of Mountain and Stone. Second to this are the dozens of guildhalls.

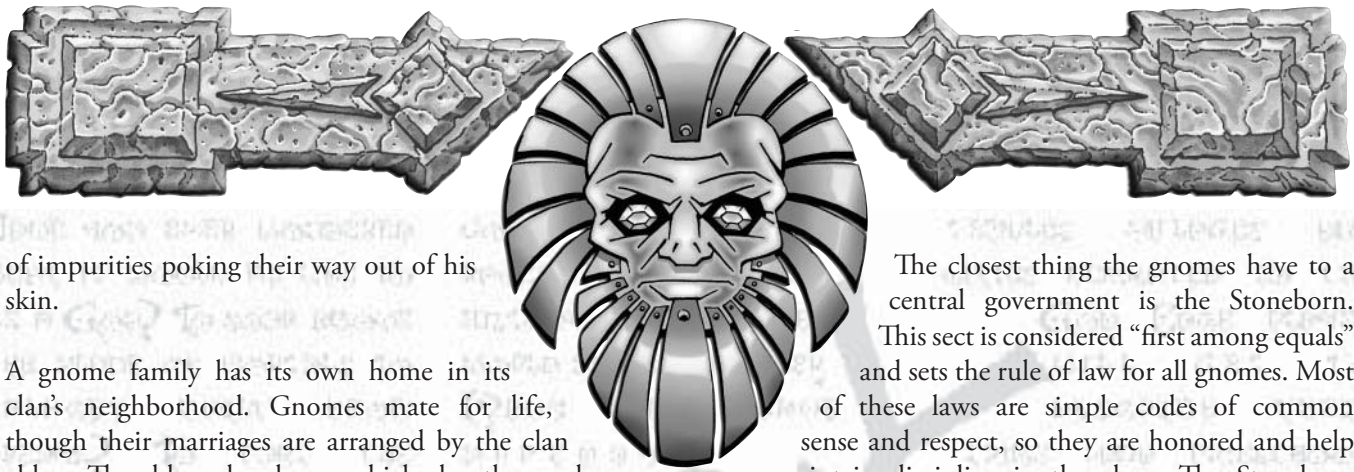
CULTURE

The focus of every gnome's life is creation. Whether etching a silver pendant, forging a battle ax, or designing a vast cathedral, nothing fulfills a gnome like making something. From before birth they are taught that they are the gods' craftsmen: The creation of the world isn't something that stopped with the foundations of the earth; it is still going on, through the hands of the gnomes. Being industrious

isn't just a gnomish trait. It is a sacred calling.

Gnomes eat rocks. They eat other materials too, including what other races consider food, but the smoldering core burning at each gnome's core is capable of "digesting" anything the gnome eats. Anything hard enough to simply melt and not turn to ash (such as rocks) is turned into magma-like blood, or pushed outward from the core as new flesh. Anything too hard to melt (such as diamonds) is pushed outward towards the skin. When it breaks the skin, the gnome picks the impurity out and disposes of it. If a male gnome is obsessing over a project, it is not unusual to see a handful





of impurities poking their way out of his skin.

A gnome family has its own home in its clan's neighborhood. Gnomes mate for life, though their marriages are arranged by the clan elders. The elders also decree which clan the newly married couple will join. When it is time for a couple to reproduce, they go to the Stone of Joining, a sacred spot near the lowest reaches of the city. Here, they both meld into the Stone, remaining for about a year. When they return, they bring their offspring out of the stone with them: a young boy or girl gnome.

Gnome children can walk and talk, though not well, when they emerge from the Stone, as a portion of their time was spent communing with their parents and learning these basic skills. They begin their lives as miniature, amalgamated versions of their parents, and grow in stature by consuming rock. Gnomes reach maturity at around a century.

Each gnome clan has a particular metal, gem, or stone that is its specialty. The clan's techniques for working with the material are passed down from one generation to the next, and are closely guarded secrets. While not every member of the clan works with the material (some are warriors, some are priests, etc.), they all identify with it, and may work it into their personal motifs.

Gnome society is also divided into hundreds of guilds. Some are large, with chapters in every city. Others are small specialized guilds only found in one city. Each guild is centered on a specific type of task: iron-smithing, deep-ore mining, gem-cutting, combat, etc. Gnomes advance in their guild based on their skill in the guild's task.

Traditionally, there is overlap between clans and guilds. That is, members of a certain clan typically join the same guilds, and certain guilds are typically made up of members from the same batch of clans, century after century. This overlap creates a system of bonds that helps unify the gnomes in the face of hardship or adversity.



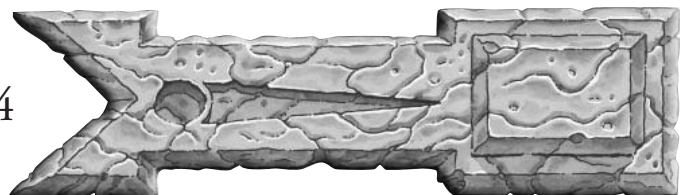
The closest thing the gnomes have to a central government is the Stoneborn. This sect is considered "first among equals" and sets the rule of law for all gnomes. Most of these laws are simple codes of common sense and respect, so they are honored and help maintain discipline in the clans. The Stoneborn maintain their seat of authority in the hidden city of Rhovma. Here, they are advised by the eldest of the other clans, who serve as their council.

While neither a clan nor a guild, the Stoneborn sect is an increasingly influential group within gnomish society. The group is dedicated to maintaining conservative gnomish traditions at any cost, and advocates isolationism and keeping the race "pure" from outside innovation. Members of the Stoneborn are typically followers of the gods Gnorr and Fors. They have no official hierarchy, and while some members proudly proclaim their Stoneborn heritage, others keep their membership a closely guarded secret. For this reason, it is hard for outsiders to face the Stoneborn as an enemy, or embrace them as an ally.

In day-to-day matters, the clans are self-ruling. Any disputes between families are mediated by the clan elders, who also serve as priests for the clans. Within a city, the various clan elders work together to overcome any inter-clan disputes. They only appeal to the Stoneborn for guidance if absolutely necessary.

There is no "noble" class of gnomes. While the Stoneborn make the laws, they are not above them and are expected to hold real jobs and trades in service to the community. All clans and guilds are officially considered equal.

More than any other race, the gnomes are known for what they create. If something can be forged, molded, cut, etched, or polished, they are the best at creating it. They craft tools, ornaments, crowns, amazing weapons, and beautiful armor. They export all these items, selling them to their allies, but keep the best of them, especially the weapons and armor, for themselves.





RELATIONS

Gnomes keep to themselves for the most part, and rarely seek out the company of other races. Most of their wars have been and continue to be against the salamanders. Undines occasionally meet with the gnomes at underground water sites to trade goods and information. Giants sometimes come down from the north lands of Jurel to raid the realms of gnomes. Sylphs are cordial, living with the gnomes in their mountain homes, but are considered untrustworthy as all sylphs sell secrets to the highest bidder.

Gnomes have developed a working, if tense, relationship with humanity. With the blessings of their gods, Gnomes sometimes teach humans on how to forge weapons and tools. One of the few cities of men, Hrace, holds three towers made of granite by the gnomes. In recent times, however, men have forged alliances with the salamanders and taken up arms against some of the gnomes.

