

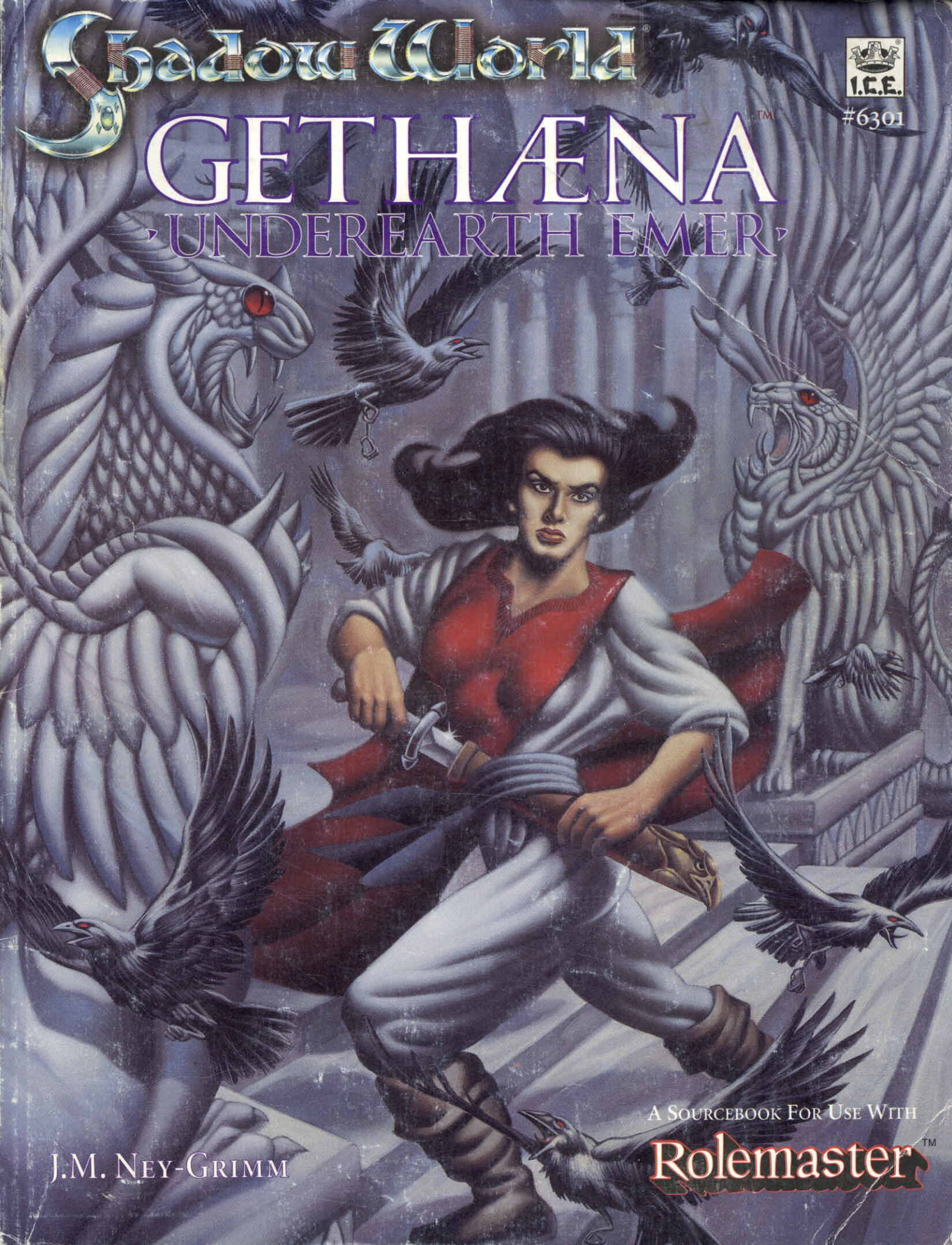
Shadow World



#6301

GETHÆNA

UNDEREARTH EMER



J.M. NEY-GRIMM

A SOURCEBOOK FOR USE WITH

Rolemaster



GETHÆNA™

‘UNDEREARTH EMER,’

AUTHOR/DESIGNER: J. M. NEY-GRIMM

This work is respectfully dedicated to the archetypal Persephone enthroned.

Many thanks to the families Ney and Grimm for their interest and support.

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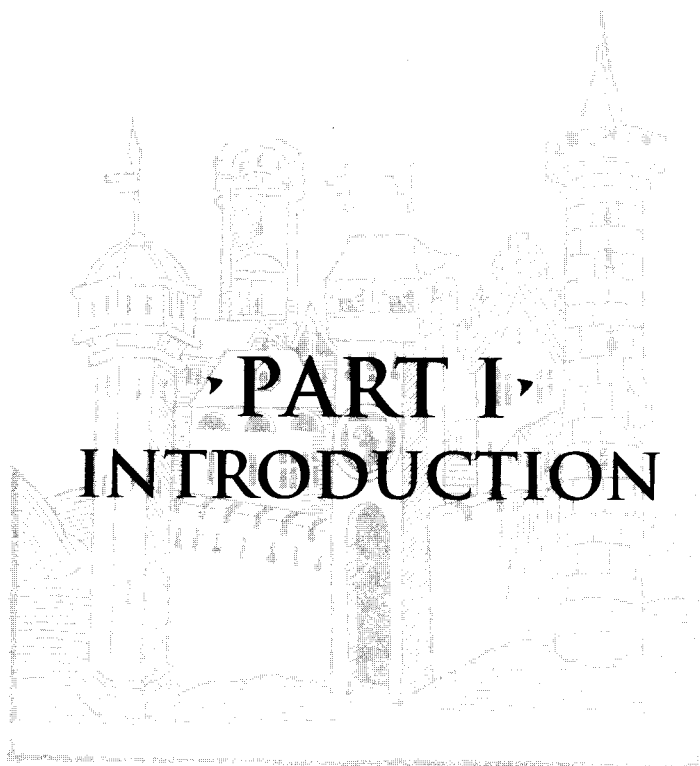
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· PART I ·

INTRODUCTION



CAIDH FELT THE MUSCLES OF THE DEMON'S SHOULDERS surge under his thighs. He marveled again at his success in summoning the monstrosity and bending it to his will. Now, surely Delia must admit him to be superior to his twin. Peath had always disapproved of the mages who dabbled in the darker arts. But all his fastidious purity had not succeeded in finding a path to the legendary treasures of Gethæna. No, Caidh's dubious methods had done that.

Pilasters of rose marble blurred with the speed of Caidh's mount. It ran down the endless hallway with its bat wings half unfurled, ready to spring into flight should the floor disappear. The mouth in its flattened snout was twisted into a snarl, baring yellowed fangs and the glimpse of a crimson gullet. Its black skin was hot to the touch, and Caidh's trousers bore scorch marks where their folds pressed against the beast. Chudiis was the name that chained it to obedience.

Faster and yet faster the demon sped. The floor dropped away, and beast and rider soared beneath a vast dome. A colonnade of blackest onyx supported the vault. Below, within the circle of these piers, a fountain splashed over porphyry steps.

An instant later, Chudiis reached the archway on the far side of the grotto, halfway up its reaching walls. A buffet of air swayed Caidh in his seat as his mount dove through the aperture. The mage gripped the demon's head-horn to steady himself. Flushed pilasters in an endless corridor flashed by once again.

CAIDH RIDING DEMONBACK



What was that glitter, that sparkle ahead? Brighter than the dim, steady glow illuminating the passage through which he traveled, it dazzled Caidh's eyes. A faceted jewel? A mirror? Or could it be the gold-spangled grasslands of fabled Migdol? Excitement tightened the rider's throat as he and his mount rushed ever nearer to the tunnel's end. Seen in miniature, a vista of gilded grasses glistening with dewdrops (or were they diamonds?) beneath a bronze sky took shape within the still-distant lens of light.

Closer, closer. The walls of the corridor opened suddenly into an immense piazza, while the ceiling curved upward to a vault lost in darkness. The grassland scene swelled larger, from the size of Caidh's palm to that of his wind-spread cloak to the width of a desert canyon. Now it filled his entire angle of vision. A hot breeze rippled the strangely metallic prairie, blowing inward through the huge portal and drawing sweat to Caidh's brow.

The mage's eyes darted sideways—caught a looming shadow, the glint of slit eyes, at the far edge of the piazza. The rustle of scales met his ear as coil upon massive coil shifted—sliding, moving, rising, readying for a deadly strike.

Tracing a rune in the air with a gloved fingertip, Caidh tilted his head back to search the high vault for the monster's spine-fringed jaws. Why had he never suspected that Gethæna's gate might have a guardian?



Adventurers who have never travelled within Gethæna will have heard only the most distorted or sketchy descriptions of the land. Wise PCs should take the rumors with a grain of salt.

Legends have named it the Realms of Eissa, Goddess of Death. Folk tales call it Dischordia. Travel lore dubs it Gethæna. Few journey to this underground kingdom, fewer return. The road is variable: sometimes short, more often long; rarely without danger, usually perilous. Great and cunning sorceries bring the mageborn here. Essence storms sweep the unwary to their doom or carry the knowledgeable to long-sought treasure. Skilled riders travel aback Demons along unseen paths to this land of strife and riches. The learned seek the Ash Lairs, passages beneath the earth possessing at least one gate into Gethæna. But each traveller must find his own way.

Journey's end is a circle of glassy, black mountains, trembling in the heat of a surrounding wasteland. The earth is encased in a dusty skin of bronze sands pierced by the sharp cliffs and sullenly glowing volcanic cones. Clawing these protrusions, the fortresses of grand dukes glare down at the metallic plain below. Above, the hemisphere of a desiccating, brass sky provides illumination for the ceaseless dual wars.

From a distance, armies of small, brown insects circle, maneuver, and crash together. A closer view shows us the individual soldier: a short, bronze-skinned humanoid bearing goat horns, a feral gleam in his eyes, and a prehensile tail. He wears a short tunic and brandishes a net and trident. His taller and heavier companion flourishes bull horns and carries a boomerang and cat-of-nine-tails. They follow a man on horseback: a competent, yet foppish cavalier, complete with feathered hat, frills, and lethal rapier.

Their objective is a walled city of black stone. Its parapets waiver through the distance of hot, shimmering air. White-garbed citizens move gracefully through narrow streets and across spacious plazas. Bargaining in the market, caught in discussion by a fountain, watching children's play in the courtyards: all seem undisturbed by the violent events so near the city gates. These are the marvels of the underearth realm of Gethæna.



· PART II · THE LAND



PEATH RUBBED HIS HAND ACROSS THE DAMP STUBBLE on his head before replacing his black skullcap. He pulled back his brown cloak, tossing the folds over his shoulders. It was hot, here in the underearth realm, and the shadows of the forest seemed to cool the heat not at all. Peath sighed, then smiled. He was here! Here in legendary Gethæna! Delia would have to acknowledge that impeccable methods were crucial to any worthy result. It was not Caidh's dubious commerce with demons that had brought success. No, Peath's mastery of the Essence—the fruit of refined intellect and hard practice—had opened the way to travel on the Flows.

Peath brushed his fingertips along the trunk of the tree under which he stood. Its bark was deeply fissured and black, black as the darkness found in mountain caverns. Yet its leaves were opalescent white, veined with filaments of silver. None of the plants showed the green foliage normal to forests in Kulthea's surface lands. The bushes bore fronds of bronze or purple, and the moss covering that fallen limb was ivory. Peath reached for the parchment and pen stored in his belt pouch. So many new species to record!

A cackling laugh, high-pitched and malicious, interrupted his concentration. Peath jerked his gaze from his notes. The old crone perched on the branch above him was a stranger, but her hand gestures were only too familiar to one of the mageborn. Peath's eyes drifted closed even as he started the counter to a sleep spell.



The terrain of Gethæna is as unusual as the plants and animals that thrive there. A whole new ecology has evolved to adapt to the conditions of a land of perpetual daylight that yet never sees the sun.

Millennia ago, a lobe of granitic magma pushed through layers of suffocating rock and soil towards the earth's surface. It never reached the sun's rays, because seawater washed the sands above. Yet a small finger of lava poured forth upon the ocean floor. Centuries passed, and the magma receded, leaving a great hollow chamber where needle-fanged lantern fish, horn-beaked squid, and electric eels swam after prey. Strange corals, requiring neither sunlight nor algae, sprouted from pumice stones or floated free in the currents. More time passed. The lands beneath the sea rose to become a desert ringed by mountains. The empty magma chamber, now a dry tomb for the bones of fishes, rested in undisturbed solitude.

Niyoreh Jirel, heir to Kadæna Worldslayer, discovered the magnificent cavern and rejoiced. Here she would house the demon armies with which her followers might conquer all the lands. Niyoreh appointed Pæl Dhæk and his daughter, Mhari Ridæn, to supervise the project. Out of their inspired imaginations the underground realm of Gethæna took shape. Mountains were raised, plains leveled, and waters moved.

Research into obscure arcane arts revealed, at last, the way to light the huge cavern and imprison the demon armies within it. Together Pæl and Mhari forged the monstrous crystal that would focus a Flow of Essænce into an incandescent sphere of force—Gethæna's sky. Too late, Niyoreh discovered treachery in her ranks. The hot, brassy sky would not imprison the demons yet to be called from a crack in the fabric of reality. Rather it would hold the lawless shapechangers who cavorted amidst the volcanos and lava flows of this world, Kulthea. These, too, were evil, but they could not be forced to do Niyoreh's will and, thus, were useless to her. The enraged Lord of Essænce attacked Mhari Ridæn without a challenge, but the deed was done. Gethæna had been born.

1·THE WASTES

Great portions of the underearth realm are wasteland. Dust, dunes, and the erratic wind haunt these infertile stretches of desert. No plants grow there, no animals creep upon the bronze sands. Heat sifts and swirls the dry air, spiraling upward toward the burning hemisphere that serves as Gethæna's sky. Where the sky curves down to meet the wastelands, temperatures rise to rival those produced in a kiln for firing clay pots. The sands are fused into a thin glaze textured by intersecting cracks.

The center of this desert is cooler. A ridge of mountains, sculpted from black volcanic glass, forms a rough circle there. The peaks are sharp and hard, with polished facets like those of a gemstone and innumerable brittle spires. No foliage softens their stark contours, but the bones of unlucky explorers gleam whitely in many cracks and crannies of the obsidian rock. Far below, deep in the mountains roots, volcanic pipes glitter with sapphires, rubies, and olivine.

SAMÆL AMIDST TANGLEWOODS



2·INSIDE THE CIRCLE OF MOUNTAINS

Within the shelter of the peaks' ring, a gentler terrain harbors life and civilization. Composed of grasslands, one great forest, and deserts colorful with exotic cacti and brightly scaled creatures, the countryside is watered by several bounteous springs and lakes. These, together with the lower temperatures, make Gethæna habitable.

THE DESERT

In contrast to the wastelands, the coarse tan, yellow, and white sands of the interior support abundant plant and animal life. Among the sifting dunes and flat, hardened saltpans grow spiny cacti that burst into flower with the infrequent rainfall, isolated clumps of silvery scargrass, thickets of thorny briars, and the bizarre tanglewood groves. These peculiar trees sprout in clusters of five stems; each shoot bends as it grows, gradually forming an arch. With time, the arches reach higher while the lengthening tip drives further into the sand. Eventually, the buried tip sprouts a new cluster of five stems. These entangle themselves with the old limbs: a grove of tanglewoods is virtually impassible to the traveller.

The most fertile stretches of desert lie within the lands of Næph, bordered to the southwest by the salt pans of Zudær and to the northeast by the drifting dunes of Pæran. Small pincushion cacti, bigger pearleaf spines, and the largest saguaros leave little sand in view. Twisting tracks and paths climb small buttes of volcanic rock, eroded by the winds, and then descend again into the maze formed by the prickly flora. Along the shores of Lake Fomwæn, the most extensive grove of tanglewoods provides furnishings and other necessities to the citizens of Tangeval.

The desert's animal life is no less plentiful. Vultures and hawks circle in the sky, while snakes, lizards, and insects creep below, occasionally disturbed by the howls of scrawny jackals or the light pattering feet of the sentani. Some of these creatures deserve more detailed mention, given below.

A dusting of cinnamon tints the suede flanks of the sandlion—a wiry and resilient great cat. Glaring, golden eyes and bronze claws attest to their predatory nature. Although prides of six to eight adults roam wild in the desert, many more serve mankind as mounts and sources of dairy products. The felines are intelligent and cooperate almost as equals when in partnership with man. However, this sagacity is turned toward aggressive independence by those remnants stalking the sands of Zudær and Næph.

Sentani are slight, quick-footed gophers adapted to the arid climate and its more lethal predators. Grizzled tan fur covers their small bodies, marked on the belly with black and brown splotches. They dig extensive underground warrens with multiple entrances. The young males of a litter spend many hours standing sentinel above these holes. A whistling bark warns those below of approaching danger.

The jewelsting might resemble a scorpion were it not for the brilliant colors of the insect's chitinous exoskeleton. Plates of vivid blue green and deepest red cover its articulated tail (which ends in a stinger) and its sturdy pincers. Each of these dispenses a different poison. The toxin from the pincers produces convulsions in its victims, while that of the tail stinger paralyzes the diaphragm, causing suffocation.

Another insect best avoided, the jadeback is a beetle with a deep green exoskeleton. A projection on its back, resembling a thorn, dispenses poison if the jadeback is trodden upon. Under these circumstances, the venom causes a high fever; however, if the toxin is ingested through the mouth, the healing rate of existing wounds is hastened. Jadebacks build complex structures for their lairs. The ignorant might mistake them for sandcastles made by children at play.

The most deadly of all the snakes, glimsinu prefer sentani and desert rats for prey. However, the serpent is not discriminating and will bite anything moving that comes within range. Light apricot scales patterned by rust, copper, and carnelian markings make the snake readily identifiable. Crimson scales around the fanged mouth match the scarlet venom dispensed by the glimsinu's bite. The toxin is a muscle poison that induces total paralysis in the victim.

THE GRASSLANDS

A flat plain softened by low rises spreads to the north of the desert, encompassing the lands of Gamesh, Væshim, and Migdol. Scargrass, a silvery grey groundcover that reaches the height of a man's knee before bearing seed grows luxuriantly here and intermingles with glittergrain, a tawny spray supporting clusters of golden kernels from which the people of Gethæna grind flour for bread. Cherrybright, a small shrub whose fruits resemble wild strawberries, and cobaltange, a bush bearing blue-skinned oranges find shelter among the roots of the grass. Sawleaf palms, the only trees found in the grasslands, sway around the infrequent waterholes, creating welcome shade with their jagged, black-green foliage.

Sentani, fatter than their desert cousins; small mice and chipmunks; harmless grass snakes; ant colonies that accumulate huge mounds for their hives; and songbirds who nest on sharp protrusions of rock chatter, hiss, and chirp in the windblown scargrass. But the most noteworthy of the plain's denizens is the gleamtiger. Truly awful strength flexes the muscles beneath the jet-streaked silver fur of this savage predator. Its shoulder matches that of a man's in height, and razor-edged fangs and claws rip the flesh of its victims. Although the gleamtiger hunts all of the species within Gethæna, it prefers to sate its hunger with the blood of the greater beasts. Its favored prey are the Nuld (see Part IV, *The Ishru*) and man.