BELIEFS AND GODS

Each clan has its own ancestral God, who is identified with that clan's metal, gem, or stone. Ruling over all the ancestral Gods is Gnorr, God of Mountain and Stone. All gnomes worship Gnorr, and their clan elders serve as priests to both Gnorr and their clan's ancestral god.

Some of the ancestral gods include:

- Bruin, God of Gold
- Rethan, God of Iron
- Fors, God of Granite
- Methussa, Goddess of Diamonds

Gnomes are a practical folk who never hold elaborate rites. Most religious ceremonies involve prayer to a particular god or goddess whenever something is created or repaired. After a small sacrifice of a valuable gem, ore or stone to the event, the ceremony is done.



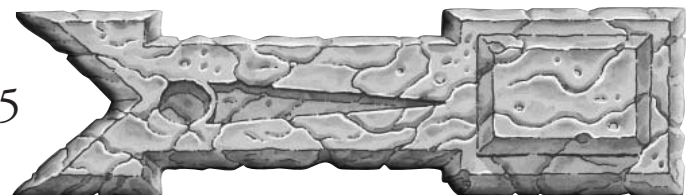
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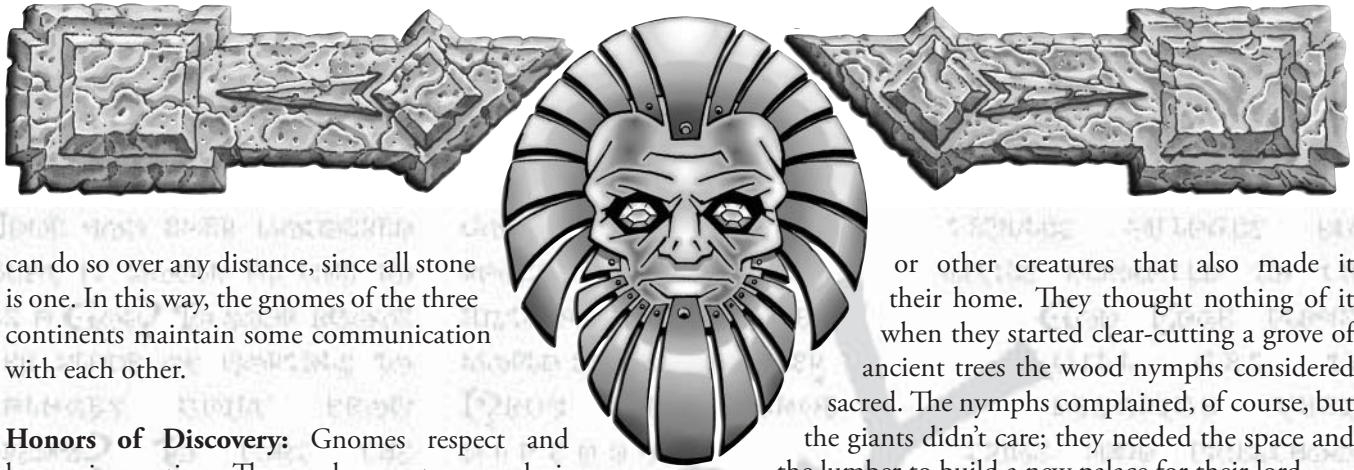
Forging the Guildkey: In order to join a guild, a gnome must show at least basic ability in that guild's craft. Working on his own, the gnome must create a work appropriate to the guild to which he wishes to join (carve a statue, shape a gold necklace, design a building, etc.).

This work is called a "guildkey." If the work is deemed remarkable enough by the masters of the guild, the gnome is granted entry. If not, the gnome is instructed on how he can improve and encouraged to try again—though the masters may prohibit him from trying for a certain amount of time, normally a year's time. While all clans are considered equal, some guilds are bestowed more honor than others, and gaining entry to them requires great skill, usually learned while working for years with some other lesser guild.

Return to Stone: When a respected gnome dies, he is the center of a funeral ceremony, elaborate by gnome standards, in the local temple of Gnorr. The body is placed on the floor. At the end of the ceremony, Gnorr opens the floor and draws the body of the deceased down into the hot red core of the earth, where the respected elder can meld one last time with the stone that gave him life. If the deceased is not well-loved of Gnorr, he will refuse to open the earth to receive him. This has only happened twice, and it brought such shame upon the clans of the deceased that their honor has never fully recovered.

Voice of Stone: Gnome elders who have spent much time melded with the mountains can develop what is known as the "Voice of Stone." It is a form of telepathy that allows a melded gnome to communicate with others melded gnomes. In its most common form, an elder "speaks" with another elder who has likewise developed this gift. In unusual cases, an elder can speak to another gnome, even though that gnome does not have the gift (and therefore cannot speak back). Once, in a time of dire emergency, a great Stoneborn elder used the voice of stone to effectively "broadcast" his message to *all* melded gnomes, warning them of an impending invasion. Those who use the "voice"





can do so over any distance, since all stone is one. In this way, the gnomes of the three continents maintain some communication with each other.

Honors of Discovery: Gnomes respect and honor innovation. Those who create new devices and new ways of doing things are heroes within their guilds and clans. Discovering a new ore or type of stone is a momentous achievement. Creating something new is the greatest work a gnome can hope to accomplish, and his reward is virtual immortality: the device, method, or other discovery is given the gnome's name. This brings honor to the creator's clan for generations to come.

Some gnomes leave their homes in search of new ideas. The others respect them for doing this, but no longer completely trust them, since outsiders and their ideas are strange, and not always acceptable to the gods.

Gnome Base Stats:

Body: d8+2

Mind: d8+1

Spirit: d6

MINOR RACES

FOREST GIANTS

The forest giants of the Guthenoth Forest stand between 15 and 20 feet tall and look like what they are: oversized men of flesh with trees trying to grow out of them. Branches protrude from their arms and twigs and leaves cover their torsos and heads. Their legs are covered in bark and roots sprout from their feet and calves. Wherever wood joins flesh, the union drips blood and sap, and the Forest Giants are forever groaning with the agony of their existence.

Long ago, the giants were the masters of the Guthenoth Forest. They hunted its wildlife, harvested its fruit for food, and cut trees for lumber and firewood. They were not malicious in their activities, but considered themselves kings of the wood and had no concern for the nymphs

or other creatures that also made it their home. They thought nothing of it when they started clear-cutting a grove of ancient trees the wood nymphs considered sacred. The nymphs complained, of course, but the giants didn't care; they needed the space and the lumber to build a new palace for their lord.

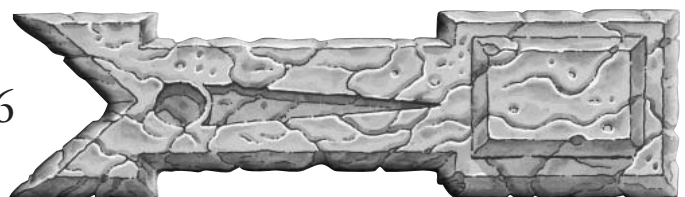
When the giants reached what they thought to be the center of the grove, they discovered what the nymphs were protecting: a magical tree dripping with lush, ripe fruit. The giants had never seen such fruit, but knew from its appearance and incredible aroma that it would taste better than any fruit they'd ever had before.

A wood nymph at the base of the tree warned the giants away. The fruit was sacred, he said, for it had no seeds. If the giants ate of it, they would be as gods and cursed forever.

Of course, that was all the encouragement then giants needed. They harvested all the fruit they could, and brought it back to their town. Everyone gathered for a feast in honor of the lord, who declared that he would build his new palace around the magical tree, so they could feast on this marvelous fruit for generations to come. Their bellies full of fruit and their hearts full of greed, the giants went to sleep that night...and woke up changed.

The fruit *was* cursed. The nymphs themselves had cursed it with the help of local forest demon. The fruit had no seeds, for the fruit itself was a seed and it took root in the giants who ate it. Over the next few days, amidst much agony, the seeds sprouted through the flesh of giants. The giants tried to cut off the branches sticking out of their bodies, but found that the branches were *part of them*; pruning a branch hurt as if cutting a finger. They also discovered the trees inside them grew faster than any mundane tree; a giant who lay abed for a full day was likely to take root, and find his joints grown over with bark.

The giant civilization was doomed. The few who had not eaten the fruit tried to stay and help, but in the end had to





flee the madness that ensued. Those who remained were forced to focus all their energies on keeping themselves moving and pruned (at great cost), lest they take root. Those who gave up took root in a matter of days, and were overgrown inside of three weeks. But the worst was that even as their last bits of flesh were overcome with wood, they kept their voices, so their companions could hear their howls of agony. Turning into a tree, they discovered, did not kill the giant, but merely transformed him into something that could not move, could not relieve its suffering, and could not die. Even chopping down the giant-tree only added pain—the felled tree would still take root. The only way to end their fellows' suffering was to chop them down and burn them.

In the centuries since the curse, the giants have adapted more or less to being forest giants. They have given up all hope of rebuilding their civilization, or anything at all beyond basic, savage survival. Centuries of pain from pruning their own flesh, burning their own companions, and suffering isolation have driven the forest giants mad. They keep moving, keep pruning, and keep eating whatever they can just to keep their digestive systems clear of plant matter. The food does little to sustain them. Now living long past their natural lifespan, it is their cursed tree parts that keep them alive. Like plants, largely the sun and nutrients in the soil now give them life.

There are only a few dozen forest giants left in the Known World. They tend to stick together, muttering and groaning, and occasionally laughing bitterly at jokes only they can understand. They share food when they can, but if particularly hungry or overwhelmed with madness, they will fight over any scrap they find.

When the forest giants encounter mortals in the Guthenoth Forest, they alternately try to eat them or force-feed them the fruit of the cursed tree, so that they may join the lonely giants in their immortal suffering. A few mortals who have escaped such encounters over the years tell tales of overgrown ruins, screaming trees, and being forced to play

through twisted parodies of ancient giant ceremonies.

A handful of forest giants occasionally staggers out of the Guthenoth Forest and head south to Rothena, or west to the mountains of Rhok-Nirith. They typically leave a wide trail of destruction, and are quickly (if not easily) put down by the locals.

Forest Giant Base Stats:
Body: d10 +4
Mind: d6 -1
Spirit: d6 +1

WOOD NYMPHS

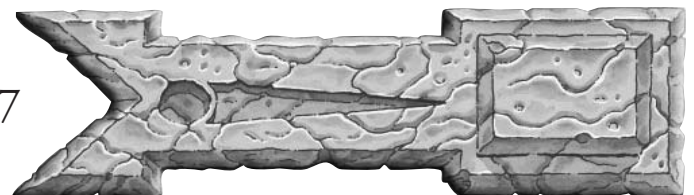
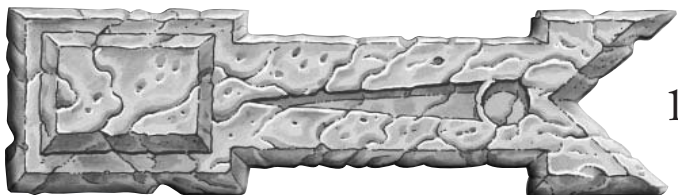
APPEARANCE

Wood nymphs are slender, long-limbed humanoids with skin of a mottled greenish brown. They are thinner than humans, with sharper features and hair made of leaves. The leaves change color with the seasons, and their eyes change color to match their leafy hair. While there are subtle differences between male and female wood nymphs, the willowy creatures appear androgynous to most outsiders.

Because they are immune to the discomforts of weather, wood nymphs wear little clothing. Simple tunics and skirts made of animal hide are common. Some are dyed for decoration. Wood nymphs are fond of jewelry. They often make a new necklace or charm for each important milestone in their lives, and attach trophies from victories to their jewelry.

ABILITIES

While they appear similar to humans, wood nymphs are much quicker and lighter, though a little more fragile. They have excellent night vision, and their senses of hearing and smell are on par with any forest animal. Weather does not affect them; their bodies maintain proper temperatures





regardless of their circumstances. Wood nymphs are gifted in the ways of small magic. This usually manifests in their ability to shape natural materials and find food in the wild.

Wood nymphs are vicious in combat. They prefer to remain hidden, and hunt their enemies at range using their bows and arrows. Up close, nymphs are savage and wield their bone knives with inhuman precision.

HABITAT

The forests of Feth, Guthenoth, and those around Rhok-Kanmor are each home to many tribes of wood nymphs. Other tribes are found in other forests throughout the world, though never in the same place as dark wood nymphs. They have abandoned the dreary forest of Baathun to their cannibalistic cousins.

Wood nymphs are extremely territorial. If they have claimed a forest as their own, no one may reach the forest's heart and survive without their consent. Even those who probe too deeply at the edges of the forest may find themselves threatened at spear-point.

Wood nymph settlements are tied closely to their environments. Tree-homes are common: either as huts built in the branches of trees, or inside the trunks of the trees themselves (which have been magically hollowed-out and kept alive). Because these homes are such a part of the forest around them, outsiders may pass through a wood nymph village and never even know it.

Some wood nymphs are known outside their homes, and a few even venture into the lands of humans or the elder races. Such nymphs are usually explorers, exiles, or emissaries. They cause a stir wherever they are seen.

CULTURE

Part of the reason that wood nymphs are so secretive and protective of their territory is that their lands are magically

productive. Where there are nymphs, the forest is thick with fruit, nuts, and berries for the picking; the water is clear and clean; and game is plentiful and healthy. Wood nymphs are accomplished hunters, and experts with bow and knife. They supplement a diet of fruit and nuts with fresh meat and fish.

Because they typically live for centuries, wood nymphs reproduce very slowly, only once a decade at the most. They also grow up slowly; a nymph isn't considered an adult until its fiftieth year. Wood nymphs marry for life, and maintain extended families. Because of their long lifespan, their families can become quite large, with five generations or more living under one roof.