TAMIEL IN ANAN'S MEADOWS

THE MEADOWLANDS

North of the plains, the sloping valley of Ænan shelters a patchwork of flowers, mosses, and berries. Diminutive purple convivius; white-leaved merylias with green berries; black, orchid-like lavænus; blue-leaved and pink-petaled sælenis; and yellow-blossomed verulia comprise but a few of the plant species present. Despite their beauty, most are deadly—yielding poisonous fruits, exuding sticky saps that burn on contact, or scattering pollens that kill at inhalation.

Only a few animals have developed immunities to the poisons. A small, lavender-pelted gazelle roams the upper reaches of the region, grazing on the short grasses that thrive where the mountains' rock meets the valley's soil. Two songbirds, the mountain thrush and the meadow swift, feast on the berries of the merylias and the balæril shrubs. Much more numerous are the thousands of butterflies frequenting the slopes. Wings of vivid blue, pale yellow, tiger-stripped orange, red-splotted purple, and silver-spangled green flutter between the blossoms.

Ænan is bordered by the only true forest in Gethæna, the Hiroth, and by its largest lake, Lebæn. However, Lebæn does not hold water, but an azure poison known as *irænis* (Æ. "Shimmerdeath"). Men who imbibe this liquid develop a blue tint to their skin and die slowly as sanity and then motor control departs over several months. Two springs of *irænis*, high on the mountainside, bubble forth to create streams that feed the lake. From a deep, calm tarn on the eastern ridge, the Tæbis enters a narrow ravine, foaming through the dark cliffs and then emerging to rush between flower laden banks down the steep slopes of upper Ænan. The Iphrætur is less tempestuous, arising in a small cavern in the gardens of Nokor Ænan, Lucibel's castle. The brook chatters across smooth pebbles before spilling over a series of cascades. Its waters slow when they join those of the Tæbis, and the combined currents meander through blue-tinged scargrass to flow into Lake Lebæn.

Several species of fish have adapted to this peculiar environment, including the *paværin* (Æ. "Prism Trout"), the *nimbusæn* (Æ. "Tinted Perch"), and the *spirælin* (Æ. "Chameleon Tuna"). They spawn in the streams, but spend their maturity in the deeper waters of the lake. There also swims the menacing spineshark, a huge creature with iridescent blue scales paling to pearl white on its belly. A spiny sailfin, indigo in color and razor sharp, projects from the creature's back. The spineshark acquired its name from this dangerous fin. It is a true fish, not a shark, and eats plants and smaller fish. When moving at full speed, the sailfin may unintentionally shear in two any swimmer or boat it encounters. Since mankind avoids this lake, such a fate remains reserved for the Ishru and their servants, who quaff *irænis* without harm.

The Gænzhur River, a leisurely current flowing south from Lake Lebæn into the Forest of Hiroth, dwindles to a small stream and then to merely a rivulet as the distance from its source increases. Snaky roots writhe down the shadowed banks to nourish the mighty irnwood trees that dominate the forest. Their bark is thick, black, and gouged by deep furrows; their dark limbs are shrouded in mists of coin-sized, pearly leaves veined by opalescent filaments. A rich loam covers the forest floor, sustaining shadebushes bearing brown leaves and topaz fruits, shadowferns whose intricate fronds stir in the slightest of breezes, and ivory sorrowmoss.

Catdoves, gentle birds with satin grey plumage that peaks in two tufts upon the head, resembling cat's ears, coo and preen amidst the lush foliage. They build nests atop shadebush thickets, trusting the tangled branches to protect their eggs. These are delicately mottled in tints of pale lavender.

Kingcats stalk the forest floor in search of prey, favoring birds and small rodents. Lean and long-legged, these felines reach just above a man's knee in height. Short silky fur of a silvery tan covers their lithe frames, changing abruptly to a velvety, chocolate fuzz at the extremities: paws, tail, and ears. Like most of their kind, icy disdain lurks in their chill, blue eyes, and their teeth and claws remain sharp and ready for the hunt.

High above the conflict of hunter and hunted, gemtails flutter through the treetops like butterflies. Metallic blue plumage shimmers on their wings and heads, topped by a crest of emerald feathers, and eyes of pearl, jade, and sapphire spangle their tiny fan tails. Tossed by the breeze, the birds sip nectar from the pale flowers of the dirænus vine found only in the uppermost twigs of the irnwoods. Minute nests, woven amidst these blooming tendrils, protect the gemtail's dainty eggs, whose shells gleam with agate-like swirls of blue and green.

Numerous other songbirds, owls, and ravens share the forest with the gemtail and the catdove, along with black squirrels, spotted deer, otters, grey foxes, and the kingcat.

THE WATERS

Rainfall blesses the land infrequently, greatly enhancing the importance of reliable sources of water. Scattered throughout Gethæna, temperamental oases flourish for merely days or months before drying up. Shrubs and bushes wither and die while the wildlife seeks water elsewhere. Fortunately, colossal springs, deriving from volcanic pockets of steam, have created three large lakes. Their depths circulate vigorously, disturbed by torrential geysers, and the continual ripples blurring their reflective surfaces clearly advertise the roiled abyss below. Glimbourn, located in the grasslands of Væshim, is the deepest and coolest of the lakes; Kressmær, situated in Migdol, is subject to sudden gusts of wind; and Fomwæn, on the border between the deserts of Næph and Pæran, has the shallowest and warmest waters.

All three support healthy populations of trout, perch, sunfish, and bass, as well as the formidable *giruzæsh* (Æ. "Spearfish"). Herald of luck, sightings of this skiff-sized waterbeast presage full nets for the fisherman and good fortune for all others. Luminous scales, a mosaic of greens shading into silver, and a whorled horn streaked with jade and jutting from the head make the fish unmistakable even from a distance. Legend attributes magical powers to the horn, but mankind's tendency to revere the *giruzæsh* combined with its evident ability to defend itself have discouraged tests of their validity.

PART III THE ISHRU



THE YOUNG WOMAN GLANCED AT HER SURROUNDINGS.

Fine white marble, simply carved, formed the balustrade guarding the edge of the balcony where she stood. An urn, filled with fresh flowers, occupied one corner. Were there any merely comfortable rooms amidst all the formal elegance of this castle?

She tilted her chin and turned her gaze to the black-garbed Ishrun gentleman beside her. He was smiling, but the expression in his dark eyes disturbed her. What secret was he pondering that gave him so much pleasure? Did he know of some disaster pending, to be averted only if she failed to achieve her aims? She shrugged.

“Dear prince, I thank you for your kind welcome. My journey has been arduous, and your hospitality is more than I ever expected.” Delia lowered her eyes and blushed. She’d learned early in life that the flicker of her long lashes above her flushed cheek did things to masculine hearts. She had cultivated the ability to color at will.

Lucibel bowed, beckoning one of his Taza to his side. His drawling voice carried the hint of steel in its quiet tones. “You will conduct this lady to the rose chamber and see that she is comfortable. Consider yourself her servant for the duration of her visit.”

The newly appointed maid bobbed a curtsey. Her master ignored her, continuing to speak to his guest.

“You wish to rest, Delia of Eidolon. Please, let us not stand on ceremony. Ilsa will guide you to your suite and supply your wants. I look forward to our next conversation.” The Ishru kissed Delia’s hand. She blushed again and thought of her cousins. Really, Peath and Caidh were such noddies. So much labor they expended on their goals. One need only know the right people.

Lucibel’s eyes followed his guest as she gracefully descended the staircase from vantage chosen for this interview. When she disappeared from sight, the Ishru pursed his lips. How much trouble would she make? He wondered. Any stranger whose first conversation with a Gethænan prince included inquiries about the Narsirabæn was unlikely to be a wallflower in Nokor Ænan.

Although their history has been profoundly influenced by the Ishru, the average citizen of Gethæna remains surprisingly ignorant about these immortals. Just as men dwelling in the capital city of their realm rarely visit its capital building, so the Dain Sædhu have little scholarly curiosity about their neighbors. Their attitude is practical rather than inquisitive. A traveller from the surface will have difficulty separating truth from superstition when he questions the natives. Personal exploration and observation are necessary for adventurers seeking accurate knowledge.

The tongue of man, wherever he lives, weaves tales to explain the world around him. Colorful events unite with imagination in the search for meaning, producing entertainment as an important byproduct. The Dain Sædhu tell many such tales about Gethæna and its inhabitants. The line between fact and fantasy is often forgotten, yet the clues to many truths lie hidden in the myths and legends.

Three orders of immortals dwell within Gethæna: the Ishru, the Taza, and the Nuld. The Ishru rule their lesser brethren and create strife and chaos for amusement. They did not enter the world through a woman's womb. Nor do they depart it via a sword's cut or heartbreak. These princes of Gethæna coalesced with the birth of thought and will. With the first lie, when Khæn murdered Æran, while Shinaar warred against Gamæris, shadow and blood intertwined to clothe fears and ill wishes with the semblance of humanity. It is a fair, almost complete resemblance. Wounds bleed vital fluids: tears, ichor. But a death blow fells one of the Ishru for an interval only, not eternity. The stricken corpse bleeds, then fades like a vanishing specter, only to reappear sound of limb at some familiar haunt. The Dain Sædhu believe that the Ishru will cease their unnatural return to life when the seven sins cede victory to their complementary virtues. Perhaps, near the beginning of time, this rumor was true. Now, eons of independent thought, emotion, and action have bequeathed the Ishru an existence apart from the perpetration of evil by men.

Both lesser and greater servants to the Ishru share their chimerical birth. Just as despair needs plague and treachery as handmaidens, so the Ishru require the Taza and the Nuld. Imitating their masters, the Taza are fair of face, appearing as handsome men and women dressed elegantly in any of the styles prevailing or historically extant. The lesser of their number serve schemes of war and victory at the tables of the Ishru.

As threads to their webs, the soldierly Nuld maneuver in dusty marches across the land. Humanoids graced with harsh visages, horned heads, and muscular limbs, the Nuld are the most perilous creatures in Gethæna. They possess intelligence and show considerable acuity in military decisions, but exercise the ability rarely in daily living. The slighter Nuld, Dænulu, are short, wiry, and infernally clever in compensation for their lack of stature. Their larger compatriots, Tænulu, are less deceitful, but more determined, not foes to be dismissed lightly. Nuld are rarely encountered singly. Part of an army, they act in groups. They throw dice together, eat together, and fight together. They obey their superior officers, the Taza, with no reservation—seeking their own will during only their idle hours. These rigidly divided personas, the professional versus the personal, often confuse men and foster the image of caprice.

LUCIBEL AND QUIETUDE



Unpredictability in the Nuld wears several masks. Boisterous humor lends itself to jests and jokes, some of which result in death. Laughter may suddenly give way to rage and battle frenzy, a condition rinsed away only by blood. Sober obedience to Tazan orders leads to unswerving completion of tasks, regardless of obstacles or casualties. These differing motivations, difficult to discern and identify, are vital to a foe's chance of survival.

The Nuld are loyal to Ishrun interests and not overly fond of life unpunctuated by death. Their long, dry campaigns, moistened by the wet impact of weapon on flesh, are begun and ended by long waiting for the spirit's return to corporeality. The Taza also spend many hours under the sky-roof, leading their soldiers to and from battle, participating in the cyclic entering and exiting of the bodily envelope.

The greater of the Taza, named Eh'taza, perform more intimate services for the Ishru. As attendants to a lord's bath, they remove clothing, lather begrimed tresses, and towel glistening limbs. As servants to a lady's pleasure, they strum a harp, discourse on the philosopher Phædon, or turn down a canopied bed. The Eh'taza, companions to the Ishru, witness and imitate the follies self-awareness has inculcated in their masters. Tazan servitude alternates between trustworthy loyalty and treacherous rebellion as Tazan desires waiver between will of self and will of the master. Enmity between peers bolstered by betrayal among their subjects is the daily fare of the Ishru.

1·THE IMPRISONMENT OF THE ISHRU

The Ishru once ran free upon the surface of Kulthea, preying as vampires upon the land and its inhabitants. They performed evil deeds in innocence as might a hungry, ferocious beast. Yet this lack of malice did not succor the weak or show mercy to the meek. Their existence was a threat to all men.

Legend reveals that a learned man, strong in spirit and perhaps a predecessor of the Loremasters, designed a solution to this deathly plague. Although it could not be slain, a corruption both rampant and immortal might be contained.

The unknown hero labored many years to this end. Research into ways, means, and magics began his work. To the far reaches of the earth he traveled to obtain ancient tomes, to chase a legend, or to speak with the dead. The knowledge obtained gave birth to a plan. Rare metals and sorcerous crystals were bought, stolen, or created. Tools were assembled, fires kindled. The wise man bent all of his skills to this mightiest of undertakings. Day after day he worked.

With the last syllable of the last chanted spell, the prison realm of Gethæna was complete. Its relentless powers of binding and restraint exerted their force upon the Ishru. Flying, tumbling, irresistibly drawn to their nemesis, these monsters passed through lava tubes, limestone crevasses, and granitic faults to the bronze sands of the cavern kingdom.

The foolishly knowledgeable sometimes call the Ishru back to the sunlit lands, where they make mischief for a while. Yet always the siren song of Gethæna whispers in their ears, enticing the immortals back to the depths that are home. The surface of Kulthea is safe: men lead happy, stable lives, and their children thrive. The Ishru prey upon one another to satisfy their cruel, compelling instincts. Yet a balance has been broken. Human sorrow lacks some of its anguish, but human joy lacks some its rapture. Mankind is severed from its darker side, the shadows that lend vigor and maturity to life.

The legend is correct in all essentials save one. The courageous sage who, at the dawn of time, dedicated his life to the subjugation of the Ishru was not a young man, but the daughter of the Lords of Essænce: Mhari Ridæn.

2·THE COMING OF MAN

No gate secured the kingdom of Gethæna in the years of its infancy. Any traveler might freely enter and less freely exit the Ishrun realm. Now a formidable conglomeration of alloy, stone, and magic bars the only cleft through the encircling mountains to the Ishrun fiefs. It bears six locks, each opened by a unique key and a unique sorcery. The gate has stood unopened for many millennia, and there is a story recounting the motives behind its sustained closure.

Long ago in the dayless, nightless realm of Gethæna, a stranger walked from the desert wasteland through the cool shadows of the valley through the mountains and into the Ishrun lands. He carried no pack; no entourage followed him. He wore white: opals, silk, white leopard's fur. Serenity blazed from his face as did the light from his garments under the too bright sky.

The stranger walked to Nokor Ænan, the palatial fortress of Lucibel the Unholy, and gained an audience with this Lord of Darkness.

"I am Jaizel Arbeleth," he said, "and my soul longs to offer you a gift. You are utterly enthralling, inspiring, and magnificent. Your existence cries out for more than obedience. It cries out for a worshiper to be enthralled and inspired. I can procure for you such a one. With your assent, I shall do so and call you friend."

Jaizel's gaze was calm, friendly, and reeked of power as do the bunched muscles of a leopard starting its spring. Lucibel, whose black garb contrasted strongly with the stranger's white, entertained and feasted his guest for eight cycles of the ornate water clock that stood in the hall. When the clock struck, jesters, dancers, wines, and delicacies vanished.

Perhaps the dark lord trusted the pale stranger. Perhaps he lacked the foresight urging wariness. Perhaps he hoped that even a lethal gift might relieve his ennui, might tip the balance in the games of war enacted among his friends, the other Ishrun princes. With the appearance of courtesy and trust, Lucibel accepted the proffered friendship and its accompanying gift. Jaizel took his leave with promises to return.

He departed Nokor Ænan, but did not quit Gethæna. The total of his visits would not be one, but six. Five other princes must bear his gaze and his generosity. Willowy, grey-clad Gadrel next gave welcome to the charismatic traveler. Courtesies and greetings prefaced Jaizel's incredible offer: a more sensitive, responsive instrument on which to play melodies of pain and pleasure. With a carelessness born of arrogance and an eagerness originating in boredom, Gadrel indicated his approval of his guest's proposal. Jaizel, his serenity untouched by success, departed the castle bound for another stronghold.

To wild, deadly Satarchian, he offered a beast more cunning and wily, worthy of the hunt and the chase. To calm, artistic Orias, he offered a novel medium for creative expression. To each of the warring grand dukes he presented temptation and the fulfillment of lifetime desires. Each succumbed.

Jaizel Arbeleth made good his promises. He gave to the Ishru mankind, who worships, fights, suffers, and ponders more deeply than all else of mortal creation. The Ishrun princes delighted in their new toy: a man. They wooed him, dueled with him, teased him, hunted him, tortured him, and watched him. They studied him in a wonderment that turned to awe and then to envy. Who was this creature, that his beauty could equal and surpass their own? What sorcery compelled them to worship him, be bested by him, and be watched by him? The Ishru killed him, six times over. Yet, blood could not erase the memory of the burning loss of supremacy. Nor could the grey ennui be kept at bay without that spark.

Men returned to dwell in Gethæna. Spirit and genius accompanied their efforts to live with dignity in difficult surroundings. The Ishru warmed themselves, scorched themselves, at the flames of man's ingenuity.

They also forged a gate, the glitter of its precious metals dimmed by the shadow of the mountains, and locked it fast, six times over. The gate is a symbol. It has never been opened.

JAIZEL ARBELETH



3 PERSONS OF NOTE

Each Ishrun prince lives in an elaborate, fortified palace among scores of Taza who act the parts of courtiers, sycophants, and servants. Every luxury is available, and only a growing weariness of spirit prevents the Ishru from becoming ineffective and spoiled fops. There are but six princes, and they are formidable individuals. Each has responded differently to the comfort of the prison that is Gethæna.

LUCIBEL

Lucibel the Unholy, High Lord of Darkness, is a subtle, often misunderstood grand duke of Gethæna. His usual aspect is that of a slim, young man with long, loosely curling, black hair. His black eyes shine like stars from a pale, beautiful face. He wears a diagonally cut mantle, the color of jet or sable, fringed with dark silk, and belted close by leather studded with bloody gems. Satin hose, patterned like restless waves lit by the moon, clad his legs. Jewels of wine and water encrust his shoes and adorn his tapered hands.

Silence, the whisper of moth's wings against the night breeze, permeates the demeanor of this most elusive of the Ishru. He speaks gently, unassumingly, with perhaps the slightest of smiles. A listener might wonder at the hideous, pleasure-ridden secret that must surely lie behind his shining eyes. No secret. Merely the delicious wonder of being Lucibel.

Even his anger assumes a silent malevolence. Without a word, like the breath of a glacier or the touch of thornwood, it burns those it lashes. The Taza of Nokor Ænan both love and hate their master for his elegant irony.

Lucibel's mount is a midnight unicorn called Quietude. His flanks exude a blackness that hurts the eye, and a faint, blue after-glow gleams from hoof and horn. He is a valiant fighter, spearing the enemy with the ink pearl of his horn and trampling the remains with his dainty, sharp hooves. He is devoted to his dark master, yet occasionally utters jests demeaning the Unholy One.

Imagine these two companions, poised amidst a desert city against a backdrop of stars. The ebon beast shifts nervously, throwing sparks with a cloven hoof. Lucibel rests one hand upon his friend to calm and comfort him. The other is raised, perhaps offering, perhaps beckoning. Are you not drawn to him, to receive what he offers, to follow where he beckons? But it is a dream. Lucibel and Quietude fight dusty battles under Gethæna's bright, desiccating sky.