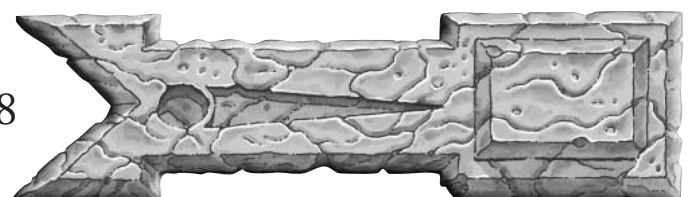
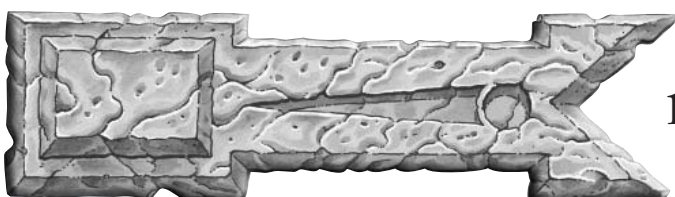
Family is very important to wood nymphs. While children are a rare and blessed event, parents and grandparents are given the most reverence. The patriarch or matriarch of a large family is held the highest esteem. They are, in fact, worshipped as gods.

Wood nymphs are inherently gifted with magic. They can shape wood, stone, bone, and other natural materials as the potter shapes clay on his wheel. Using their magic and a few simple tools, they create intricate, beautiful items. Their bows and bone-daggers are works of art. Their simple furniture looks delicate, but is stronger than any made of metal. The works they create purely as art, such as jewelry, are exquisite beyond mortal ability.

Because their gifts work so well on other materials, wood nymphs choose not to work in metal. Because they live so simply, the nymphs tend to only create objects they would use, rather than objects for sale.

GODS AND BELIEFS

While wood nymphs acknowledge the existence of gods, they worship none as their own. Instead, they worship each other and worship themselves. They worship wood nymphs as the pinnacle of all that is, and their Belief makes them virtually immortal.





Nymph religion is as organized as any other. Each nymph worships his or her mother and father. Mother is the creator and giver of life. Father is the ruler and giver of law. This, in turn, empowers the mother and father with Belief, some of which they offer up as worship to their own parents. In this manner, the eldest wood nymphs with the most descendants are given the most Belief. They use this Belief to prolong their own lives indefinitely and to work miracles for the benefit of their tribes.

In the rare instances where humans and wood nymphs live in close proximity, some humans turned to nymph-worship. It works after a fashion, but the elder nymphs find the humans' Belief thin gruel and the humans find that wood nymphs aren't that concerned with humans' well-being.

CUSTOMS

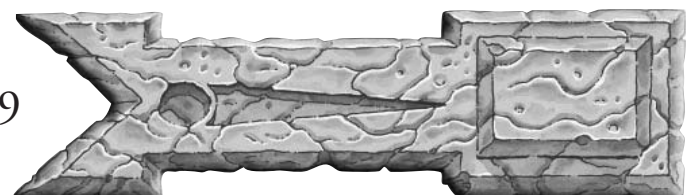
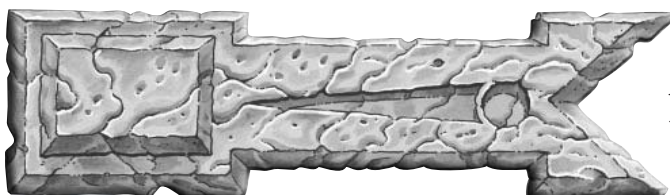
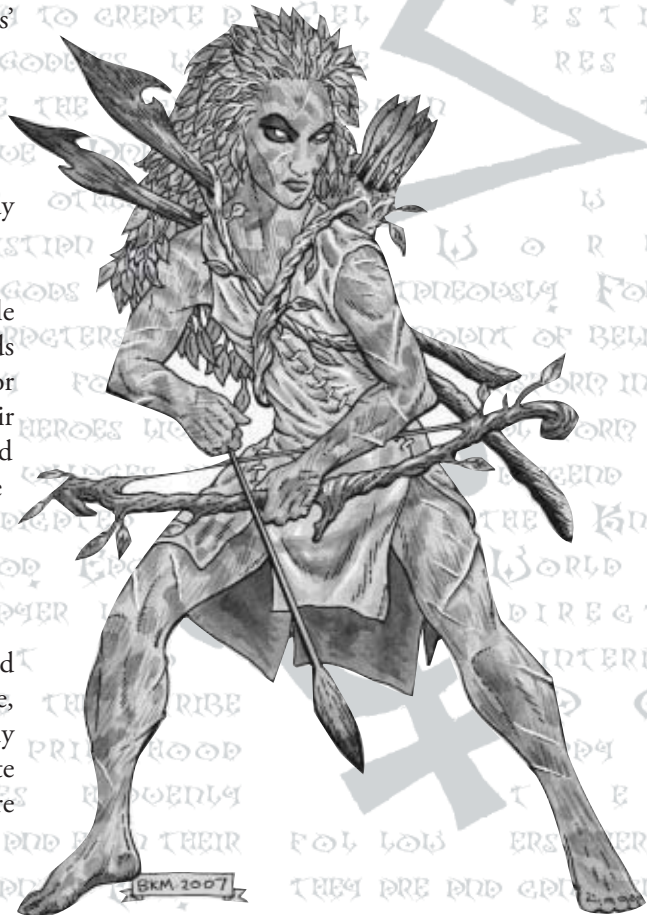
Because wood nymphs are a hidden, secretive people, few outsiders know of their customs. Here are some that may be known on the edges of the forest.

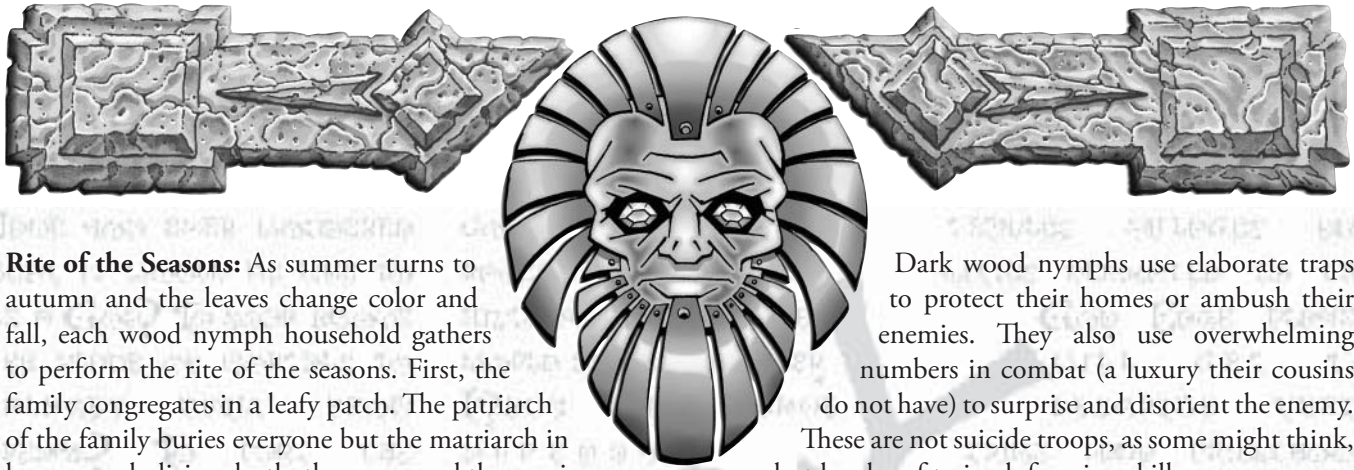
The Wedding Season: When a wood nymph couple marries, it takes a full season to do so. Family and friends are gathered from all over and are kept near the couple for the duration. Each morning at dawn, the guests offer their prayers to the elders to strengthen the union. At the end of the season, all those gathered celebrate with a massive feast that lasts three days. There is power in this season of prayer, for the Belief it generates infuses the marriage and creates a mystic bond between husband and wife.