Age: ? (Appears=29). **Eyes:** Black. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Lean. **Height:** 6'0". **Race/Sex:** Ishru/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Irresistible. **Dress:** Black silk tunic, with diagonally cut and fringed hem; black leather belt studded with large rubies; black silk hose; black shoes. **True Attitude:** Child-like, joyous. **Home:** Nokor Ænan.

Hits: 90. **Melee:** +125bs. **Missile:** 20ts.

AT(DB): 1(-85). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 25. **PP:** 384.

Lvl: 24. **Profession:** Mentalist. **Stats:** SD-76; Co-90; Ag-100; Me-79; Re-73; St-95; Qu-102; Pr-102; In-99; Em-89. **AP:** 103.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±14, DSpell 50, Climb 50, Ride 40, Swim 40, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 40, Perc 45, Speed 40, Landing 40, Ægron 8, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Dyar 8, Erlin 6, Miir 6, Muri-Elven 6, Rhaya 6, Rhiani 6, Shay 8, Iruaric 5, Kugor 5, Old Emer 5, Logos 8, Runes 75, St&W 75, Acrobat 50, Act 20, AnimalH 15, Dance 50, Dive 35, False 25, FAid 15, Frenzy 20, GambL 25, Med 50, Music 60, PSpeak 75, Sail 20, Sed 120, Sing 60, Ski 60, SpMast 40, StarG 25, Subdue 50, Track 20, Trick 20, TumbL 30.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 24. Directed Spell OB: 74. All Base Mentalist lists to his level. To 20th level: Cloaking, Damage Resistance, Attack Avoidance, Self Healing, Detections, Spell Resistance, Sense Mastery, Shifting, Movement, Mind's Door, Soul's Bane. To 10th level: Delving, Illusions. To 5th level: Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce.

Sword: +30 OB; silver with lapis lazuli hilts; sheathed in a fold between the dimensions, it is accessible only to its owner's hand and invisible until drawn.

Onyx Ring: simple silver band set with eight cabuchons of onyx; allows wearer to use eight rings simultaneously; teleports to wearer's finger if removed.

Sapphire Ring: ornate silver band with complex setting for the large gemstone; x4 PP multiplier.

Ruby Ring: elegant silver band with two pearls flanking the ruby; regenerates wearer's hit points, 5/rnd; 10% resistance to any criticals suffered by wearer.

Diamond Ring: thick silver band totally encrusted with gemstones; protects head as a helm; cloaks thoughts from Mentalist spells, +50 to RR's.

Lapis Lazuli Ring: simple stone band; +30 DB; displaces wearer's image, 33% chance that any combat attack will miss.

Pearl Ring: classic silver band with knot of pearls; warns wearer of an ambush.

Carnelian Ring: simple stone band; +30 OB.

ORIAS

Orias, the Charioteer and the Serpent, balances at ease in a hurtling, brilliantly red-gold chariot. Held loosely in his slim, strong hands, azure reins control a galloping pair of flame-red stallions. Long copper hair streams back from the Charioteer's fair, chiseled face and calm, sapphire eyes. His short tunic, the blue of the storm, bares muscled legs and arms. Sandals, the red of wine, grip his feet. Vipers, the red of blood, twine around his forearms as greaves. His sword, used competently, but rarely, depends from an ocean-blue belt. More often employed are the blades attached to the whirling chariot wheels and the hooves and fangs of the deadly pair propelling it. Named Fury and Despair, the stallions justly inspire dread among foes. They obey their master's every wish, yet utilize their own savage intelligence to gain advantage on his behalf.

The Charioteer, graceful with rein and weapon, is equally skilled with the pen. Ornate, gilded titles adorn the documents of state reposing in his library. A more delicate beauty attends the letters and periods of correspondence, sonnets, and ballads. But his talent shines most clearly in the drawings: indefinite, translucent hues violated and given structure and meaning by bold, yet precise, linear strokes of ink.

A detached, perfect craftsmanship insinuates itself into all of the actions performed by this prince. Taming stallions, releasing life from its fleshly prison on the battlefield, or guiding the flow of ink upon parchment: all these occupations become clever artifice, holding the spirit, but never the heart. Orias remains visibly aloof at all times.

ORIAS



Age: ? (Appears=32). **Eyes:** Blue. **Hair:** Copper Red. **Build:** Muscular. **Height:** 5'11". **Race/Sex:** Ishru/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Aloof. **Dress:** Sleeveless blue-grey tunic, hangs to mid-thigh; blue-green belt; red leather sandals. **True Attitude:** Compassionate. **Home:** Nokor Migdol.

Hits: 130. **Melee:** 140fa. **Missile:** 120fa.

AT(DB): 1(-60). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** A/L.

MovM: 15. **PP:** 234.

Lvl: 26. **Profession:** Bard. **Stats:** SD-85; Co-99; Ag-95; Me-94; Re-75; St-100; Qu-102; Pr-100; In-85; Em-80. **AP:** 102.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush 3, Climb 50, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 20, PLocks 20, S&H 50, Perc 40, Strength 50, Speed 50, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Arlak 5, Erlin 8, Itanian 6, Iylar 6, Kuluk 5, Rhaya 5, Rhiana 6, Shay 8, Taal 6, Iruaric 8, Kugor 8, Old Emer 8, Logos 8, Runes 50, St&W 50, Acrobat 70, Act 20, AnimalH 80, Contort 20, Dance 10, Dive 50, FAid 50, Fletch 35, Forag 20, Frenzy 35, Gambl 20, Math 20, Med 40, Music 70, PSpeak 40, Row 40, Sail 70, Sed 20, Signal 20, Sing 20, Ski 35, Smith 15, StarG 10, Subdue 120, Track 30, Trick 20, Tumb1 35, WeaW 15.

Spells: All Base Bard lists to his level. To 20th level: Maker's Way 20. To 5th level: Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce.

Falchion: +30 OB; non-fumbling; changes form to throwing blade at will; teleports back to wielder's hand.

Viper Gauntlets: living scarlet serpents that twine around the wearer's arms: 50% resistance to arm criticals; turn blade like a shield; +30 OB.

Sandals: Fly 3x/day, +50% to maneuvers.

Belt: +25 DB, x3 PP multiplier, *Bladeturn* 3x/day.

Chariot: Fly 3x/day (with horses): +50 blades on wheels.

SACHIEL

Sachiel, the Witches' Master, sports merry, emerald eyes and mischievous lineaments, hinting of his inner pan-like nature. Tightly curled, black hair tumbles to broad shoulders protected by dragon scales glinting in a jerkin the green of aging copper. Milky gemstones gleam like fishes' breath from the broad, metallic band of new-minted copper that hugs his narrow hips. Pointed-topped boots, the jade of ocean foam, protect his feet.

He carries a bow carved from thornwood, and the arrows flying from it are said to bring a bitter death or heart's desire. With paradoxes and ambiguities, this Ishrun prince bewilders his proteges and enemies. Confusion married to passion is an essential nutrient for Sachiel.

A huge, black wolf named Cunning accompanies him into battle, be it philosophical or physical combat. The intense glare from his phosphorescent green eyes ensorcelms many an opponent, while the strength in his great paws crushes more stalwart foes. From his fanged jaws, a glow the green of putrescence suggests the poison of his breath to which others succumb.

Sachiel's propensity, shared by his wolf friend, for mischief and trickery gives him a special brand of adaptability. Into calm prosperity he injects conflict. From long harbored serenity he draws confusion. To any ordered system of existence he brings disruption. Wherever he may do his own will, Sachiel remains continually amused.

Age: ? (Appears=24). **Eyes:** Green. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Wiry. **Height:** 5'10". **Race/Sex:** Ishru/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Mischievous. **Dress:** Mint-green dragonscale jerkin; copper belt set with opals and mother-of-pearl; jade-green boots. **True Attitude:** Warmhearted. **Home:** Nokor Naph.

Hits: 125. **Melee:** 115bs. **Missile:** 135cp.

AT(DB): 4(-110). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** L.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 207.

Lvl: 23. **Profession:** Ranger. **Stats:** SD-70; Co-95; Ag-99; Me-82; Re-71; St-99; Qu-101; Pr-100; In-100; Em-73. **AP:** 101.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±6, Climb 50, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 50, PLocks 50, S&H 65, Perc 40, Speed 40, Leaping 40, Ægron 8, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Erlin 6, Rhaya 6, Rhiani 6, Shay 8, Iruaric 5, Kugor 5, Old Emer 5, Enruth 6, Krônnyt 6, Runes 30, St&W 30, Channel 40, Acrobat 75, Act 15, AnimalH 65, Caving 20, Contort 25, Cook 20, Dance 15, Dive 10, False 25, FAid 20, Fletch 70, Forag 15, GambL 25, Herd 20, LWork 40, Math 15, Med 20, Music 60, Nav 30, PSpeak 25, Rope 50, Row 40, Sail 40, Sed 60, Signal 20, Sing 15, Ski 30, StarG 60, Subdue 60, Track 120, Trade 10, Trick 50, TumbL 50, WeaW 60, Wood 15.

Spells: All Base Ranger lists to his level. To 20th level: Mischief's Gift 20. To 5th level: Victory's Nemesis 5, Discord's Veil 5, Fate's Truce 5.

Dancing Sword: +30 OB; will fight for an unlimited length of time independent of its wielder's hand.

Belt: x3 PP multiplier; *Invisibility* 3x/day; *Deflections III* 3x/day.

Composite Bow: +30 OB; doubles concussion hits delivered by arrows shot from bow.

Arrows of Slaying: 5 arrows in quiver; target is slain if a critical results.

Arrows of Healing: 10 arrows in quiver; target is healed upon impact of arrow; no critical=10 hits healed, 'A' crit=20 hits healed, 'B' crit=30 hits healed, 'C' crit=40 hits healed, 'D' crit=50 hits healed, 'E' crit=all damage (including any criticals) healed.

Bracers: +30 DB, 10% critical resistance.

Dragonscale Jerkin: AT(DB) 4(-50).

Boots: +50 to all maneuvers; *of Landing*, wearer will land safely from any fall; *of Leaping*, wearer may leap 50' horizontally or vertically.



SATARCHIAN AND BEAST

SATARCHIAN

Satarchian, the Adversary and the Prince of Passions, is touched with the sunlit wildness of the tiger. He stalks his prey with the joy of the hunter bent upon ultimate violence. As he moves across the dappled woodlands wherein the hunted lies concealed, his hair, a tangled mane like winter leaves gilded by the sun, alternately burns and extinguishes itself. His deceitfully calm, cinnamon eyes probe thickets and brambles, stripping them of safety. When the prey flushes, perhaps a gamebird, perhaps a man, Satarchian leaps, permitting his victim a fatal glimpse of Ishrun glory: lithe, vital death incarnate, clothed in a blouse the honey of marigolds, leggings the deep amber of ale, and a sash the butter of moonlight. His rapier, swift and supple and sweet as stormfire or goldenrod or honeysuckle, releases heart blood to glimmer in the twilight like a vintage wine or fire on the water.

A lion, his flanks the dark gold of flowers from the sun, paces smoothly forward and quenches his thirst at the bleeding corpse. Called Beast by the Adversary, his fangs, claws, and ferocity merit his naming. Yet, his master is more truly the beast than he. Concealed in shadows, playing the role of beaters for the hunt, lurk the prince's Eh'taza. They venerate Satarchian's crazed deadliness, but grow weary of their master's obsession with bloodlust.

Age: ? (Appears≈26). **Eyes:** Hazel. **Hair:** Gold-streaked honey brown. **Build:** Very muscular. **Height:** 5'11". **Race/Sex:** Ishru/M. **Skin:** Lightly tanned. **Demeanor:** before Myrlænis: obsessed with hunting; after Myrlænis: subdued. **Dress:** poet's blouse of yellow linen; cinnamon-brown leggings; pale lemon-colored sash; rust moccasins of suede. **True Attitude:** before Myrlænis: violent; after Myrlænis: repentant. **Home:** Nokor Gamesh.

Hits: 130. **Melee:** 125ra. **Missile:** -.

AT(DB): 1(-100). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 10. **PP:** 252.

Lvl: 21. **Profession:** Monk. **Stats:** SD-49; Co-100; Ag-91; Me-63; Re-81; St-101; Pr-98; In-72; Em-100. **AP:** 102.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ± 5 , Climb 50, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 20, S&H 85, Perc 50, Strength 70, Speed 70, Balance 70, Leaping 70, Landing 70, Ægron 6, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Mavaun 5, Rhaya 5, Rhianai 5, Shay 6, Iruaric 4, Kugor 4, Old Emer 5, Aludos 5, Uscurac 6, Runes 30, St&W 30, Acrobat 60, AnimalH 70, Contort 20, Cook 20, Dive 20, FAid 15, Forag 15, Frenzy 50, Rope 20, Row 10, Sail 10, Signal 30, StarG, Subdue 60, Track 120, Tumbl 50, WeaW 50.

Spells: All Base Monk lists to his level. To 20th level: Hunter's Choice 20. To 5th level: Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5.

Rapier: +35 OB; *Lightning Bolt* 3x/day; detects presences continually; gives initiative (strike first); permits two strikes each round.

Sash: +30 DB; regenerates 10 hits/rnd.

Earring: x4, stores 3 spells of any level.

Ring: *Farsight* at will; +100% to all maneuvers.

GADREL

Gadrel, Master of Seductions, Bestower of the Fruit, and Lord of Twin Aspects, is fond of staircases. Gracefully descending, step by step, while gazing imperiously ahead, oblivious of the admirers waiting below, he dramatizes his superiority and pride. This duke of Gethæna is vain: vain of the cornsilk hair drifting back from his arrogant countenance and ice grey eyes; vain of his elegant physique tastefully displayed in a smoke-grey velvet doublet with steely, satin ruff and pearl grey silken hose; vain of the pleasure he sucks from pain and its infliction.

Equally prey to vanity, his sister, his other self, also named Gadrel, has longer hair and lighter eyes. A satin gown, the grey of an earthly overcast sky, clings to her slim form. Like her brother, she carries a pair of whips, used capriciously, but with dreaded accuracy.

The Taza of Nokor Væshim, the Bestower's palace home, never see Gadrel and Gadrel promenading the gardens, strolling the mirrored galleries, or feasting at banquets together. An unasked and unanswered question hangs in the air. Is Gadrel one individual possessing twin aspects as his name suggests? Or is the Ishrun prince really two?

Gadrel masters a warhorse the color of snow. Named Frost, the steed carries his rider well and uses his hooves to deadly effect. He has died and returned many times at the Bestower's command, but even his loyalty has been strained by his master's perverse and capricious arrogance.



GADREL

Age: ? (Appears ≈ 27). **Eyes:** Grey. **Hair:** Ash Blond. **Build:** Slender. **Height:** 6'0". **Race/Sex:** Ishru/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** before Myrlænis: haughty; after Myrlænis: expectant. **Dress:** Male: Grey doublet with a ruff, grey silk hose, grey slippers. Female: Grey silk gown, grey slippers. **True Attitude:** before Myrlænis: sadistic; after Myrlænis: filled with awe. **Home:** Nokor Væshim.

Hits: 95. **Melee:** 115wp. **Missile:** 30da.

AT(DB): 1(-75). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 10. **PP:** 300.

Lvl: 25. **Profession:** Illusionist. **Stats:** SD-51; Co-93; Ag-90; Me-71; St-98; Qu-100; Pr-98; In-73; Em-100. **AP:** 103.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ± 1 , DSpell 75, Climb 20, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 20, Perc 45, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Itanian 8, Iylar 7, Lugro 7, Muri-Elven 7, Rhaya 8, Rhiani 8, Shay 10, Uluka 7, Iruaric 6, Kugor 5, Old Emer 8, Aludos 8, Uscurac 8, Runes 90, St&W 90, Channel 10, Acrobat 25, Act 25, Dance 70, Dive 45, False 15, Frenzy 40, Gamb1 40, Med 5, Music 50, PSpeak 45, Sail 50, Sed 100, Sing 45, Ski 30, SpMast 40, StarG 5, Subdue 100, Track 5, Trick 5, Tumbl 25.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 25. Directed Spell OB: 100. All Base Illusionist lists to his level. To 25th level: Rune Mastery, Physical Enhancement, Gate Mastery, Elemental Shields, Invisible Ways, Living Change, Spirit Mastery, Spell Reins, Lofty Bridge, Spell Enhancement. To 20th level: Pain's Cloak. To 10th Level: Delving Ways, Detecting Ways. To 5th level: War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

Twin Whips: +30 OB, cold criticals accompany concussion criticals, 50% entangles missiles aimed at bearer.

Ring: +25 DB, x4 PP multiplier, protects head as helm, *Triad of Ice* 5x/day.

Throwing Dagger: +30 OB, concealed, returns to wielder's hand via teleport.

AMIANTHUS

Amianthus, Giver of Judgements and Prince of Vice, strolls luxuriantly patterned carpets littered with finely crafted furnishings and eclectic art pieces. Level eyes, luminous jewels the violet of an autumn horizon, gaze out from a handsome face notable for its control and its cap of short, straight, ebon hair seemingly gathered from the pelt of a panther. Caution focuses the eyes upon the cacophony of sycophants, servants, jesters, seekers of knowledge, followers of justice, and fools who frequent the ducal court. Discretion guides the eyes to note the hidden passions and goals of the horde and never hesitate on their own beauty to be glimpsed at intervals in the many ornate mirrors, never dwell on the exotic individual reflected in these depths: a spare, trim figure clothed in a velvet, raison-colored jacket held fast by misting pearls, full trousers mimicking the sheen of a succulent plum, and a corded belt shining silver as morning dew.

The eyes stray to the flower swaying in the slender, ducal hands, an orchid or an iris flushed with heart's blood and a nightingale's song. Swiftly, they flick back to the shifting crowds. Amianthus must appreciate the riches, the elegance, and the synchrony of his surroundings in solitude, when removed from the dangers inherent in his wide acquaintanceship.

Even the Eh'taza of Nokor Pæran remain wisely mistrusted. Only in the company of Wisdom does Amianthus let down his guard. Wisdom is an oversized panther whose flanks are dark as the non-existent night sky. His glittering, amethyst eyes aid those of his master in an unceasing vigil for danger. And his unscrupulous wit discomfits unwelcome visitors.

Age: ? (Appears ≈34). **Eyes:** Violet. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Slim. **Height:** 6'0". **Race/Sex:** Ishru/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Sophisticated, knowledgeable. **Dress:** Velvet purple-black jacket, silk violet-blue trousers, belt of silver cord. **True Attitude:** Philanthropic, but wary. **Home:** Nokor Pæran.

Hits: 95. **Melee:** 90bs. **Missile:** —

AT(DB): 1(-75). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 15. **PP:** 416.

Lvl: 26. **Profession:** Magician. **Stats:** SD-90; Co-92; Ag-95; Me-101; Re-91; Qu-100; Pr-99; In-89; Em-102. **AP:** 102.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±2, DSpell 106, Climb 20, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 20, Perc 45, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Arlak 9, Chîra 9, Erlin 10, Itanian 10, Iylar 8, Miir 8, Muri-Elven 9, Rhaya 10, Rhiani 9, Shay 10, T'loc-loc 6, Taal 8, Vajaari 6, Enris-Sokal 7, Iruaric 7, Kugor 6, Old Emer 10, Aludos 10, Sylmaria 3, Uscurac 10, Runes 90, St&W 90, Channel 10, Act 35, AnimalH 5, Cook 35, Dance 55, Dive 10, False 5, FAid 15, Gamb1 25, Math 70, Med 60, Music 60, PSpeak 80, Rope 5, Sed 80, Signal 30, Sing 40, SpMast 50, StarG 20, Subdue 40, Trade 65, Trick 15, WeaW 10.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 26. Directed Spell OB: 80. All Base Magician lists to his level. To 25th level: Spell Enhancement, Shield Mastery, Rapid Ways, Spirit Mastery, Lofty Bridge, Spell Reins, Delving Ways, Elemental Shields. To 20th level: Sage's Will. To 5th level: Victory's Wreath, War's Weapon, Doom's Truce.

Sword: +30 OB, translates any language. *Water Bolt* 3x/day.

Flower: fresh iris; bloom regenerates if it suffers damage, it never wilts; releases at will 3x/day a poison gas, 10' R, RR failure of 01-10=sleep 4 hours, 11-25=sleep 8 hours, 26-50=coma for 1 day, 51-95=coma for 1 week and 25 points damage, 96+=unconscious for 6 rnds and then dead.

Ring: x4 PP multiplier, continuous *Deflections I*.

Belt: +25 OB, *Bladeturn* 5x/day

Earring: continual *Slyears*, protects head as helm.



AMIANTHUS

· PART IV ·

THE DAIN SÆDHU



CAIDH STARED AT THE MAN AND MOUNT APPROACHING through the swaying bronze grass. The stranger rode a lion whose shoulder rose even with Caidh's chin. Cinnamon tints dusted the tawny flanks of the beast, and its eyes held an intelligent gleam. Its rider, garbed in silky white robes with a flowing head wrap over his braided chestnut hair, seemed unafraid and at ease.

"Pashæ maræn Ægron?" he asked.

Caidh shrugged and smiled.

The man put an open hand on his own chest. "Hæn." Then he touched his steed. "Marinælla."

Caidh chewed his lower lip. Were those their names? Or were they the words for "man" and "lion" in the stranger's native language? Not the moment for dithering. He opened his mouth to introduce himself.

The syllable of his name turned into a shout of alarm. *What was that?!* The monster racing down the hill towards them could not be the demon Chudiis, for its skin was metallic brass, not black, and it brandished a heavy bastard sword in each clawed hand.

Hæn turned his head to follow Caidh's panicked gaze. The lion Marinælla spun and crouched, and her rider drew his scimitar. Caidh traced a rune with his wand.



Although the men of Gethæna, the Dain Sædhu, enjoy a nearly utopian society, they pay a heavy price for the amenity. Their land does not permit easy living, and their neighbors are among the worst.



Millennia have passed since men first came to dwell in Gethæna. They were not native to the land, but travellers in search of a new home. They were known as the People of the Journey (*Æ. "Dain Sædhu"*) and have kept that name in memory of their heritage. Centuries upon centuries spent beneath Gethæna's bright roof have darkened the pigments of these folk, and bronze skin, brown or hazel or green eyes, and smoky dark hair predominate. Occasionally, an infant possessing silver blond or coppery red hair and blue eyes surprises pleased parents.

For many years, all men have resided in one of the four existent towns: Kangled, Stondepin, Tangeval, or Stedron. Nomadic, tent-based living was tried, but has long been abandoned as unsuitable to the region. Little water, the constant maneuvering of Nuld armies, and the capricious nature of their neighbors, the immortal Ishru, make permanent, defensible communities necessary.

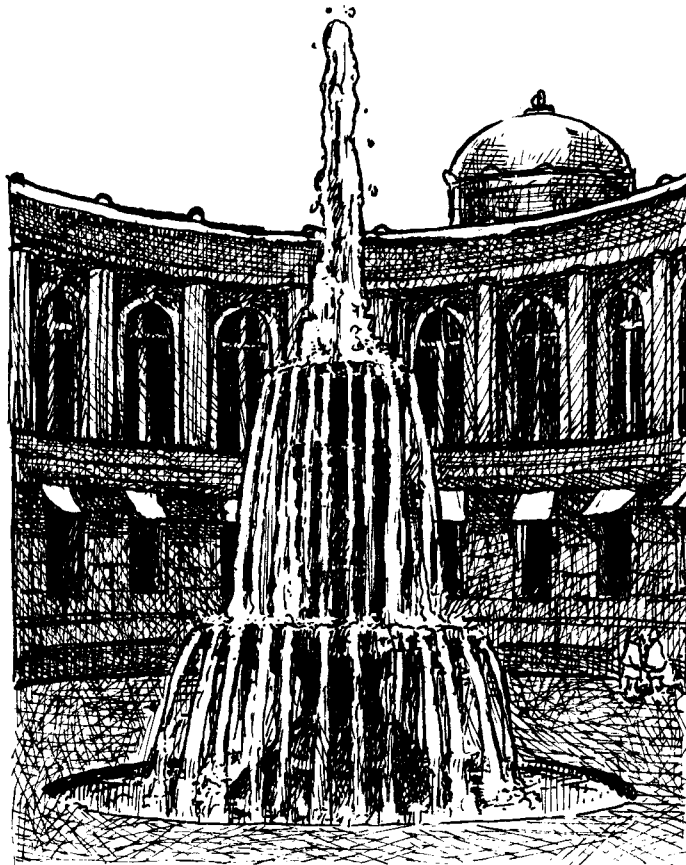
A period well removed in history—when the Ishru meddled directly in the political, material, and sociological concerns of the Dain Sædhu—is often used as a reminder to citizens to be grateful for the relative freedom from Ishrun attention that exists now. Carelessly conducted feuds and the infrequent princely whim occasionally disrupt the peace of men's domain with warfare and suffering. Yet, these events are nothing when compared to the systematic pursuit of destruction exhibited by the Ishru in the past.

The deliberate torture of populations had been common. The Ishru could not starve, nor might they die of exposure. Inducing famine among the Dain Sædhu amused them. The reduction of Dain homes to rubble was another pastime. Such policies caused misery greatly in excess of that due to the Ishrun irresponsibilities characteristic of the present.

The uninformed lack of concern now displayed by the Ishru for Dain Sædhu society is the product of long, continuous work by a few ambassadors endowed with luck and skill. Generations ago, negotiations with individual Nuld kept some contingents of troops away from human habitations. These tenuous agreements eventually begged the attention of the Taza. Rage, amusement, indifference, and then sympathy swayed the reactions of these officers who possessed more authority than the soldierly Nuld. More extensive agreements were formed with the Taza to protect human interests. Some upheld their word, some flagrantly disregarded it, and a few brought news of it to the powerful Eh'taza (the elite among the minions of the Ishru).

With this development, a period of suffering and degradation began. The Eh'taza reminded their masters of the toys forgotten and put aside. The Ishru retrieved their human playthings; death, torture, perversion, chaos, and unpredictable kindnesses confused the lives of the Dain Sædhu as men lost all control over the events that filled their days. Once more the Ishru passed from ecstatic delight to soul-biting envy with a final return to despairing boredom.

Courageous individuals renewed attempts at diplomatic negotiation. Slowly, accompanied by numerous reverses, certain policies were agreed upon. The four towns were given boundaries within which warring Nuld armies would not conduct their battles. Limits were set regarding Gethænan resources: exclusive human rights to water, limited rights in the forests of Hiroth, none at all in the mines of Kohæl, and other similar arrangements. The inconsistent Ishru forgot and ignored some of the laws formulated, yet an acceptable pattern emerged. A few plundering Nuld might rampage through city walls, or a wandering Ishru might involve himself in the affairs of one household, but intervention in society as a whole occurred rarely. The Dain Sædhu regathered their autonomy, a precious gift now retained largely due to the lethargy of the Ishru and the integrity of the servants supervising the treaties signed.



DAIN SÆDHUN FOUNTAIN

1·CULTURE

The unique environment provided by Gethæna has produced unusual adaptations in mankind's way of living. Diet, clothing, social organization, religion, government, and self expression are all affected by the interplay between the harsh terrain, the powerful and quixotic Ishru, and men's need for comfort, security, and a sense of mastery.

TIME

No sun sails across Gethæna's cavern roof to divide existence into discrete intervals. This does not trouble the wayward Ishru, but is of importance to the Dain Sædhu. Civilized societies need precise ways of obtaining answers to the question: "When?" With no day and no night, the year and the hour became meaningless terms.

The solution to this dilemma was a focus on the cyclical fluctuations in the heat level. Over a period akin to a day, the temperature slowly increases to a peak (105°F), then diminishes to a nadir (75°F). Thus, a clock for one of the Dain Sædhu is a thermometer to a surface dweller. In Gethæna, "What time is it?" is synonymous with "How hot is it?" During the warmest part of the day, called *kharufier* (*Æ. "Skyburn"*), the Dain Sædhu take their latest meal and retire for sleep. The cooler part of the cycle, *kharufræl* (*Æ. "Skychill"*), is filled with activity.

Both *skyburn* and *skychill* are divided into four *zhat* (*Æ. "Watches"*). An inquiry about the time might receive as an answer: "mid first *zhat* of *kharufier*" or "ninety-one degrees." The full cycle of all eight *zhat* retains the name *suynwæn* (*Æ. "Day"*) once used by Dain Sædhu ancestors.

The Gethænan year is largely an artificial concept. Seasonal fluctuations are almost nonexistent, yet racial memory insists on a celebration of the forgotten solstice and equinox. Commemoration of historical or mythical events add numerous holidays to these remnants of sun worship.

DIET

Gethæna is a dry land. A few oases in the wasteland produce thin trickles of moisture, enough perhaps for a household, never sufficient for the current population. Fortunately the waters beside Stondepin, Tangeval, and Stedron are bountiful, able to provide for thousands. Protection of this resource, the liquid of life, is a first priority. Water is a revered and sacred part of every meal.

Foodstuffs, although peculiar to the stranger's palate, are available in plenty. Glittergrain, a dusty golden fiber bearing small edible kernels, grows amidst the silvery scargrass to provide a textured, flavorful baking flour. Loaves and small cakes are seasoned with herbs and spices. Nuts (from the irnwoods) and berries from shadebushes and other shrubs are sometimes added for sweetness.

Many species of fish swim the lakes that supply the Dain Sædhu with water. These fin-bearing creatures are a major source of protein. The flesh of catdoves, certain lizards, and the infrequent gleamtiger speared by hunters also make appearances at table. Catdove and gemtail eggs provide a domestic source of nourishment.

A profusion of lakeweeds, the succulent meat of several cacti, and the greenery from sawleaf palms find several ways to the serving dish. Beer fermented from glittergrain, wine pressed from berries, and the milk of sandlions are frequently consumed beverages. Yet, water rivals these liquids in popularity.

A typical mid-day meal begins with a glass of water. A salad of lake greens follows as an appetizer. Stir-fried tidbits of fish served over sawleaves, complemented with biscuits and milk, comprise the main course. A bowl of berries, cheese, and wine close the meal. Variations on this theme, refreshed by imaginative cookery, comprise the Dain Sædhu diet.

GARB

The Dain Sædhu wear garments fashioned from silkweave. This shimmering material is soothing to the touch and penetrable by the lightest movement of air. In comfort and beauty, it has no rivals. The fibers of coinleaves, the pearly foliage of the irnwoods, are spun together, then put to the loom to yield a silvery white length of cloth. Vibrant dyes may be applied, depending on the fabric's destined use. Lengths intended for clothing are usually left undyed, since the glare and heat of the brassy sky-roof are best repelled by white.

For very active occupations, the favored outfit is the *dahlusa*: a rectangle of cloth folded once and seamed up the sides, with openings left for the arms, and a hole slashed for the neck. A bright sash wrapped around the waist usually confines the voluminous piece of apparel. Drawstring trousers are worn under it for riding, or leather pants for particularly grueling hours in the saddle. Long, thin wrappings protect the head and secure a veil which shades the face and eyes.

The *noru*, a garment for more sedentary pursuits, is simply a very long cloth wrapped several times around the body, fastened by elaborate tucks and pleats, and ending with a few folds about the head. These can be shifted to the shoulders depending on the quantities of shade available. The very coordinated among the Dain Sædhu often wear this garment despite considerable activity, because of its greater comfort and its display of their superior dexterity.

Boots protect the feet against the dangers inherent in fighting or travelling over broken terrain and hot sand. Their discomfort makes other footwear popular in safer situations. For extended desert living, wrappings of silkweave are worn under sandals. Within town, sandals alone are considered sufficient. The feet go bare in the home.

Gender is reflected little in the clothing of the Dain Sædhu. Both sexes wear the *dahlusa* and the *noru*. Accessories and ornaments are equally uninformative on this matter. Most garments sport elaborate borders of floral and geometric design intricately embroidered with vivid threads. *Noru* of very thin, gauzy silkweave are removed from cupboards for festive occasions. At these times, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and diadems adorn male and female celebrants alike. Otherwise, in deference to the heat, jewelry is seldom worn.

SOCIAL CLASSES

Comprised of people whose ancestors left comfortable homes due to dissatisfaction with a society that rewarded inherited rank with privilege, Dain Sædhu culture contains no rigid caste system. Nor have social classes based upon the economic pressures of supply and demand evolved: man's survival in Gethæna is sufficiently difficult to make every legitimate profession valued and well rewarded.

In Dain Sædhu opinion and practice, each individual possesses unique skills and enthusiasms, and thus labors at tasks uniquely suited to him or her. One, enjoying days in the saddle and the threat of danger, guides travellers through the wastelands between towns. Another, gifted with voice and talent, sings to music-loving audiences. The numbers of humanity are large enough to permit freedom in the choice of profession, yet small enough that all must labor together. No effete wealthy eat the fruits of other's work; nor does a dominated slave class yield unrecompensed their time and energy. Every man and woman is expected to have duties and responsibilities along with the skills to discharge them.

Although days filled with toil are the norm among the Dain Sædhu, work is not viewed puritanically. Rather than a way to avoid wickedness, it is an occupation that leads to feelings of self worth and competence. Labor should be satisfying, sometimes enjoyable, and never drudgery or overlong. The Dain Sædhu believe the productive life yields happiness, while the idle existence births boredom and despair. The villainy of the aristocratic Ishru and the unceasing toils of their servile Nuld reinforce this attitude.



A DAIN SÆDHUN MEAL

A KINGCAT



RELIGION

Predation by fang-baring beasts and the malicious Ishru, the conspicuous absence of a benign living environment, and the lack of day and night and sun and moon might well create despair in the most stalwart of peoples. Yet, the Dain Sædhu demonstrate determined purposefulness and serenity. They have wrested a comfortable existence from their harsh surroundings and invented new societal customs that yield harmony in the unusual circumstances.

Central to Dain Sædhu contentment and hope is their belief in a "Power-that-Abides." For each individual, this Power manifests itself in different ways. One man may worship Paalk, the spirit of the volcano Paltæl at Gethæna's heart. Another reveres the force towards goodness and life that exists in all men. The very practical deem the Power to be the set of social mores held in common by all Dain Sædhu. The more learned consider the Greater Power to be the primal Essænce, the essential core of all in existence, living or dead.

The unity behind these varying images of the divine rests upon the concept that there exists a Power which is greater than any powers possessed by an individual, and which acts mysteriously and benevolently in men's lives. Details concerning the identity and characteristics of this Power are a personal and subjective issue. Friends and family are expected to disagree, and such discord is regarded favorably.

FAMILY LIFE

Among the Dain Sædhu, life revolves around the family (Æ. "Tædhi"). A tædhi consists of several adults who have made a commitment "to live and grow together for so long as we shall mutually flourish;" in practice until death. Romantic ties are enduring yet fluid and stay within the household. Typically, four adult partners forming a tædhi raise an equal or lesser number of children. Each house determines its own optimum number of partners, but the ratio of adults to children is never more than one child to each adult. The limited resources within Gethæna make population control important.

The adults of a tædhi usually follow different professions. A weaver, a council member, a teacher, and a historian is one example of the many and varied combinations to be found. Much professional work is accomplished within the environs of the home, and schedules are arranged to permit the sharing of child rearing.

While a child passes through infancy, one of the adults assumes the role of primary caretaker (Æ. "Nænu"). Often, though not invariably, this individual is the biological mother. As the infant grows, the other adults increase the level of their involvement with the child; toddlers are cared for, played with, and taught by all of the partners.

A child's early years are spent in the company of his nænu and his brothers and sisters. However, as his verbal abilities mature, he devotes increasing portions of his day to experiences guided by a teacher. Although not confined to a classroom, the children in a class (4-5 pupils) learn about their society, master basic skills, and discover their own personal abilities and interests. Instructed by their teacher, they study together, play together, and grow together. This pleasurable but educational way of life continues until the age of reason is attained.

When a child becomes capable of extensive abstract thought (13-14 years), she faces a first important decision. She may continue her studies along increasingly academic lines, or she may begin a period of training as an apprentice in one of the professional fields. Some individuals combine these paths, broadening their sphere of emphasis. The child's own desires and talents are focused upon as guides to her choice. Nor is this choice irrevocable; her decision is regularly reevaluated.

As she progresses towards becoming a scholar, or songwriter, or soldier, the student does more than gain expertise in her chosen field. She discovers or creates a productive role in society for herself while adjusting her means of fulfillment to societal needs.

At the age of responsibility (24 years), the child becomes an adult. He may leave his tædhi to enter another or form one of his own. He is not compelled to depart his family of origin but cannot hold the position of adult partner there. The transition is usually both gentle and swift; at its conclusion, the new adult has transferred his affiliation and responsibility to his chosen life partners and the children whom they will bear and raise together.

ART AND SYMBOLISM

The Dain Sædhun definition of art is quite broad. Alongside musicians, actors, and sculptors, many craftsman consider themselves to be artists. The usefulness of a product in no way detracts from its potential as a medium for creative expression. The intricately carved chair drawn up to a writing table may be merely a finely crafted chair, or it might be a valued work of art. This subjective distinction between art and craft yields high standards of quality. Few material goods display less than excellent workmanship, and many possess unique beauty.

Among a people to whom survival is such a gamble, the arts are a hard-won luxury, valiantly defended. Artists are an intrinsic part of the community, the entire population, rather than a select few, celebrating the creative endeavor. The appreciation of the fine arts is as much a social experience as an æsthetic one.

Although all artistry is respected, some works find a special place in the hearts of the Dain Sædhun. Ornamental fountains, glorifying the beauty of lifegiving water and exhibitionistly displaying its reassuring presence, elicit a singular reverence. The songs and ballads of minstrels evoke a less solemn pleasure. The Dain Sædhun are a musical people, and those who do not sing or play an instrument belong to a small minority. The works of songmakers are eagerly received by the tuneful majority, always in search of new material for its voices, pipes, horns, and lyres.

ARCHITECTURE

Building materials are scarce. The thorny bushes and rare sapling-sized trees that dot the Gethænan landscape provide little substance by their nature. The more massive irnwoods of Hiroth have strict quotas set by the Ishru upon mortal usage. Only the black stone forming the sinews of the land and most visible in the mountains exists in unrestricted abundance. From the quarries of Stondepin, inky glass—shaped into blocks of varying size—supplies the needs of the Dain Sædhun cities. Bricks become houses and cisterns, while huge piers become monuments or fountains.