The Family Assembly: Once a year, all the extended families gather together from throughout the forest. Here, they receive the blessings and wisdom of their family patriarchs. The patriarchs rule on family disputes, negotiate between families, and single out their descendants who are particularly worthy of praise.



Final Silence: Wood nymphs are virtually immortal. As long their fellows believe in them, they can sustain themselves indefinitely. But some eventually tire of existence. In their culture this is a sad but accepted fact. When a nymph feels that he has lived long enough, he undertakes the "final silence," a ritual in which he burns his jewelry, clothing, weapons, and anything else that may remind others of himself. He then takes a plain tunic and steps into the forest, never to be seen again. From that day forward, the rest of the tribe is forbidden to say the nymph's name and certainly must never worship him.





Rite of the Seasons: As summer turns to autumn and the leaves change color and fall, each wood nymph household gathers to perform the rite of the seasons. First, the family congregates in a leafy patch. The patriarch of the family buries everyone but the matriarch in leaves, symbolizing death, the grave, and the coming winter. He says a few words about how the past year has gone, and how he expects the next year to be, then lies down and buries himself in leaves. At this point, the matriarch steps up and calls out the names of her family members from the youngest to the eldest. When they hear their names, they rise from their leafy graves and offer thanksgiving to the one who has given them life.

Wood Nymph Base Stats:

Body: d6 +2

Mind: d8

Spirit: d10 +1

DARK WOOD NYMPHS

APPEARANCE

Like their cousins, dark wood nymphs are slender, with limbs longer than those of humans. Their skin is pale, their hair is black, and their teeth are pointed. Their eyes are black as the void, with no visible pupils.

Dark wood nymphs wear their hair long. Their skin is marked with ritual decorative scars. They wear little clothing, save for animal hides—some are dyed black, but some aren't even cured and reek of death.

ABILITIES

Like their cousins, the dark nymphs are blessed with excellent sense, superhuman speed, and virtual immortality. Because of their powerful self-Belief, they are stronger than their cousins, less fragile, and given a supernatural control over their bodies. Their teeth and nails grow into fangs and claws, which they use for hunting and combat.

Dark wood nymphs use elaborate traps to protect their homes or ambush their enemies. They also use overwhelming numbers in combat (a luxury their cousins do not have) to surprise and disorient the enemy. These are not suicide troops, as some might think, but hordes of trained, ferocious killers.

HABITAT

The dark wood nymphs are mostly found in the haunted forest of Baathun. Smaller groups can also be found between that forest and the forest of Feth to the north, which they have been trying to take from their green-skinned cousins for centuries. Colonies are occasionally spotted throughout western and northern Raanon, where they attack isolated human settlements and travelers.

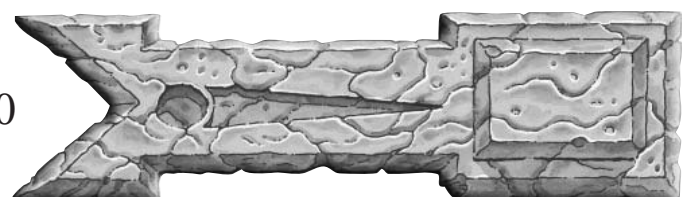
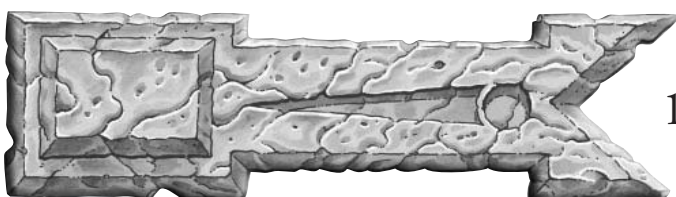
Dark wood nymph settlements are centered on natural fire pits, magic roots, fresh water springs, or a spot where game come to feed. There are no houses where dark nymphs live. There are not even shelters. There are just wide areas in the dirt, leaves, or tree branches where nymphs may sleep at night.

CULTURE

While dark wood nymphs grudgingly supplement their diet with fruit and nuts if they must, they prefer the taste of meat. They eat the flesh of their prey raw. The brain, heart, and other organs are delicacies; eating them gives the dark wood nymph the strength of his prey. Dark nymphs have no problem eating sentient creatures, including other wood nymphs, dark or otherwise.

When hunting, dark nymphs prefer to use their claws and teeth. They magically sharpen and strengthen these innate weapons until they are as serviceable as any wild animal's. They sometimes use bone knives, but mostly just for cutting the meat after the kill.

Dark wood nymphs reproduce much more quickly than their more "civilized" cousins. Their females give birth at least once every two years, and most births are multiple





(twins or triplets). A child born without a sibling is pitied. A female who has not given birth in more than two years is scorned. A child's mother and father are responsible for his first few years, but upon his fifth year, he is turned over to the tribal elder for training.

Each tribe is composed of 15 to 25 dark nymphs, and led by a single elder. The elder is usually the eldest nymph, and is always considered the wisest in the tribe. Elders can be either male or female. The primary role of the elder is to teach the next generation the glory of the dark wood nymphs, and how their faith in the race will help them achieve their destiny. The elder also teaches them to hunt, fight, and carry on the traditions of the people. If necessary, the elder taps other members of the tribe to oversee specialized training.

Dark wood nymphs don't believe in marriage as the wood nymphs do. Rather, they believe in short-term unions between male and female. These unions are long enough to produce more offspring, but short enough to allow the adults to create bonds of emotion with others in the tribe. These bonds help strengthen the tribe.

Dark wood nymphs build nothing, for they need nothing. Since they are impervious to the elements, they need no shelters. Since they worship themselves, they need no temples. Since their bodies are honed to perfection, they need no weapons.

GODS AND BELIEFS

Like their light cousins, the dark wood nymphs have no need for gods. They worship only themselves. But while the light wood nymphs worship their elders in a pyramid of Belief, dark wood nymphs worship their race as a whole, with no special emphasis on any specific member. The result is that there are no all-powerful elders to perform miracles when needed, but the average dark wood nymph is blessed with more inherent power than his light counterpart.



The core of the dark wood nymph belief is their destiny. They believe that their race is the pinnacle of life in the Known World, and therefore deserving of worship.

After all, the other races are soft and weak—they need buildings and tools and gods to help them survive. The dark wood nymphs need nothing but themselves. It is their destiny, they believe, to be worshipped by all other races—and to destroy any who refuse to bow.