Bricks, the most popular size due to the ease with which they can be quarried, transported, and suited to most designs, yield structures with a profusion of arches and vaults. Year upon year of experience has given architectural craftsman a bent for novelty that manifests itself in incredible variety: round, lancet, ogee, trefoil, and horseshoe arches and stepped, ribbed, round, onion, and penentive domes adorn buildings in the four cities.

A bronze glaze derived from Gethænan sands is applied to roofs to repel the cavern-sky's glare and ensure cool interiors. It is also used to highlight cornices, pediments, paneling, and bas relief. In Kangled alone, the shadows of the forest make this treatment unnecessary.

Chambers surrounding a courtyard comprise the typical Dain Sædhun residence. The extremes of the climate make extensive grounds impractical. Instead, the central court is a carefully controlled environment which shade plants and spraying fountains make pleasant for human use. Thick walls and windows shielded by wide verandas or neatly positioned awnings maintain the coolness of the interior rooms. Thick tapestries block the light during skyburn to allow the inhabitants to sleep undisturbed, but are drawn aside during skychill.

Public buildings use designs resembling those of the cities' homes, merely on a larger scale. Outside these refuges from the heat, sandy streets and dusty plazas form the glue holding a city together. In Kangled, a community interwoven with the forest, irnwoods grow unchecked in the byways, markets, squares, and avenues. They interfere with the flow of walkers, riders, and carts, but provide welcome shade. The other cities use numerous awnings and fountains to improve the outdoor environment.

Routes between the cities, like the streets within, go unpaved. The black building stone absorbs heat too readily when lying prone, and thus is employed only as posts to mark the way. Frequently, the track follows one of the aqueducts that supply the Dain Sædhun of Kangled with water. Incredible engineering feats, these pipes rest atop arched bridges whose supporting piers march across the wastelands from each of the three lakes at Gethæna's perimeter. The height at which the liquid is carried is precisely calculated to yield the proper water pressure when it reaches the city at the realm's heart.



DAIN SÆDHUN TRAVELLER

TRAVEL

Outside city walls, all security fails. Men do not hold dominion over the lands through which their roads, paths, and tracks pass. And the Ishru have no interest in securing the safety of travelers. Therefore, the routes between the Dain Sædhun cities remain unguarded by fort or soldier. Outlaws, wild beasts, and the war-loving Nuld attack without fear of serious reprisal. Most Dain Sædhun meet a journey's challenge with an armed escort, fleet mounts, and experienced guides.

Many Dain Sædhun roads follow the arching piers of the aqueducts. Where the two must part, the road is marked by black stone posts standing the height of a man. No pavement smooths the way. In the desert, dunes sometimes hide the markers, stranding inexperienced travelers. Sandstorms present additional hazards. Across the plains, the environment is less dangerous, but the man-eating gleamtigr roams these territories.

Serving as companions and steeds, empathic sandlions tamed by the Dain Sædhun provide reliable transportation between cities or to more unusual destinations, such as an Ishrun palace. Native to Gethæna, the sandlion is more thoroughly adapted to the climactic conditions than is the horse (kept for sporting purposes) and is a potent fighter as well.

Survival while in transit customarily depends upon swift feet and bursts of weaponed courage. Whether engaged in fight or flight, a wagon is merely an unwanted encumbrance to travelers despite its capacity to most efficiently transport large quantities. Although these vehicles retain popularity within city walls, all trade goods and baggage are fastened in light packs on sandlions for passage through the wild lands. Cleverly designed harnesses ensure that the burdens do not impede any beast's mobility, allowing the sandlion to fight bandits or Nuld effectively, as though it bore only a trained warrior on its back.

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Citizens carry arms in the cradles of Dain Sædhun civilization. Volatile neighbors—the Ishru—rather than internal strife dictate this precaution. Nimble persons—those rare individuals who wear the entangling noru upon all occasions—learn the arts of unarmed combat, foregoing the need for weapons. However, the less deft, acquire proficiency with the knife and are in no way helpless or hapless during a fight. Professionals who work with animals (horse trainers, sandlion grooms) often use the whip.

Soldiers and travel guides (whose livelihoods incur greater risks than normal) go more heavily armed. Scimitars and warhammers are prevalent among these folk. Leather breastplates with greaves, gauntlets, and helm are standard equipment, as are small, maneuverable round shields. Metal armor is impractical due to the heat.



KANGLÉD

Mounted warriors favor a variety of missile weapons. The composite bow is a favorite choice, especially among the city guard. Less conventional riders prefer the javelin or the bola. Like the footsoldiers, the cavalry wields scimitars against foes that get close enough.

ECONOMY

The medium of exchange in all four Dain Sædhun towns is a combination of coinage, barter, and *færa* (Æ. “Community Standing”). *Færa* is a complex concept that includes an individual's maturity, productivity, and potential as ascertained within the circle of his acquaintances. It is usually employed in the town of one's residence, so travelers must carry currency. With age, the average citizen's acquaintanceship widens, increasing the possibilities for use of *færa*.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Among themselves, the Dain Sædhun speak *Ægron*, a musical tongue assumed to be descended from the language spoken by their forebearers. Comparisons

drawn from the speech of the rare traveler shed little light on the matter, and its origins remain a mystery.

Two other languages roll from the lips of men in Gethæna. The Ishru employ *Hæsig* (Hæ. “The Noble Tongue”) for communication and rarely deign to pronounce the syllables of any other language, despite their comprehensive knowledge of such “lowly” tongues. Thus, most men fortify themselves against the day when they too will be confronted by an angry Ishrun lord by learning at least a smattering of *Hæsig*. Ambassadors to the Ishru and the truly cautious achieve fluency.

The Nuld speak only *Varnese* (Hæ./Va. “The Nether Tongue”), at the insistence of their masters. These crude warriors must not soil the Noble Tongue by mouthing its exalted sounds. When Ishru speak with Nuld, *Eh'taza* must serve as interpreters, since the one will not and the other cannot use his colleague's language. Encounters between Dain Sædhun and Nuld occur with sufficient frequency that most men reach respectable competence in *Varnese*.

The *Oræna*, a phonetic alphabet consisting of thirty-eight symbols, serves the Dain Sædhun need for written communication. Business records, personal journals, and educational aids all flow as ink from pen or brush onto the satin paper derived from the fibrous leaves of the irnwoods. The rate of literacy is high.

The *Luringæ*, the pictorial characters used by the Ishru, remain in relative obscurity among the Dain Sædhun. Scholars and experts are versed in these non-phonetic, purely semantic representations of concepts, but of the 10,000 runes existing, the masses know only one; it signifies “forbidden.”

GOVERNMENT

Members of the Tælsiprene, the ruling council of the Dain Sædhu, convene every ten weeks for a five-day session in one of the four cities. The Tælsiprenu (Æ. "Council Members") number twelve in years when an Alcald (Æ. "Speaker of the Will") is appointed, thirteen at other times. (Six signifies ill luck in Gethæna.) Each city elects three Tælsiprenu, two of whom are replaced every four years. These four represent the concerns of their metropolis in the governing body, as well as administering its internal affairs. Fighting units, trade, judicial procedures, taxation, and land use are all under their individual jurisdictions. The Tælsiprene reserves its time for matters concerning the Dain Sædhu as a whole people: water and the Ishru. Policies for the maintenance and protection of the great aqueducts, the appointment of ambassadors to the six Ishrun courts, and diplomatic goals are determined by the Tælsiprene.

The Alcald guides and advises the Tælsiprene. His or her wisdom and knowledge remain decisive in all issues, since the Alcald possesses the power of veto. The office is for life. Upon the death of an Alcald, an election is held to replace eight of the Tælsiprenu. The new council appoints one of its twelve to be Alcald. Four years later, each city follows the established procedure to replace two of its representatives, save one that elects three individuals to bring the total up to its usual thirteen. Often an Alcald will resign from office, especially if the Speaker's reign has been long and he or she has trained several candidates suitable as successors.

2·THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Few of the Dain Sædhu abandon their people to dwell in the courts of the Ishru. Adrift from their culture and playthings of the princes, these court sycophants deserve pity more than envy. Most men reside in one of the four Dain Sædhun cities. Clean and skillfully planned, the urban environment is aesthetically pleasing as well as communally secure.

KANGLED

Interwoven with the Forest of Hiroth, the city's streets seem as congested by irnwood boles as by people. The rustling of leaves mingles with the rushing of fountains to produce soothing effect. The twisting streets bend to pressures of vegetation rather than to dictates of architecture. Marketplaces resemble parks due to the profusion of foliage. The graceful structures of the city—houses, cisterns, museums, dining establishments, and governmental halls—are executed in the black stone quarried at Stondepin and ornament the woodland splendidly.

Waters circulating in the fountains, covered cisterns, and buried conduits flow from three great aqueducts linking Kangled to her sister cities. These elaborate feats of engineering transport ample liquid from the springs of Fomwæn, Glimbourn, and Kressmær.

Several local products are exported to pay for the imported water. Medicines derived from roots and berries native to Hiroth are rendered by trained herbalists. The salves, tinctures, and powders close wounds, soothe burns, speed recovery from sickness, abate fever, and perform other cures. Injury inflicted by the harsh environment or the chances of war create brisk sales and ensure that herbal surpluses are unheard of.

Irnwood, the medium used for furnishings, artistic endeavors, and tools, provided the original impulse for the founding of Kangled. The wood's close-grained, black density and magical properties—a characteristic known to few—make it a prized commodity across all Kulthea. Within Gethæna, the scarcity of wood of any kind gives it additional value.

Silkweave, the fabric used in the Dain Sædhun noru, is spun from the leaves of the irnwoods. The comfort, durability, and beauty of the cloth would ensconce it firmly in the repertoire of tailors. The lack of other materials places it in the category of necessity. Linen, cotton, and wool are not available as alternatives.

The loose societal structure adopted by the Dain Sædhu precludes rigid urban organization. Since a weaver, a jeweler, and a healer may be members of the same tædhi (family), each working out of their shared residence, there is no street of healers or weavers' district. The shops peculiar to each profession are sprinkled randomly throughout the city. Basics may be acquired from the vendors in the marketplaces. More esoteric goods require search.

A thick, stone wall twenty feet in height encircles Kangled. Intermittent towers gives access to the walltop; soldiers pace its smooth walkway throughout the day. Three gates provide the only links between the surrounding lands and the city inside.



A GLEAMTIGER

STONDEPIN

A jewel on the water's edge, Stondepin faces lake Fomwæn and turns its back to the plains. Walkways, streets, and squares orient themselves to the curve and glitter of the shore. Sawleaf palms crowd the sloping beach, combatting the glare with broad, jagged leaves. Human ingenuity has created shade within the city. Bronze-glazed roofs bounce the sky's warm light back whence it came. Awnings of silkweave checker alleys and avenues alike. Piazzas remain intimate and contain at least one fountain supplied by the nearby lake.

Far across Fomwæn's shifting expanse, the sheer faces of the encircling mountains raise their dark battlements. Curling protec-

tively around the water, the cliffs are accessible by boat or barge. Magnificent quarries furnished the stone for the Dain Sædhu during the years when the cities were founded and built. Now they supply it for repairs, new structures, and the works of artists.

Surrounding grasslands yield a bounteous crop of glittergrain. The dusty kernels, stored in granaries throughout the city after their harvest, become flour traded to Kangled and Tangeval. Fish from Lake Fomwæn, while consumed regularly at home, are caught in quantities sufficient to supply Kangled as well.

Looming over these lesser commodities of exchange, water is the primary export. The massive conduit through which it flows opens its maw several hundred feet from the shore. Obscured by a skimming of water, its girth travels to land just below the lake's surface. The metal pipe creeps through the city half-buried in the earth. Piercing city walls, it snakes away through the silver scargrass, growing arched stone legs as the land falls away to the forests.

TANGEVAL

Glittering desert sands lap the walls of this light-filled harbor of civilization. Brightness from the sky reflects from Lake Kressmær as well as from the desert mirages. Resembling Stondepin, Tangeval boasts flocks of awnings spread over the streets and squares of the city. Curving branches from tanglewoods serve as supports, yielding arched silken vaults (rather than the flat tarpaulins prevalent elsewhere). Small fountains, many displaying ornamental fishes, splash in chiaroscuroed courtyards and thoroughfares.

Close by the sweltering city walls, tanglewoods entwine their branches in an impassible grove. Men harvest the wood at its edges, and these pickings become furnishings, weapons, and boat ribs. Numerous vessels skim Lake Kressmær, and fisherman pluck trout, perch, sunfish, and bass from its depths to supply the city's population and for export. Severe escarpments at the far side of the water beckon prospectors and miners over the waves. Several ferries bear them across Lake Kressmær daily to the mouth of the mines that twist through the dark bowels of the mountains.

Slaking its thirst in the lake, an immense pipe, like a monstrous bronze worm, penetrates the city from the shoreline. Its segmented skin scatters light across the city's roofs, while its bulk shoulders aside stone villas in the conduit's passage through Tangeval to the desert. At its other end, lost in the distance, forested Kangled depends on the water that flows into its cisterns from the aqueduct.



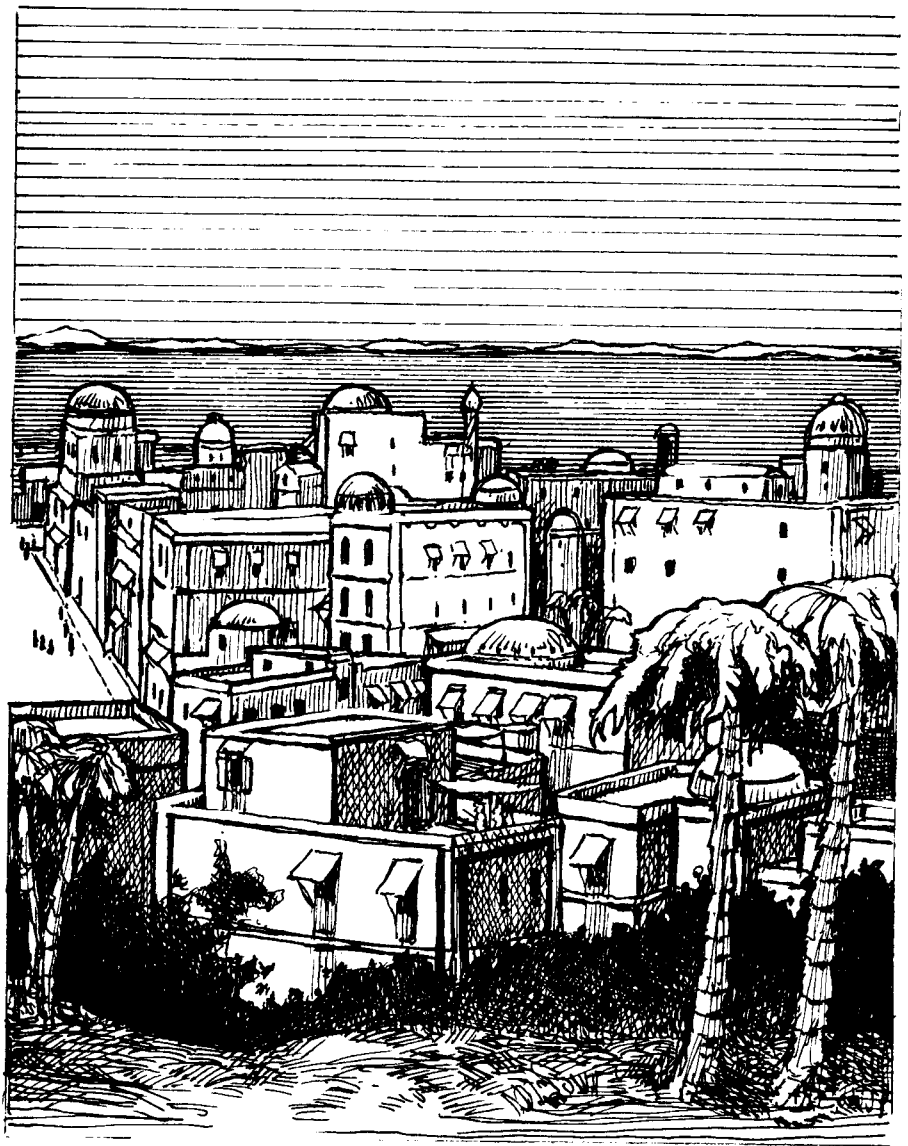
TANGEVAL

STEDRON

Most spacious of the Dain Sædhun cities, Stedron's expansive plazas flaunt acres of breeze-ruffled sawleaf palms placed around grandiose fountains. These fanciful and elaborate sculptures spout, gush, or trickle water in as many ways as artistic invention can devise. Even the lake exhibits creative artifice; spraying jets of water sway in graceful arabesques above its surface to create an everchanging alluvial ballet. Gaily canopied boats accommodating pleasure parties swarm upon Glimbourn to view the display.

Herds of proud, wild horses gallop the plains outside the city walls. Hardened men, equally wild, accompany the herds from waterhole to waterhole, caring for gravid mares and newly-born foals, training young colts, and cooperating with the ruling stallion. This nomadic existence, threatened by hostile Nuld and savage gleamtigers, is interrupted by the Panteriad, horse races held once every five years. The herders, their horses, and a throng of spectators congregate within a monumental arena to view the magnificent spectacle. Contests of speed, riding ability, and grace occur within the rich traditions of pageantry. Trumpets, ceremonies conducted by the Tælsiprenu in resplendent garb, and dramatic presentations commemorating Dain Sædhun history are as much a part of the Panteriad as the transactions involving horseflesh, horse trappings, and other commodities that progress under cover of the jubilant cacophony.

Brimming with wealth and the ease it engenders, the city glitters. The joy of her citizens, the beauty of her gracious plazas, and the grandeur of the behemoth aqueduct stretching from Glimbourn to the forests of Hiroth combine to create the image of untroubled luxury—a burnished medallion on a golden cord gleaming in its utopian casket. Yet the comfort typical of Stedron is shared by her sister cities; nor is it perfect. The ordinary stresses of daily life are heightened by the erratic raids of the Ishru. And the events now unfolding amidst the Eh'taza may spell the end of all Dain Sædhun ease.



STEDRON

3 PERSONS OF NOTE

DÆRU ONVIN

During the few ceremonies requiring his presence, Dæru the Alcalá is an impressive sight. The folds of an exquisitely woven noru accentuate his tall, strong frame. Blue eyes, accustomed to command, stare out from his purposeful face. The lines engraved there spring not only from the years in public office, but from joyful living among the partners and children of his tædhi. Responsibility has engendered serenity rather than anxiety in Dæru's psyche. At his feet, a sandlion often reclines, a favorite grown too old to serve as mount, yet loyal in the protection of her human friend. Gripped in his hand, a silver staff shaped to resemble the elegant stem of the zolianth, enfolded by tapering leaves and crowned by azure petals, symbolizes the powers and duties of the Alcalá.

Age: 51. **Eyes:** Blue. **Hair:** Dark Brown. **Build:** Large-boned, muscular. **Height:** 6'3". **Race/Sex:** Dain Sædhu/M. **Skin:** Tan. **Demeanor:** Responsible. **Dress:** White silk noru. **True Attitude:** Trustworthy; dedicated. **Home:** Kangled.

Hits: 50. **Melee:** +75bs. **Missile:**—

AT(DB): 1(-65). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 5. **PP:** 210.

Lvl: 14. **Profession:** Lay Healer. **Stats:** SD-88; Co-84; Ag-89; Me-86; Re-87; St-85; Qu-95; Pr-100; In-88; Em-89.. **AP:** 72.

Skill Bonuses: DSpell 30, Climb 35, Ride 35, Swim 35, DTraps 5, S&H 30, Perc 30, Strength 30, Speed 30, Ægron 10, Hæsig 5, Varnese 5, Erlin 6, Shay 6, Runes 65, St&W 65, Act 20, AnimalH 35, Cook 15, FAid 35, Forag 10, Math 15, Med 20, Music 35, PSpeak 35, SpMast +5, Subdue 15, Track 20, Trade 30.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 14. Directed Spell OB: 44. All Base Lay Healer lists, Movement, and Mind's Door to his level. To 10th level: Speed, Liquid Manipulation, Shifting, Gas Manipulation, Cloaking, Detections.

Sword: +20 OB, intelligent, independently casts any spells from the Detections list up to 20th level and informs wielder, 60 PP.

Noru: +25 DB.

Earring: x5 PP multiplier.

Staff of Office: intelligent, independently 3x/day casts any spell from the attack Avoidance list up to 20th level and/or Mind's Door: *Long Door 500'*.



A DAIN SÆDHUN GARDEN

Much of Dæru Onvin's energy and creativity has been directed toward forging a new policy regarding treaties with the Ishru. Over the past centuries, Dain Sædhu dealings with the Nuld and the Taza had shifted to direct interaction with their masters. The change produced a great improvement in adherence to the policies formed, since the Ishru more directly exercised their authority in those days. An agreement with a Tazan lieutenant would be overset entirely when Sachiel or Amianthus ordered a new task completed or a maneuver performed that conflicted with it. The servants obeyed their masters' will; thus, when the servants offended, the Dain Sædhu ambassadors strove to speak with their superiors. Covenants between the Ishru and the Dain Sædhu took shape.

When the Ishru enforced these compacts, the Dain Sædhu enjoyed increasing freedom from harassment by their subordinates. Yet, in time, Ishrun attention wandered. Without the Princes' guidance, their Taza and Nuld ceased to follow the tenets of the treaties, the specifics of which were unknown to them. The Eh'taza held the responsibility of supervising the Nuld and Taza in the absence of Ishrun initiative. Unfortunately, they too had remained in ignorance of their masters' agreements with the Dain Sædhu, and the situation worsened. The Dain Sædhu ambassadors increased their efforts to secure Ishrun cooperation, only to be refused audiences or ignored altogether while in the Ishrun presence.

When Dæru Onvin took the office of Alcald, he broadened the focus of negotiation. Eh'taza such as Chamos of Nokor Ænan received visits from the diplomatic corps. The ambassadors brought the prior Ishrun commitments to Eh'tazan attention and requested that the agreements be honored in the coordination of the Nuld and Tazan activity. Chamos and Urian easily saw the justice of the Dain Sædhu point of view and modified their administrative modes to accommodate the previously ratified treaties. Other Eh'taza were slower to change, but the situation improved. Once an Eh'taza could be brought to cooperate, the Nuld and Taza under his or her jurisdiction ceased harassment of Dain Sædhu citizens they encountered and operated more exclusively in territories unfrequented by men. The Eh'taza brought a scrupulous perfectionism, developed over millennia of serving the Ishru, to restricting their charges, a style which entirely surpassed the inconsistent manner in which the Ishru had performed.

For the past twenty years of Dæru Onvin's rule, the Dain Sædhu have experienced increased security and prosperity. Yet the Alcald uncharacteristically harbors worries. Two visitors are responsible for his anxieties. During the burning silence of kharufier, Loremaster Jaizel Arbeleth came to Onvin's tædhi with vague warnings and pessimistic prophecies. He spoke of a time of upheaval when all agreements would be cast down before the face of Chaos; of war and the end of the known world; of the need for preparation and the possibility of a forced exodus. The Loremaster refused to be more specific, but his demeanor was too sincere and convincing for a casual dismissal of his predictions.

The Alcald's most recent interview with Chamos, concerning the trivial matter of some stolen letters, proved unexpectedly unsettling. The usually warm and serene Eh'taza remained distant and agitated throughout. When told of Jaizel's warnings, she replied that the wise person remains eternally watchful. This ambiguous response in no way soothed Onvin's worries. His next dispatch to the Dain Sædhu ambassadors outlined the need for preternatural alertness concerning anomalies within the Ishrun courts.

NEVRÆLIA ORQIS



NEVRÆLIA ORQIS

Trained as a weaver, Nevraelia's talents broadened early to encompass the skilled manipulation of patterns of interaction between men. As ambassador to Lucibel's court, she creates tapestries composed of human and Ishrun lives rather than the strands of silkweave in a Dain Sædhun wall hanging. She acts with caution amidst the intrigues and rivalries of the Taza, slowly molding events to serve her purpose: the safeguarding of the Dain Sædhun community.

When Nevraelia first arrived at Nokor Ænan, her shy finesse attracted the benevolent interest of several prominent figures in the game of power. Her modest demeanor encouraged confidences, and her discretion nurtured friendships. Over time, the young diplomat developed an excellent sense for distinguishing the concerns to be shared among contentious neighbors from those best kept private. Now, after years of her service, relations between the individuals under Lucibel's authority and the Dain Sædhun progress smoothly with little infringement on the autonomy and security guaranteed by treaty.

Yet, like the Alcal, Nevraelia nurses some worries. Rumors flicker about Nokor Ænan, concerning dissatisfied factions among the Eh'taza who will take action soon. War may sweep the land, ignoring all promises granting the Dain Sædhun immunity in the waxing tides of Eh'tazan fury. No facts have emerged from the morass of hearsay and gossip, but a phrase—Narsirabæn—whose meaning remains unclear produces sudden silences among the whispers. Nevraelia has shifted all her attention to obtaining knowledge about the Eh'tazan rebels. Do they exist? What are their plans? Like a spider at the center of its web, sensitive to the vibrations of each strand, the ambassador waits for her surveillance net spread through the Taza to yield information.

Nevraelia's simplicity of manner and appearance makes her unique amid the flamboyance popular in Lucibel's court. In response to elaborate courtesies, the ambassador is direct, almost blunt. In contrast to the vibrant reds, blues, and blacks typical of Tazan coloring, her smooth, nut brown skin and coffee hair and eyes possess a restful beauty. An unadorned tunic and matching hose, the shade of tiger lilies, clothe her neat frame. Cream gloves, cap, and belt complete the costume worn at Nokor Ænan. When staying at her home in Kangled, she discards even these minor fripperies for the traditional noru.

Age: 37. **Eyes:** Brown. **Hair:** Dark Brown. **Build:** Slim. **Height:** 5'6". **Race/Sex:** Dain Sædhun/F. **Skin:** Light Brown. **Demeanor:** Direct, straightforward. **Dress:** at court: tangerine thigh-length tunic and hose, cream-colored gloves, belt, and cap; home: white slik noru. **True Attitude:** Compassionate. **Home:** Kangled.

Hits: 40. **Melee:** 80da. **Missile:** —

AT(DB): 1(-60). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 5. **PP:** 72.

Lvl: 9. **Profession:** Seer. **Stats:** SD-93; Co-97; Ag-86; Me-65; Re-87; St-87; Qu-99; Pr-96; In-87; Em-81. **AP:** 68.

Skill Bonuses: DSpell 20, Climb 30, Ride 30, Swim 30, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 30, Perc 25, Speed 30, Balance 30, Ægron 8, Hæsig 8, Varnese 8, Erlin 5, Shay 5, Runes 60, St&W 60, Acrobat 5, Act 25, AnimalH 10, Cook 15, Dance 10, FAid 20, Gamb1 15, Med 5, Music 30, PSpeak 20, Sed 25, Sing 20, SpMast 20, Track 5, Trade 30, Trick 15.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 9. Directed Spell OB: 29. All Base Seer lists, Movement, Mind's Door, Telekinesis, Mind Mastery, Speed, Sense Mastery, Illusions, Self Healing, Cloaking to her level.

Dagger: +30 OB, invisible to all except wielder, detects presences continuously.

Earring: x4 PP multiplier, +15 to all RRs.

Bracelet: +20 DB, *Shadows* 3x/day, *Facades II* 3x/day, *Invisibility to I'* 3x/day, *Camouflage* 3x/day.



OAKING IN AN ORNATE PORCELAIN TUB, DELIA

reached for the bath salts. She added a pinch to the warm water and breathed in the floral scent. If only Peath could see her now. He'd die of amazement.

She turned her thoughts to the conversation she'd overheard on the way to her room. So interesting to learn that it was Sachiel's Taza who whispered of the Narsirabæn. Perhaps she'd made an error, visiting Nokor Ænan rather than Nokor Næph, and talking of the secret weapon to Ishru rather than Taza.

No matter. The Ishru must know by now that there were rebels among their servants. They weren't fools. She reviewed her memory of Lucibel's face, calm during the moment of her indiscretion. She hadn't been telling the duke anything he didn't already know. There would have been more interest behind his polite facade.

The real issue remained: could she acquire the Narsirabæn for the Prince of Sel-kai?



Many Taza and Eh'taza are dissatisfied with their lot in life. They cannot leave Gethæna, trapped by its sky as are their masters. And while the Taza remain, their lives are ruled by the Ishru. Some of them have banded together to change the balance of power. The following text, existing as notes in the desk drawer belonging to the Ishru Orias, describes these rebels.

This account, a collection of facts concerning certain groups and individuals perpetrating various actions within Gethæna, has been collected from observations by Taza so assigned and from the evidence presented by my own senses. It is recorded by myself, Orias, in the 35,000,000th cycle of my reign.

GM Note: *The most obvious cycle in Gethæna is the regular fluctuation of the ambient temperature over the course of one day. Orias certainly does not claim to have ruled for millions of years.*

1•THE ORDÆUM NOVIS

The Ishru were not alone in their exposure to the Loremaster Jaizel Arbeleth's charisma. His gentle voice touched both servant and master. Several Eh'taza felt they had found a special friend in this most inspiring of dissemblers. In the fantasy of their dreams, his compassion for their plight evolved into a capability for benevolent suzerainty.

Upon its nativity, the Ordæum Novis (Hæ. "New Order") organized itself around the desire to found a new hierarchy of authority in Gethæna. Cooperative dealings with the Dain Sædhu, greater individual freedoms, and an abdication from power by the Ishru were central aims of the rebels. The purity of these goals remained intact, but the mechanisms for their attainment soon felt the taint of Jaizel's encompassing presence. The Ordæum's idealistic search for freedom, mercy, and justice sullied itself in the desire to abandon its self-assumed responsibilities to a supreme ruler.



SACHIEL AND CUNNING

The Ordæum came to believe that the loving discipline so apparently required by the erratic Ishru could be provided by an autocrat. The regulation of Ishrun tantrums would liberate those currently under their dominion to lead happy, fulfilling lives. The correspondence of these fantasies to truth is in doubt.

Note: *The progression from idealism to autocracy here attributed to the Ordæum Novis occurred long before observation was possible. This reconstruction was largely possible through the work of Taza Eiran. I believe her efforts to be accurate.*

The identity of the proposed candidate for sovereign presents a formidable obstacle to a hopeful outcome. Jaizel is a Loremaster. His order rarely interferes in the affairs of the peoples of Kulthea. This policy allows individuals and civilizations to maintain autonomy, learning and growing from their experiences. Only against the Unlife is direct action a fully endorsed option for a Loremaster.

Note: *The above information, largely hypothetical and open to question, is derived from a fusion of rumor and events observed by myself.*

If Jaizel is a moral and well-intentioned man, if he is worthy of the naive trust possessed by the Ordæum, then his wisdom should hold him faithful to the tenets of noninterference. The exact qualities making him suitable for a position of power should cause him to refuse it. There is a darker possibility. He may be a fallen lord, seduced by powerlust or the Unlife. Purposeful evil, enthroned as a replacement for careless selfishness, presents a more unfortunate consequence to the Ordæum's designs.

To my knowledge, the Loremaster remains in ignorance of the powers that could be his. The Ordæum has schemed privately. They plan to invite Jaizel to assume the throne after they have created and secured it. Until that moment, his innermost character must remain unknown.

Note: *The identities of certain of the Eh'taza involved have some relevance to an objective view of the whole. The following statements, revealing the differing natures, sensitivities, and intentions of several individuals, represent the further efforts of Taza Eiran.*

BELIAL

A slight, unobtrusive figure in the distance, Belial wears a fitted, blue tunic and trousers tucked into low boots. His close-cropped, silver hair and exquisitely fashioned lap harp make him readily identifiable. Closer acquaintance with the Eh'taza discloses his modest, yet magnetic, personality. His hypnotic voice and quiet manner inspire fascination in friend and stranger alike. His calm, almost glacial, eyes remind the unbiased of his imperious master, Gadrel.

From this source, numerous humiliations, annoyances, and difficult situations have fallen on Belial's shoulders. His sensitive artist's nature bruised under such burdens, and resentment tinged his capable service. Jaizel's sympathy drew new purpose from this hoarded anger. Belial discovered a courage that freed him to despise his servitude to a spoiled child and to pursue the justice to which the melodious muse called him. His harp, Lormalæn, became a constant companion and a symbol of his resolve to defeat Gadrel. He found an ally in the abused equine, Frost. Together, they created the Ordæum Novis.



ALASTOR

Much of Belial's frustration evaporated with constructive action. Mature restraint returned with his serenity and prevented precipitate violence. The Ordæum Novis will move when all is ready. Belial's love for Gadrel flourishes in a new found compassion marked by more durable patience. He continues to guide the rebels in the belief that their seditious goals represent a hope for his master's salvation.

Age: ? (Appears≈28). **Eyes:** Grey. **Hair:** Silver. **Build:** Slight. **Height:** 5'10". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Quietly magnetic. **Dress:** Blue silk tunic, blue silk trousers. **True Attitude:** Sensitive, artistic. **Home:** Nokor Væshim.

Hits: 65. **Melee:** 90bs. **Missile:** 80da.

AT(DB): 1(-50). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 125.

Lvl: 15. **Profession:** Bard. **Stats:** SD-89; Co-98; Ag-99; Me-73; Re-74; St-97; Qu-100; Pr-98; In-87; Em-82. **AP:** 95.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±2. Climb 45, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 20, PLocks 20, S&H 50, Perc 40, Speed 40, Landing 40, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Erlin 6, Iylar 5, Muri-Elven 6, Rhaya 6, Rhiani 6, Shay 7, Logos 10, Runes 40, St&W 40, Act 25, Dance 35, FAid 50, Gambi 25, Med 15, Music 70, PSpeak 15, Sed 30, Sing 60, Subdue 40, Trick 10.

Spells: All Base Bard lists to his level. To 10th level: Movement. To 5th level: Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce.

Sword: +20 OB, gives initiative to wielder.

Harp: +15 to all Controlling Songs.

Earring: +25 DB.

Ring: x3 PP multiplier.

MALPHUS

Eh'taza to Satarchian, Malphus long ago foundered in boredom. The sensual lusts of the hunt palled with surfeit; his cerebral disposition turned to other pursuits for amusement. The dust of ancient, metal-hasped tomes and the forgotten sorceries they contained provided Malphus with the complexity he craved. With increasing intensity, he ignored the servile duties owed to the Ishru, focusing on his study of manipulation of the Essence. The allure of the subject and an innate insensitivity permitted him indifference to reprimands from Satarchian.

Gadrel, a connoisseur of torture, and Satarchian, an adept at death, maintain an ambivalent, sporadic friendship. The infrequent visits they exchange merge their Eh'taza, enforcing acquaintance-ship among these retainers if not fondness or esteem. Malphus and Belial sustained a composed enmity for eons. Their differing attitudes toward service, resentful obedience versus graceful subservience, confounded mutual liking.

When Belial committed himself to the defeat of his master, his disapproval for Malphus' rudeness became admiration. An understanding evolved between the two Eh'taza, and Malphus joined the Ordæum Novis.

Malphus possesses a medium build, but affects an eccentric character. His thick, taupe brown hair falls smoothly to the shoulder; insolent, brown eyes stare out from under a heavy fringe of bangs. A generous mouth and strong bones complete his authoritative countenance. He wears a black tunic and matching trousers beneath a voluminous, black, gauze mantle, bespattered with onyx spangles.

Age: ? (Appears≈35). **Eyes:** Brown. **Hair:** Brown. **Build:** Medium. **Height:** 5'10". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/M. **Skin:** Tan. **Demeanor:** Insolent. **Dress:** Black tunic and trousers, black gauze cloak spattered with onyx drops. **True Attitude:** Stubborn. **Home:** Nokor Gamesh.

Hits: 55. **Melee:** 65bs. **Missile:** —

AT(DB): 1(-45). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 10. **PP:** 128.

Lvl: 14. **Profession:** Magician. **Stats:** SD-90; Co-91; Ag-92; Me-71; Re-69; St-99; Qu-97; Pr-90; In-72; Em-98. **AP:** 65.

Skill Bonuses: DSpell 65, Climb 15, Ride 40, Swim 40, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 15, Perc 35, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Enris-Sokal 7, Iruaric 3, Old Emer 6, Aludos 7, Uscurac 8, Runes 85, St&W 85, Channel 10, Caving 15, Cook 15, FAid 20, Forag 20, Math 20, Med 20, Music 15, SpMast 20, StarG 10, Track 15, WeaW 10.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 14. Directed Spell OB: 79. All Base Magician lists, Lofty Bridge list, and Spirit Mastery list to his level. To 10th level: Spell Enhancement, Shield Mastery, Rapid Ways, Invisible Ways. To 5th level: War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

Sword: +15 OB.

Mantle: +20 DB.

Ring: casts *Blur* at will, x4 PP multiplier.

FROST

Icy marble gilded with opalescent mane and tail, Frost's equine form baffles curiosity directed at his thoughts and feelings. Reticent to the point of mute silence, the steed spoke initially to Gadrel alone. When this excessive loyalty received exploitation from its object, the stallion's affection for his master faltered, and his reserve lost its strictness. He conversed with any who spoke to him, but maintained a repressive discretion that allowed no hint of his disappointment and bitterness to escape. His performance of his responsibilities to Gadrel retained perfection and an element of self sacrifice, since loyalty to duty replaced personal loyalty to the Ishru.

A spontaneous sympathy dawned between Frost and Belial. Neither referred to his own discomfort, yet each accurately assumed that the other suffered under Gadrel's regime. The friendship grew, slowly engendering greater trust within their hearts. When Belial shouldered the harp, Lormalæn, the bond between the stallion and the Eh'taza possessed strength enough to survive Belial's terse words urging betrayal. Frost's continued parade of dutiful obedience to Gadrel is nothing but a charade to mask his active participation in the Ordæum Novis.

Age: ?. **Form:** Equine. **Eyes:** Grey. **Hide Color:** White. **Build:** Muscular. **Shoulder Height:** 16 hands (64" or 5'4"). **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/M. **Demeanor:** Unobtrusive. **True Attitude:** Dedicated. **Home:** Nokor Væshim.

Hits: 150. **Melee:** 100LBa/85LTs. **Missile:** —

AT(DB): 3(-40). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 25. **PP:** 96.