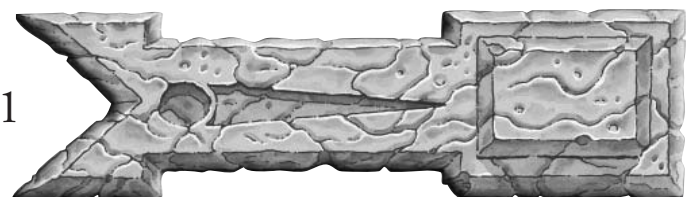
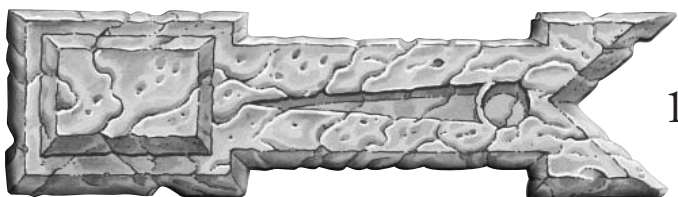
According to tradition, the light wood nymphs turned away from this destiny ages ago. They turned to isolation and *making things* due to laziness and a lust for luxury, until they were little better than the elder races. The dark wood nymphs are infuriated by their cousins' betrayal and arrogance. They have given up trying to bring their cousins back into the true path, and now just want to see them dead.

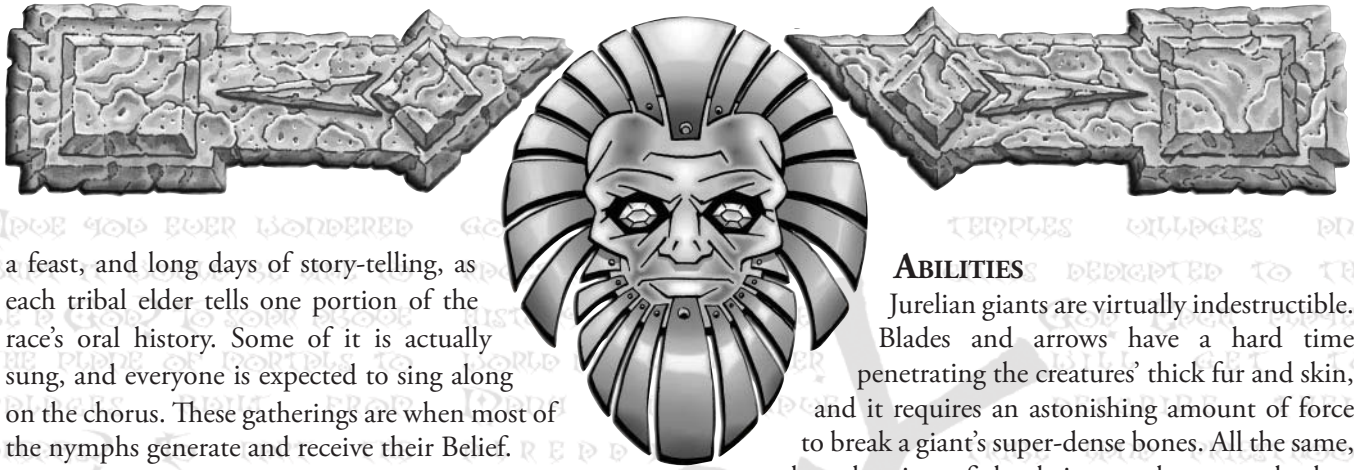
CUSTOMS

In ages past, the dark wood nymph tribes warred against each other. Now they are united as a single race with a single culture and a single, bloody destiny. Below are some of the customs that help unify their culture.

Chewing the Root: The blood-red "vision root" is found at the base of certain trees in shadow-shrouded glens throughout Raanon. When dried and chewed, it provides a hallucinatory experience and a feeling of euphoria. While not all dark nymphs chew the root, the elders of each tribe are expected to, as are the other leaders. Because of their belief in each other, they have a mystic bond that results in all having the same vision if they chew root at the same time. The eldest interprets the vision, deciding whether it is a warning of danger or encouragement for the current course of action.

The Song of Destiny: Once per season, the tribes gather for a time of remembering who they are, the history of the dark nymphs, and their glorious destiny. There is a hunt,





a feast, and long days of story-telling, as each tribal elder tells one portion of the race's oral history. Some of it is actually sung, and everyone is expected to sing along on the chorus. These gatherings are when most of the nymphs generate and receive their Belief.

Cannibalism: Dark wood nymphs are cannibals. They eat other sentient races, other wood nymphs, and even each other if one should fall in battle. Eating the flesh of a sentient creature is a mark of respect, no matter how grudging, for that creature. There is no greater insult to an enemy than to leave his corpse for scavengers and decay.

Time of Blood: As a rite of passage, dark wood nymph youths reaching 15 years old are taken to an area known to be occupied by dangerous creatures. The nymph is left with no weapons or food, and cannot return to the tribe for three days and three nights. If he survives, he is presented with his first ritual scar and welcomed into the tribe as an adult.

Dark Wood Nymphs Base Stats:

Body: d6 +3

Mind: d8

Spirit: d10

JURELIAN GIANTS

The mighty Jurelian giants are among the largest sentient races in the Known World. They stand two to three times as tall as a man, and up to three times as wide at the shoulders. Mostly humanoid, they have six massive limbs—two legs and four arms—and move with an ape-like stoop. They have three beady eyes in their primal faces, and their bodies are covered in long, shaggy coats of fur. Their fur ranges from white to brown or even light blue in color.

Because of their fur and thick skins, Jurelian giants need no clothing. A few may carry bags of possessions or wear jewelry adorned with trophies of some important victory (a monster's tooth, a human skull, etc.).

ABILITIES

Jurelian giants are virtually indestructible. Blades and arrows have a hard time penetrating the creatures' thick fur and skin, and it requires an astonishing amount of force to break a giant's super-dense bones. All the same, when the giants fight their own, bones are broken and blood is shed in abundance; while they are far tougher than any human, they are also far stronger.

Not that the giants are invincible in combat. They are slow, and their eyesight isn't good in bright light. A quick adversary could dodge a giant's attack and lure it into a trap. When fighting, giants alternate between crushing their enemies in their massive arms and simply smashing them with oversized clubs.

HABITAT

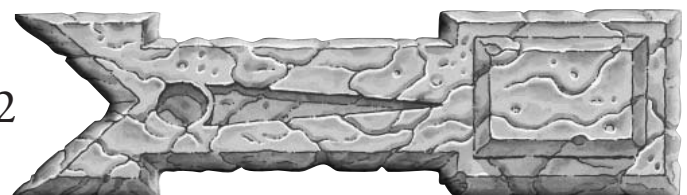
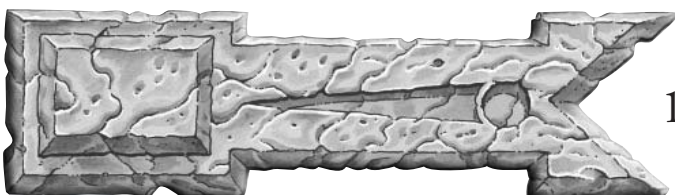
For millennia, the Jurelian giants have lived in the icy realm of Jurel from which they get their name. While the region may appear an arctic wasteland to outsiders, the giants see a diverse and beautiful landscape. The giants live in caves of stone and ice carved from the mountains, hills, and glaciers of the region. There are hundreds of tribes throughout Jurel, each with its own home, hunting ground, and sacred sites.