Lvl: 16. **Profession:** Fighter. **Stats:** SD-93; Co-100; Ag-85; Me-89; Re-73; St-102; Qu-100; Pr-98; In-89; Em-95. **AP:** 97.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±11, Climb 45, Ride 60, Swim 60, DTraps 45, PLocks 45, S&H 60, Perc 60, Strength 50, Speed 50, Leaping 50, Landing 50, Ægron 6, Hæsig 10, Varnese 8, Shay 6, Runes 5, St&W 5, Act 25, AnimalH 45, Dance 15, FAid 20, Forag 60, Frenzy 60, Gamb1 15, Herd 15, Math 15, Med 30, Sed 50, Subdue 70, Track 90.

Spells: To 5th level: War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

Horse shoes: +25 OB, +20 DB, x2 PP multiplier.

ALASTOR

Age: ? (Appears=23). **Eyes:** Dark Blue. **Hair:** Red. **Build:** Slender. **Height:** 6'1". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Intense. **Dress:** Ankle-length tabard over tunic and trousers. **True Attitude:** Angry. **Home:** Nokor Migdol.

Hits: 140. **Melee:** 155th. **Missile:** 140lb.

AT(DB): 20(-45). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 5. **PP:** 78.

Lvl: 13. **Profession:** Fighter. **Stats:** SD-75; Co-92; Ag-85; Me-43; Re-65; St-99; Qu-98; Pr-95; In-87; Em-83. **AP:** 94.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±9, Climb 35, Ride 60, Swim 60, DTraps 45, PLocks 40, S&H 55, Perc 55, Strength 50, Speed 50, Landing 50, Ægron 8, Hæsig 8, Varnese 6, Shay 6, Runes 5, St&W 5, Acrobat 15, AnimalH 5, Caving 5, Cook 20, Dance 15, Dive 35, FAid 15, Fletch 60, Forag 50, Frenzy 60, Herd 10, LWork 10, Sail 50, Sed 20, Signal 10, Sing 30, Ski 5, Subdue 70, Track 40, Tumb1 20, WeaW 15.

Spells: To 5th level: Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce.

Two-hand sword: +15 OB.

Tabard: +25 DB, confers AT 20, no encumbrance.

Long bow: +10 OB.

Ring: x3 PP multiplier.

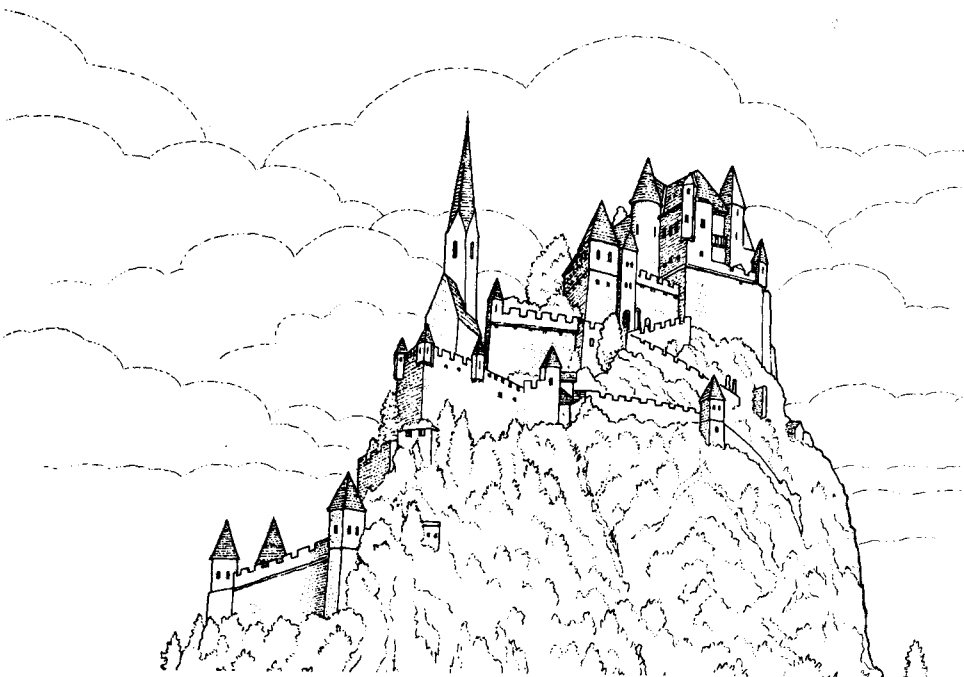
Eh'taza to Orias, Alastor faced none of the tantrums and other vicissitudes confronting the retainers of Satarchian or Gadrel. Only reasonable requests, those concerning the security of estates surrounded by war, were asked of him. From where then derived his regret? Fashioning discontent within an apparently desirable situation, his own spirit must contain the fault rather than his master's treatment. Yet appearances often mask distasteful truths. Orias used his servants more gently than most, but withheld, in common with all Ishru, any personal approval he might feel for his Eh'taza.

Unrewarded industry soon fed Alastor the concept that his labors, however fulfilling upon execution, possessed no real worth or value within the scope of his existence. The depression engendered by such thoughts required only the persuasive tongue of Maiphus to metamorphose into anger and rebellion. Alastor became a member of the Ordæum Novis

where his ardent demands for autonomy and purpose for all Taza stiffen this organization's altruistic stance.

His spiritual intensity bolsters his flamboyant physiognomy: long, waving, carmine hair and iridescent, indigo eyes burn an afterimage into the retinas of onlookers. Blue tunic and trousers are eclipsed by a long tabard embroidered with a cobalt-scaled griffon spitting vermilion flames.

Note: In total, the Ordæum Novis consists of eight Eh'taza (each with a numerous, yet ignorant, following of Taza). The four described above consistently lead the organization. Chorozon, previously unmentioned in this account, functions largely as an observer. Alocer, also lacking an entry, has proved elusive while under observation. Chamos and Iblis will appear later in this document.



NOKOR VÆSHIM

Comment: *The Ordæum Novis is not the only group of malcontents. The next organization under review commands the expertise of Taza Eshæ. The following derives from his work.*

2·THE HERESIA COMBATA

More selfish than some, these Eh'taza seek personal power. The humiliation and subjugation of the proud Ishru promises to be a fruit of surpassing sweetness to their hungry servants. The years of unappreciated loyalty rankle in their hearts, and envy shapes their ambitions. They intend to slay or imprison the grand dukes while assuming the seat of power themselves.

Fostered by the Ordæum Novis, the Heresiarchs unknowingly provide a cloak behind which other revolutionaries operate. The Heresia Combata (Hæ. "Violent Heresy") makes a more active search for disloyal Taza, placing itself in greater danger of discovery, but unknowingly illuminating individual sentiments for safe perusal by the Ordæum Novis.

The lack of means to curtail Ishrun freedom or insure their permanent death importuned both groups from their inception. Often the Ordæum falsely supposed the Heresia to have discovered a solution to this persistent problem. Now, after perilous research into the Essænce, this desired fantasy is truth. Magical bonds have been forged and await use.

Query: *Details concerning these items are currently unavailable. Precisely how do they function, and where are they kept?*

BATHYM

Nominal leader of the Heresiarchs, Bathym aspires to the stature possessed by his master, Sachiël. Commanding equal humor and wit, the Eh'taza's ambition is both feasible and understandable. His aspirations first caught fire during a philosophical debate with Belial and Iblis. Independent and prudent, he created the Heresia Combata alone, subsequently inviting his friends to join it. He remains unaware of the Ordæum Novis and the identities of its members.

Despite his incomplete store of knowledge, Bathym possesses impressive capabilities. A dabbler in alchemy, he has created many beautiful weapons and talismans, repositories of strange and sorcerous powers. His repeated forays into the far reaches of the alchemical arts have yielded up at last the objects of his most intense desire: the Narsirabæn. The sparkling facets of the six gems focus the Essænce to form an impenetrable sphere, a man's height in diameter, through which the Ishru cannot pass. Bathym has set the orange jacinths in ornate rods of electrium: touch-sensitive devices that regulate the placement of each jewel's effect.

Of average height, Bathym's muscularity makes him an intimidating figure. The laughter present in his jade green eyes detracts from this first impression, as do the bright chestnut curls haloing his head. His customary garb consists of a soft, moss green tunic whose pleats depend from a wide yoke and are confined at the hips by a generous sash. Green leggings hug his legs, punctuated by snug, suede slippers. Full sleeves conceal the razor-sharp dagger strapped to Bathym's forearm.

Age: ? (Appears≈34). **Eyes:** Green. **Hair:** Chestnut brown. **Build:** Very Muscular. **Height:** 5'9". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Cynical. **Dress:** Long-sleeved tunic, sash, leggings, slippers. **True Attitude:** Power-hungry. **Home:** Nokor Næph.

Hits: 55. **Melee:** 75da. **Missile:** —

AT(DB): 1(-65). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 5. **PP:** 210.

Lvl: 14. **Profession:** Alchemist. **Stats:** SD-55; Co-94; Ag-89; Me-71; Re-75; St-99; Qu-98; Pr-96; In-79; Em-98. **AP:** 85.

Skill Bonuses: DSpell 65, Climb 15, Ride 40, Swim 40, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 15, Perc 35, Ægron 7, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Italian 7, Miir 7, Rhaya 6, Rhiani 6, Shay 10, Taal 6, Enris-Sokal 4, Iruaric 5, Old Emer 7, Aludos 6, Uscurac 7, Runes 85, St&W 85, Channel 10, Acrobat 15, Act 25, Cook 40, Dance 20, Fletch 80, LWork 50, Math 20, Med 20, Music 15, Rope 60, Smith 90, SpMast 40, StarG 15, Stone 70, Subdue 15, Trade 10, Wood 50.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 14. Directed Spell OB: 79. All Base Alchemist lists to his level. To 10th level: Shield Mastery, Rapid Ways, Lofty Bridge, Invisible Ways, Spirit Mastery. To 5th level: War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

Dagger: +25 OB.

Ring: casts *Shield* at will.

Rod: *Firebolt*.

Ring: regenerates 10 hp/rnd.

Earring: x5 PP multiplier.

ISCAARON

The most irreverent among the Eh'taza, Iscaaron played court jester for Satarchian. Expecting neither affection nor appreciation for his unflattering humor, he remained content with his role. Belial and Malphus supposed his critical jokes to spring from disaffection rather than from joy in malicious wit. They revealed the existence of the Heresia Combata to him. Iscaaron possessed no great loyalty to his master; he did (and does) nurture a cunning sense of self-preservation. So he joined the rebels. He pretends to feel the popular outrage, keeping his paramount self-interest secret. He cares little who wins ultimate victory, so long as he retains a modicum of personal power.

A black-and-white checkered pierrot suit upholds his jester's image. Humor-filled golden eyes laugh at those who fall victim to his sallies, and a curly mop of golden brown hair contrasts with the controlled grace exhibited in the gymnastic feats he performs daily. Iscaaron is amusing and annoying to any whose company he keeps, including members of the Heresia Combata.

Age: ? (Appears≈25). **Eyes:** Golden. **Hair:** Brown streaked w/gold. **Build:** Lean. **Height:** 5'9". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/M. **Skin:** Tan. **Demeanor:** Sardonic. **Dress:** Pierrot suit. **True Attitude:** Self-centered. **Home:** Nokor Gamesh.

Hits: 65. **Melee:** 70MA. **Missile:** —

AT(DB): 1(-90). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 15. **PP:** 104.

Lvl: 13. **Profession:** Monk. **Stats:** SD-88; Co-95; Ag-95; Me-65; Re-76; St-99; Qu-100; Pr-97; In-81; Em-97. **AP:** 85.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±4, Climb 45, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 20, PLocks 20, S&H 50, Perc 40, Speed 65, Balance 65, Leaping 65, Landing 65, Ægron 8, Hæsig 10, Varnese 8, Shay 7, Runes 30, St&W 30, Acrobat 70, Act 50, AnimalH 50, Contort 50, Cook 15, Dance 60, Dive 50, False 15, FAid 50, Forag 20, Frenzy 20, Gambl 20, LWork 15, Med 10, Music 40, PSpeak 40, Rope 35, Row 10, Sail 10, Sed 50, Signal 30, Subdue 50, Track 40, Trick 30, Tumb1 70.

Spells: All Base Monk lists to his level. To 5th level: Detecting Ways, Essence Hand, War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

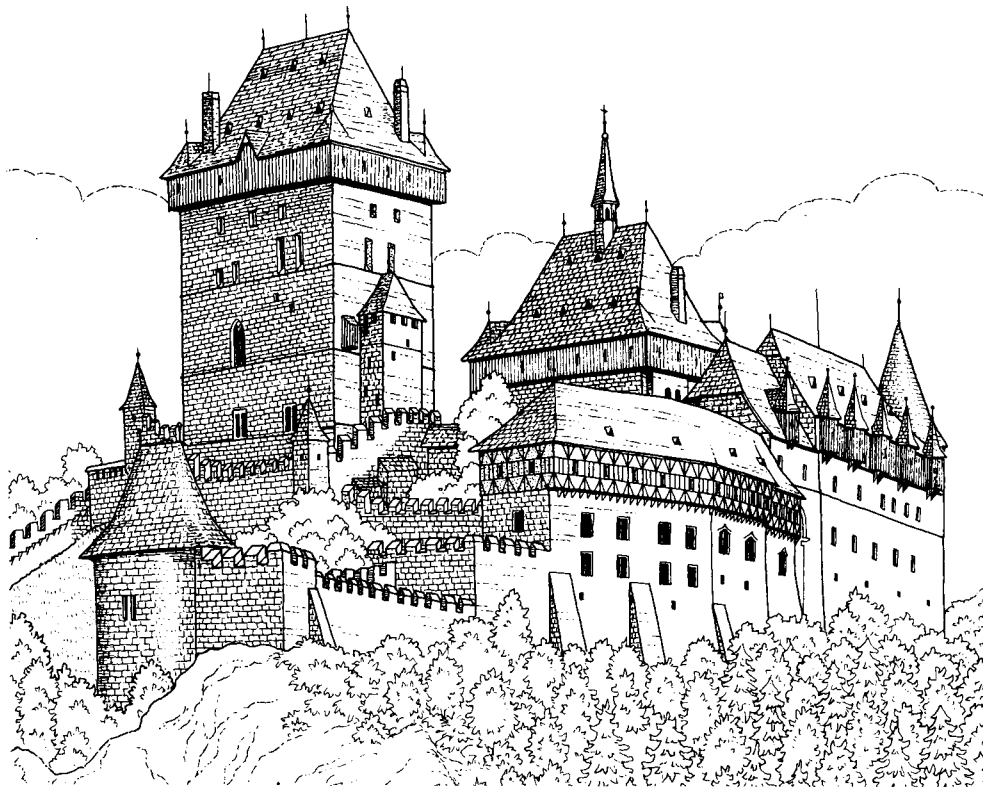
Bracers: +20 OB, +20 DB, *Icebolt* 3x/day.

Earring: x4 PP multiplier.

Her ebullient opposition to stoicism speedily earned the Eh'taza a seat with the Heresia Combata. Yet, beneath the frivolity of her transient emotions, Iblis retains a sense of proportion. A childish grab for the reins of power never struck her as a reasonable solution to the problems besetting Gethæna. This opinion was the first of many that she learned to hide behind her eyes. She became a faithful member of the Ordæum Novis, while pretending continued loyalty to the Heresiarchs. She plots now to steal or destroy the Narsirabæn.

Small and delicate, her slight form is usually sheathed in snug, electric blue. Blurring the Eh'taza's kinetic gestures, a sheer, silver-spangled mantle billows around her with an energy of its own. Blue-black hair frames her pale, piquant face from which blazing sapphire eyes attend persons of interest.

Age: ? (Appears≈27). **Eyes:** Blue. **Hair:** Blue-black. **Build:** Petite. **Height:** 5'2". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/F. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Frenetic. **Dress:** Snug jumpsuit, gauze cloak. **True Attitude:** Soft-hearted. **Home:** Nokor Paran.



NOKOR NÆPH

IBLIS

Rumored to possess one thousand and one kingcats, Iblis finds herself followed by at least three of these aloof creatures wherever her mercurial nature takes her. Their imperturbable nonchalance contrasts sharply with the Eh'taza's phrenetic animation. Like the blue flames of a dying fire, Iblis flickers and flares, darting from place to place, talking all the while of the joys and sorrows oppressing or buoying her heart.

Hits: 50. **Melee:** 60da. **Missile:** —

AT(DB): 1(-65). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 5. **PP:** 144.

Lvl: 12. **Profession:** Mystic. **Stats:** SD-75; Co-95; Ag-87; Me-73; Re-78; St-85; Qu-97; Pr-98; In-87; Em-97. **AP:** 99.

Skill Bonuses: DSpell 60, Climb 10, Ride 35, Swim 35, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 15, Perc 30, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 8, Erlin 7, Itanian 7, Rhaya 6, Shay 6, Iruaric 2, Old Emer 5, Aludos 5, Logos 7, Runes 65, St&W 65, Channel 60, Acrobat, Act, AnimalH, Caving, Contort, Cook, Dance, Dive, False, FAid, Fletch, Forag, Frenzy, Gambl, Herd, LWork, Math, Med, Music, Nav, PSpeak, Rope, Row, Sail, Sed, Signal, Sing, Ski, Smith, SpMast, Star, Stone, Subdue, Track, Trade, Trick, Tumb1, WeaW, Wood.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 12. Directed Spell OB: 72. All Base Mystic lists to her level. To 5th level: Lofty Bridges, Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, Doom's Truce.

Dagger: +20 OB.

Mantle: +25 DB, casts *Shield* at will.

Wand: *Stonefires*.

Earring: x4 PP multiplier.

Note: Sixteen Eh'taza guide the course of the Heresia Combata. A list of its members includes:

Quietude, Azæl, Valafar, Agares, Turel, Dagon, Belial, Ilgar,

Chorozon, Bathym, Cunning, Iscaaron, Alocer, Iblis, Abigor, and Naberus. The most significant of these (in the opinions of Eshæ and myself) were described in detail above.

Comment: The following paragraphs result from my own personal experiences and observations. The facts therein served as motivation for assigning certain duties to Eiran and Eshæ, the results of which reside in the previous paragraphs. No one, save myself, is privy to much of the information below.

3 THE NICTUM AUREATE

Heaven does not weep, nor blush to welcome the sun, nor dim to flatter the moons. Her burnished glare reflects only the acrid beauty of incarceration: a monotony deplored by the Nictum Aureate (Hæ. "Dawning Night"), which intends to restore a changing, seasonal sky to Gethæna. The shattering of the brass shield illuminating the lands of the Ishru will reveal an abyss of azure flown by varying celestial lanterns. All the kingdoms of Kulthea's surface will then be vulnerable to Ishrun powers.

Note: The sky currently above us is no sky, but a selective field of force imprisoning certain individuals.

The risk of disaster looms large, but the Nictum Aureate foresees a favorable outcome. For millennia, the Ishru tore and scratched at one another's wounds, vying for supremacy. The struggle birthed a new consciousness into their existence. "I am" transformed bestial cleverness into sentient choice. Yet, lingering passions inspired further evil deeds, while newborn capacities for compassion and self-discipline stifled in the primordial confinement imposed by Gethæna. The long exile must be terminated, the false mask ripped from the face of the sky, the Kirzelæn splintered before it is too late. Stultifying patterns must be wrenched asunder by an interval of chaos, to settle with perhaps more grace in the brisk freedom of daylight.