Giant caves resemble rabbit warrens. A whole tribe shares a single network of caves, and digs deeper if the tribe grows. The caves are warm and snug, but smoky from the fires used for cooking and light. The walls are all decorated with crude illustrations depicting old hunts and battles that the tribe wants to memorialize.

While they call Jurel their home, the giants are occasionally seen in Rhok-Galenth and Rhok-Kanmor. These are mostly raiding parties, though they have tried to colonize these regions in the past. It is only a matter of time before they do so again.

CULTURE

Hunting is the main source of food for the Jurelian giants. Using clubs and crude bone knives, they hunt seals on the





coastline, mammoths across the frozen tundra, and anything else they can find to provide meat for the tribe. Millennia of experience have made the giants experts at sucking every last bit of nutrition from their kills; if any part of animal is edible, it is eaten.

There are stories of Jurelian giants hunting humans or sylphs for sport. While this is not true, the truth is that if hungry enough, a Jurelian giant will eat sentient creatures. They prefer not to due to the effort required and won't eat other giants, but won't balk if they're really hungry.

Jurelian giants mate for life—though that life may be short. A single male giant may have any number of wives in his caves, if he has the status in the tribe to convince them to marry him. It is the wives' duty to bear children and teach them the history and traditions of the tribe. It is the husbands' duty to provide food for all his family. If one male giant slays another, he is required to take his slain enemy's wives and children into his own home. Likewise, if a female giant slays another, she is required to take that giant's children into her home.

A tribe is made up of several families, and may have up to 50 giants in it. The tribe is led by the oldest three giants, whether male or female. One of these serves as the shaman for the tribe, another as its chief warrior, and the third as the peacemaker who negotiates with other tribes and settles intra-tribe disputes.

The various tribes are always competing for hunting grounds and sacred sites. Wise elders can maintain the peace with a rival tribe by claiming a territory to save face but ensuring that the two tribes are never there at the same time to save peace.

BELIEFS AND GODS

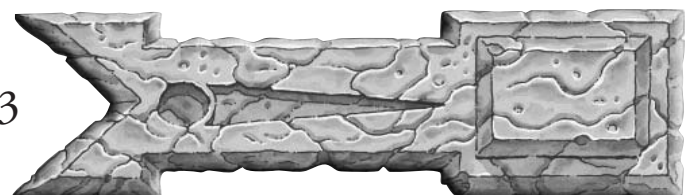
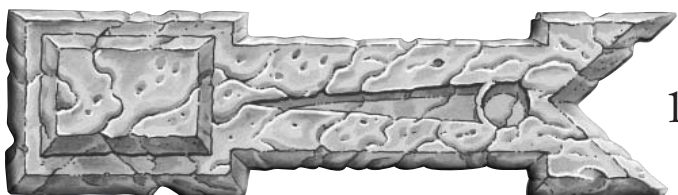
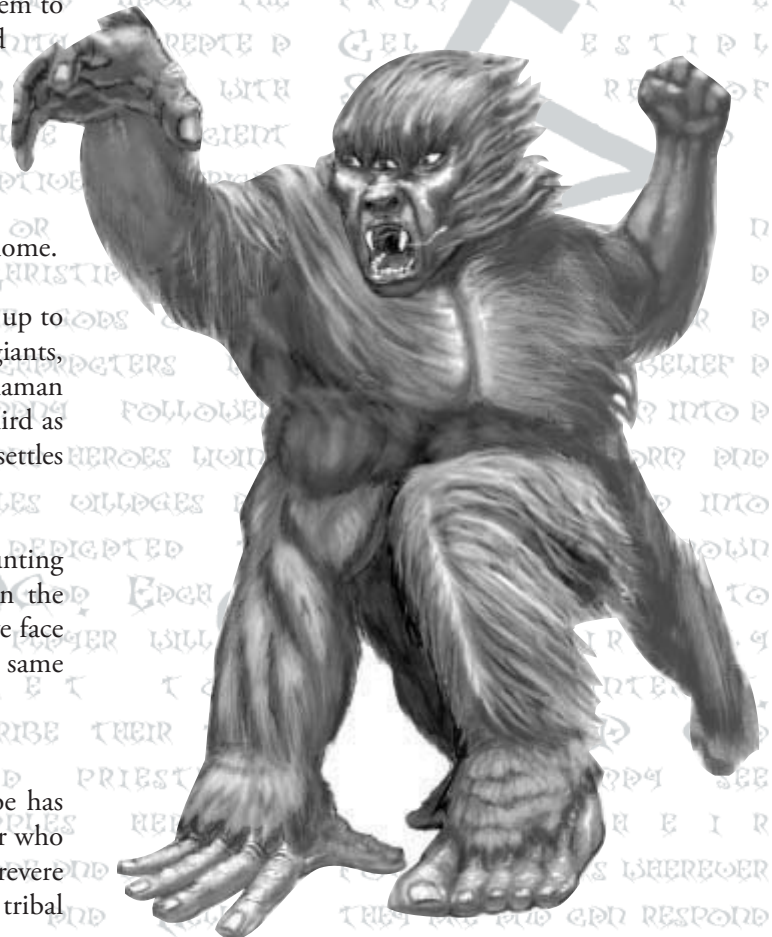
The giants of Jurel believe in many gods. Each tribe has its own tribal god, who is usually an ancient ancestor who ascended to godhood after death. All the tribes revere Thuun, Lord of Destruction. It is said that even the tribal



gods bow to Thuun, for his power is great and his anger terrible. Thuun's constant demand for sacrifice is often the force driving the giants to make war against each other and their neighbors to the south.

Scattered across Jurel are hundreds of sacred sites, each marked with stones. No one living can say what made them sacred originally, but their power cannot be denied. They are conduits to the gods, and the tribes compete for control of these locations.

There are three types of stone markers: Cairns, which are simply hundreds of smooth stones piled in a ritualistic shape; obelisks, which are free-standing columns carved





with holy runes; and standing stones, which are circles of stone columns standing taller than the giants themselves.

Cairns are the most common and least powerful. Each tribe has access to at least one cairn, and any giant who prays there may hear the voice of his tribal god. Obelisks are more uncommon, and often fought over. The gods give their blessings to those who offer sacrifices and prayers at an obelisk.

Standing stones are rare. While there are a handful of circles hidden throughout Jurel, they are largely forgotten and lost. The primary standing stones are the Grun Circle, where Thuun makes his presence known. This is the holiest site in all of Jurel. Its icy soil is soaked in the blood of countless sacrifices, and the battles fought to control it. For the past two centuries, the giants have agreed to keep the Circle and its environs as neutral ground; Thuun is too important to all tribes to restrict his stones to just one.

According to giant tradition, there once was but one god, Grun, who ruled over all of Jurel. But even he could not stand against Thuun, and his throne was destroyed. Today, the name "Grun" is used as a curse amongst the giants.

CUSTOMS

While outsiders may assume the Jurelian giants are stupid savages, the tribes have actually evolved a rather complex set of customs over the centuries.

Sharing of Food: When a hunter returns with meat, he is required to share his kill with the rest of the tribe. He is free, however, to choose who gets their portion first, and thereby show the status of the others in the tribe. A married hunter is expected to choose his wives first.

Gathering the Stones: The standing stones and cairns of the giants are well-known sacred sites. What outsiders don't know, however, is that the stones at these sites aren't all ancient. Some are recently acquired, at great peril, from the bowels of the earth. Jurel is dotted with caves leading to

monster-infested subterranean caverns. These monsters are guarding sacred stones imbued with primal Belief. Giants who want to prove themselves quest into these caves to retrieve said stones. Those to return victorious are hailed as heroes and given great honor. These stones are then placed on the sacred cairn, and their Belief released to the tribal god.

Stone Milk: Every few seasons, the giants brew up a nasty concoction of fermented mammoth milk, mixed with blood and snow or sea water. This heady drink is very intoxicating—and likely lethal to any non-giants who give it a try. The night the batch is finished, the tribe celebrates with a drunken celebration that often ends in a good-natured brawl. The recipe for stone milk was handed down by some long-forgotten hearth goddess to a tribe of humans the giants wiped out ages ago. This drink is all that remains of that doomed culture.

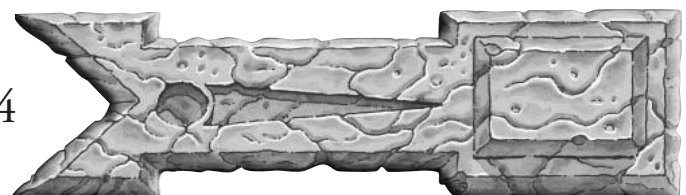
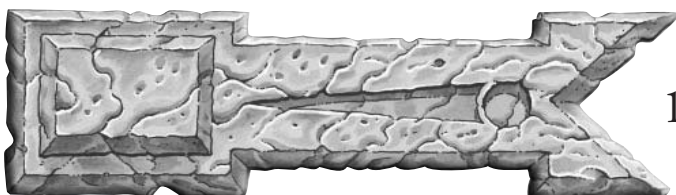
Rampage: In honor of Thuun, Lord of Destruction, the Jurelian giants embark on a campaign of utter devastation every few years. When the moon is right, the food is plentiful, and the shamans decree that Thuun would be pleased, the giants of Jurel amass at the Grun Circle of Stones, then flood to the south. They destroy everything in their path that smacks of civilization. They kill anyone they find, slaughter livestock, burn crops, destroy buildings, and generally leave nothing but ruins in their wake. The time of rampage can last for weeks, then ends as suddenly as it began. When the shaman gives the word, the giants reverse course and return to Jurel. All the destruction of the Rampage is a sacrifice to Thuun.

Jurelian Giants Base Stats:

Body: d10 +4

Mind: d6

Spirit: d6



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I was born and raised in Frankfort, Kentucky. I attended a tiny high-school of only 300 or so students and it was toward the end of my junior year I became interested in art as a career. After highschool I moved to Cincinnati to attend the Art Academy of Cincinnati. I graduated with a BFA in communication arts with an emphasis in illustration. I got married shortly after college and together we bought a house and now live in the northern Kentucky area.

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<http://steffworthington.blogspot.com>

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She also runs the rpg publishing company, Dog Soul, 2006 ENnie Award winner for Best Electronic Book.

She can be reached at deborah@dogsoul.net. Visit Dog Soul's website at <http://dogsoul.net>.

NEW GODS OF MANKIND

Character Sheet

Player Name: _____

Name: _____

Pantheon: _____

Titles: _____

Primary Domain: _____

Appearance: _____

Symbols
Draw Your Symbol Here

Secondary Domains:

Incarnated: _____

1. _____
2. _____

Commandments

Elemental: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Inclination

Harmony: _____
-1 Cost

Balance: _____
+0 Cost

Opposition: _____
+1 Cost

Celestial Realm

Season: _____

Description: _____

Belief

Current: _____

Maximum: _____

Terror: _____

Worship Details

Festival Season: _____

Ceremony: _____

Belief Scale Chart

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
X1	X2	X4	X8	X15	X30	X60	X125	X250	X500	X1000	X2000

Base Cost:

- 2 - Trivial Alteration
- 3 - Minor Alteration
- 4 - Significant Alteration / Trivial Innovation
- 5 - Major Alteration / Minor Innovation
- 6 - Legendary Alteration / Significant Innovation
- 7 - Major Innovation
- 8 - Legendary Innovation

Scale:

- +0 - Individual (1)
- +1 - Household (~10)
- +2 - Village (~100)
- +3 - Territory (~1000)
- +4 - Nation (~10,000)
- +5 - Continent (~100,000)

Duration:

- +0 - Round/ Instant
- +1 - Conflict/ Week
- +2 - Season
- +3 - Year/ Permanent*

Inclination:

- 1 - Casting God is in Harmony with style of miracle
- +0 - Casting God is in Balance with style of miracle
- +1 - Casting God is in Opposition to style of miracle

Location:

- +0 - location controlled by the casting God
- +1 - location controlled by no major God
- +2 - location controlled by another major God

Domain:

- 2 - Miracle falls within the casting God's Domain

NEW GODS OF MANKIND

Character Sheet

Miracles Work Sheet

Belief Scale Chart

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
X1	X2	X4	X8	X15	X30	X60	X125	X250	X500	X1000	X2000

Base Cost:

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Location:

- +0 - location controlled by the casting God
- +1 - location controlled by no major God
- +2 - location controlled by another major God

Duration:

- +0 - Round/Instant
- +1 - Conflict/Week

- +2 - Season
- +3 - Year/Permanent*

Domain:

- 2 - Miracle falls within the casting God's Domain

Miracles

Creation	Cost	Effect	Scale	Duration
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Destruction	Cost			
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Transformation	Cost			
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Control	Cost			
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

NEW GODS OF MANKIND

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Rival Gods

Noteworthy Events

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Territories

Type: _____
Households Sustained: _____

Territories

Type: _____
Households Sustained: _____

Temples

Temples

Artifacts

Artifacts

Tribe: _____

Population: _____

Followers: _____

% _____

Tribal Castes: *of population*

% _____
professions

% _____
professions

% _____
professions

Belief Spent: _____

Territory: _____

Hero: _____

Body: _____

Mind: _____

Spirit: _____

Hero: _____

Body: _____

Mind: _____

Spirit: _____

Hero: _____

Body: _____

Mind: _____

Spirit: _____

Tribal Customs: _____

Notes: _____



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In the Celestial Spheres above the Known World, you live among the immortals, a New God of Mankind, worshipped by your followers. Here you may create your own heaven or hell, a place of solace or perhaps a kingdom of pain. From your heavenly abode, you may descend to the Known World or visit the unearthly Spirit Realm in the blink of an eye. Your power is limited only by the worshippers and belief you command.

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