The Nictum Aureate maintains an accurate knowledge of the other factions operating in Gethæna. Of the three revolutionary groups, it is the only one to do so. Concern for the effects that Gethæna's transition from strict isolation into the company of the neighboring lands of Kulthea's surface will have on all involved motivates the keeping of such records. The Heresia Combata and others will not be pleased by the cataclysm that will so change the world over which they desire dominion.

Note: Portions of the rhetoric employed by the Nictum Aureate have been preserved in the preceding passage to provide an accurate representation of the organization's spirit. In addition, it must be recorded that I am not a wholly unbiased observer.

Comment: Nine individuals form the Nictum Aureate: Quietude, Chamos, Astaroth, Arys, Urian, Chorozon, Cunning, Beast, and Naberus. Following are my observations concerning several of them.

URIAN

Quicksilver arpeggios gavotte past mirrored silences, then soften into smoky murmurs. Urian's blond head bends slightly to accommodate the gleaming flute, Timbrithalas, from which his slender fingers milk such glories. His slight figure, clad in somber black, perches on the deep sill of an opened casement. Joy, given wings through sound, soars out from the quiet hall to circle the spires and battlements of Nokor Væshim.

Dreaming over the beauties of improvisation, the Eh'taza's liquid grey eyes smile with an untarnished delight in living. Urian's desire to see the dawn from his window owes nothing to the miseries of rage and spite. Untouched by the rigors of imprisonment and the cruelty of the Ishru, yet observant of the sickness these conditions have wrought in most others, simple compassion moves Urian to espouse the violent ending proposed by the Nictum Aureate.

Age: ? (Appears=27). **Eyes:** Grey. **Hair:** Blond. **Build:** Slender. **Height:** 5'11". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Meditative. **Dress:** Black silk tunic and hose. **True Attitude:** Delighted. **Home:** Nokor Væshim.

Hits: 70. **Melee:** 95fa. **Missile:** 80lb.

AT(DB): 1(-55). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 10. **PP:** 204.

Lvl: 17. **Profession:** Bard. **Stats:** SD-85; Co-95; Ag-93; Me-76; Re-79; St-99; Qu-101; Pr-100; In-95; Em-100. **AP:** 95.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±2, Climb 45, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 20, PLocks 20, S&H 50, Perc 40, Speed 40, Landing 40, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Erlin 7, Itanian 8, Kuluk 6, Rhaya 6, Rhiani 6, Shay 10, Iruaric 3, Old Emer 5, Logos 9, Runes 40, St&W 40, Acrobat 15, Act 50, AnimalH 15, Dance 50, Dive 15, FAid 60, Fletch 20, Gambl 15, Med 60, Music 90, PSpeak 10, Sail 10, Sed 50, Signal 40, Sing 70, Ski 15, StarG 15, Subdue 60, Track 15, Tumb1 10, WeaW 10, Wood 15.

Spells: All Base Bard lists to his level. To 5th level: Brilliance, Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce.

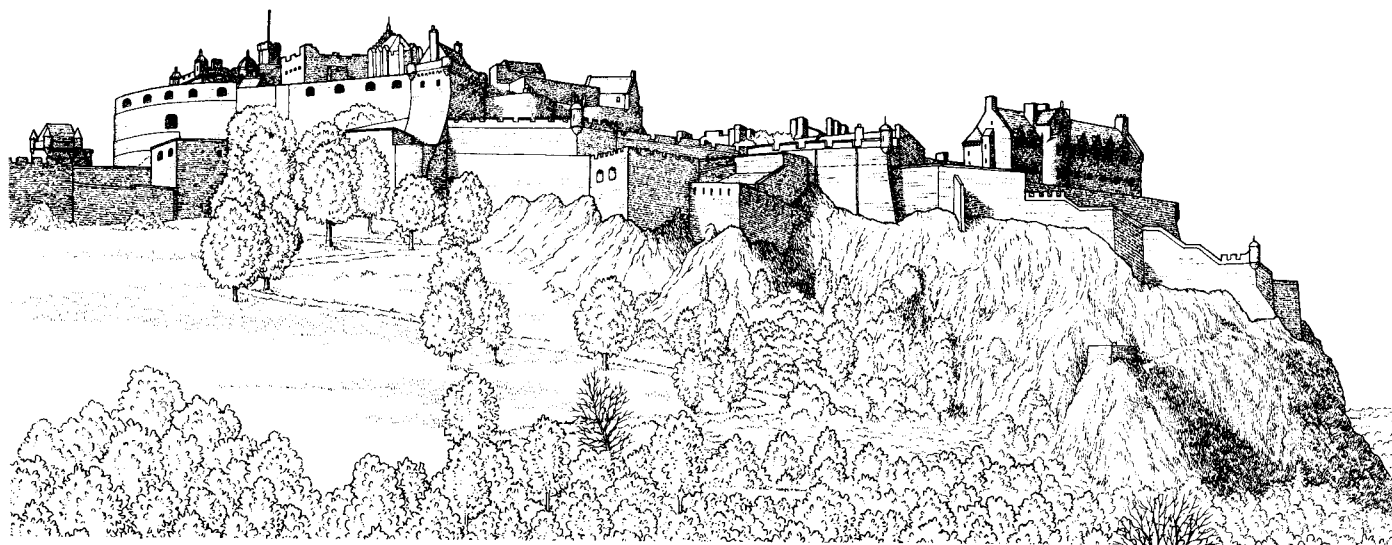
Flute: +25 to all spells, casts *Sleep Song* at will, teleports to Urian if removed from his person.

Falchion: +25 OB, dances to free wielder's hands, delivers cold criticals with crits of B severity or greater.

Long bow: +20 OB, permits wielder to shoot 2x/rnd.

Ring: +25 DB.

Earring: x4 PP multiplier.



NOKOR MIQDOL

CHAMOS

The iced arc of her sword leaps in a blur from its sheath to sever the neck of her imaginary opponent. Returned to the sheath's captivity, it blazes forth again to drink phantasmal blood. A windowed gallery seizes the graceful harmony of weapon and wielder as reflections in its polished marbles. Chamos is practicing her art.

A crimson hakama, falling to mid-calf, swirls about her concise figure as she moves in exercises of stepping and slashing. A sleeveless, crimson jacket floats loosely from her shoulders; black hair, cropped very short, reveals the elegant contours of her skull. The exertions of her limbs make no indentation on the repose of her face.

Despite her lethal training in the skills of personal combat, Chamos is mother to a tradition of providing succor to the Dain Sædhu. She has long acted as guardian to the unfortunate individuals absorbed by the Ishrun court at Nokor Ænan. Many children of men have grown to maturity under her detached nurturance. On the eve of crisis, she will not abandon her self-assumed responsibilities: the Dain Sædhu must be prepared for the dawn prophesied by the Nictum Aureate. The Eh'taza hopes to meet with Dæru Onvin, the Alcal of the four cities of mankind, to assess his ability to guide his people wisely through the coming cataclysm and to advise him of its advent.

Age: ? (Appears≈32). **Eyes:** Black. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Wiry. **Height:** 5'4". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/F. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Calm. **Dress:** Crimson hakama and haori. **True Attitude:** Motherly. **Home:** Nokor Ænan.

Hits: 70. **Melee:** 85katana/75MA. **Missile:** 50sh.

AT(DB): 1(-100). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 216.

Lvl: 18. **Profession:** Monk. **Stats:** SD-94; Co-96; Ag-98; Me-85; Re-83; St-99; Qu-101; Pr-100; In-87; Em-101. **AP:** 93.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±5, Climb 50, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 20, PLocks 20, S&H 50, Perc 40, Speed 70, Balance 70, Leaping 70, Landing 70, ÆEgron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Shay 7, Runes 30, St&W 30, Acrobat 70, Act 40, AnimalH 40, Contort 40, Cook 50, Dance 40, Dive 50, FAid 70, Forag 50, Frenzy 30, Med 30, Music 20, PSpeak 40, Rope 30, Sed 30, Signal 20, Sing 40, Ski 30, StarG 15, Subdue 70, Track 30, Trade 20, Tumbl 70, WeaW 10.

Spells: All Base Monk lists to her level. To 5th level: War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

Katana: +25 OB, sharpness: removes appropriate limb with critical.

Bracers: +25 to martial arts attacks, +25 DB, +25 vs. Essence spells.

Earrings: x4 PP multiplier, +25 vs. all detection spells.

Shuriken: +20 OB, 5 of them, return to caster by teleport.

THE STEEDS OF THE ISHRU

Quietude, the dark unicorn who once did not eschew sites of murdered innocence, joined the Nictum Aureate at the invitation of Arys. He remains loyal to his master, whom he tells nothing, trusting that freedom will remove from Lucibel the last vestiges of Ishrun arrogance that the Lord of Darkness still possesses.

Cunning, the sleek author of lupine mischiefs, is less discrete. He repeats edited tales of the rebels' doings to Sachiel. Since the Witches' Master laughs and replies with stories of bungled revolutions from Kulthea's surface, perhaps the wolf is wise in his utterances. Certainly, his master takes no action to prevent the breaking of Gethæna's sky.

Dark gold manes the majesty emanating from Beast's leonine face. Light scatters from its metallic silk to illumine the brighter gold of his flanks and the liquid play of muscle beneath his velvet hide. With the bloodlust gone from his eyes, the wisdom there tempers the ferocity inherent in his form. The lion hunts no longer.

Unlike his cohorts, Beast remains unswayed by the afterimage of affection for his master. The seeds of boyish optimism reposing in Satarchian stifle amidst his joy in calculated cruelty. No virtues flower in his torrid soul. Fearful of boredom to the point of panic, the Adversary rushes headlong into the oblivion of fighting and killing followed by exhausted sleep. Beast collaborates with Arys in the designing of plots to tame his savage master. Satarchian must be gentled before his release from Gethæna.

ARYS

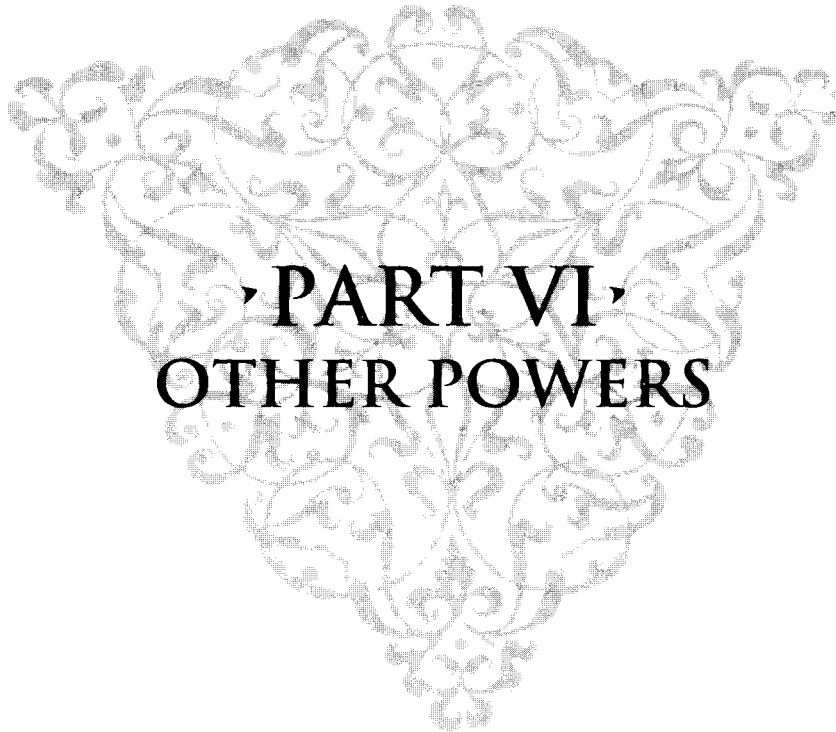
Arys is known by another name. His silky, copper hair and unconcerned reserve belong to that other. His skill with horses and artistry with the calligrapher's brush belong to the other. Especially, his exalted position and sorcerous powers belong to another. Only the name, Arys, and the anonymity symbolized by it are his own.

As Arys, he listened long at the keyholes of the chambers where the Nictum Aureate took council. The debate concerning the Heresia Combata, the condemnations of Jaizel's character, the resolve to shatter the sky: he heard all. And betrayed . . . nothing. An interval of solitude and contemplation followed.

He reviewed his knowledge of the Ishru: Lucibel, dark as dusk, melancholy, yet marvelously kind; Orias, flame bright, remote, yet eminently reasonable; Sachiel, dancer and musician, merry and compassionate; Amianthus, subtle as ancient wine, learned, and wise. These four of the grand dukes might be loosed upon Kulthea bringing little regret to their liberator.

But two of the Ishrun princes, released from their prison, would become monsters ravaging among children. Gadrel and the blood-thirsty Satarchian require special preparation before their return to Kulthea's surface. And he, the secret one, must act as their physician; no Eh'taza could withstand the Ishrun wiles that the Adversary and the Bestower would draw on when they began to fight back. Arys revealed himself to those upon whom he spied and joined their ranks. Masked by a name, Orias works to dethrone himself.

Comment: With these final portions of the manuscript, it becomes clear that I am not the objective scribe recording history as it happens. Perhaps all of my testimony should be discarded by future scholars who chance upon these papers. I have an interest in the events, in the mesh of desires, described by my pen. I, too, weary of my confinement and long for freedom. I will forego it, if I must. Should my brothers Gadrel and Satarchian prove intractable, I will forego it. Yet, the sun's rays tug at my resolution.



PART VI OTHER POWERS



THREE MEN AND A SANDLION STOOD IN THE SHADOW of the city gate.

Sajys Tyrpian sniffed impatiently. “Do you have the requisite fee or not? My time is worth coinage as well, you know.”

Caidh remembered regretfully the days when he’d kept his vow to stay out of the hands of money-grubbing Navigators. These Yja Inrelu were the worst he’d ever dealt with.

“That’s not the point! I specified that you bring us to the nearest healer with sufficient skill to help my friend Hæn. I did not want to leave Gethæna. And Tangeval was a lot closer than Charónic Kaitaine on Ciros! Surely there must be someone in Tangeval who knows the law of muscle and blood?”

Tyrpian sniffed again. “No doubt there is, but I do not know of any such, and you did not specify which city must be your destination. Are you going to pay the remaining 250 gold pieces owed or not? I suggest you honor your debt.”

Caidh ground his teeth. “I suggest you honor your obligation to *jump* Hæn, Marinælla, and myself to the healer nearest to our original point of departure. I didn’t request the nearest healer approved and certified by the guild. I said the nearest, period.”

Tyrpian stared scornfully at the horizon. “I shall consult my superiors. I recommend you prepare yourself for disappointment.” The Navigator disappeared.



The Dain Sædhu and the Ishru, while not indigenous to Gethæna, have resided in the realm for so long as to become an integral part of its essence. However, they are not its sole inhabitants.

Powerful individuals of more unusual origins shape events in Gethæna today, and their ambitions will influence its future.

1·THE LORDS OF ESSÆNCE

Although Utha and Kadæna and all of the immortal First Lords of Essænce are dead, some few of their opposed orders survived the final conflict between the Uruths and the K'ta'viiri. Pale shadows of their predecessors, they yet possessed power sufficient to awe ordinary men. The story of the deeds wrought by three of these lesser Lords follows.

THE KIRZELÆN

She poses—a butterfly under glass, an image trapped by prisms. Cyanic hair flows down her loveliness like silk, and a spangled, silver net gleams from the watery locks. The midnight sky has draped itself in graceful velvet as clothing for her slight form. An iridescent nimbus swirls through the lattices of the crystal that imprisons her. Her name is Mhari Ridæn.

Utha, First Master of the Flows, was not the last of his kind. Many successors arose in his wake to continue his fight against the worldslayers. In concealment and stealth, they waged their battles; their numbers were few and their order fragile, prohibiting open confrontation. The first years of the Second Era of Ire saw the land wasted and barren, slow in its recovery from wanton manipulation by warring Flowmasters.

Stelar Ahkail led a few of Utha's survivors to sanctuary. They sought renewal of strength and hope, to be followed by further plans for the triumph of good over evil. The calming of the land remained their first priority, along with provision for the sentient peoples of Kulthea. Stelar Ahkail and his lifemate, Liræn Solmir, conceived and initiated long machinations that would result in the arrival of benevolent leaders at crucial points in history. Persistence and patience marked all their efforts, since their enemies sought to undo each portion of the task as it was achieved.

Like Utha, Kadæna Worldslayer did not lack heirs upon her cataclysmic death. Niyoreh Jirel struggled against numerous aspirants in one sect before securely grasping the reins of power. She and her disciples healed their wounds, inflicted by both friend and enemy, while the land reclaimed its greenery. The spring leaves provided new inspiration for these lovers of molten earth and flaming sky. Niyoreh Jirel and her cohort, Pæl Dhæk, researched means to glory and dominance. Their efforts unlocked the knowledge requisite for the freeing of the Great Demons and ultimately touched the ravening forces of the Unlife.

Even before the release of the Demons, evil sprites cavorted amidst the wreckage of the anguished land. Foul smokes and noisome vapors prowled the laval flames and groaning earth. Silhouetted, angular forms flitted through these fumes, partially concealed by the mists. To men, they were the stuff of hallucination: the hideous Nightbird, a half-seen, putrescent, winged, and beaked monster who fed the eyes of children to her fetid brood; the brutish Mænsturius, a bull-headed shadow whose skein drew men's souls from their bodies by night; the enticing Mædu, a serpentine-tressed horror whose vipers craved the blood of lost innocence.

To Mhari Ridæn, daughter of Liræn Solmir and Pæl Dhæk, the land in travail exhibited a tragic, noble temper, deserving of respect and nurturance. Mhari celebrated the emergence of each new, delicately green frond and the birth of each infant badger, mole, and raccoon. These were signs of the earth's returning health. The nightmarish beings that haunted the wastelands seemed an evil remnant of the worldslayers' destructive schemes. As she hated her dark father, Pæl, so Mhari hated this small portion of his labors. Early in life, she bent her young and still limited powers to the destruction of the fiends he must have created.

When Mhari first departed the havens that comprised home, against the wishes of Liræn and Stelar, inexperience marked her campaign against Peal Dhæk. In ignorance, she tracked the Ishru and their children. Premature encounters with these malevolent entities left her body wracked and bleeding upon the field of battle. Only her inherited strength as a Lord of Essænce allowed her to survive. She grew strong and subtle. New stratagems led her to the ancient records compiled by men. From them, she learned much concerning her prey, yet never of its true nature. Always the trail swept Mhari onward to a personal confrontation with the stranger who fathered her.

In secret, she penetrated the shadowed fastness ruled by Niyoreh Jirel. Discovery of the Demonlore confirmed her belief that the worldslayers controlled the Ishru and further parted Mhari from the truth: that the Demons were another evil unconnected in any way to the monsters she detested. She cast off the armor of secrecy to openly desire reconciliation with Pæl Dhæk. He welcomed his daughter, and the worldslayers accepted Mhari as one of their own.



MÆDU AND NIGHTBIRD

In public, she added her energies to the labors in progress, hastening the day when Doombringers and Ordainers obeyed deadly masters. Privately, since Mhari's loyalty belonged to her foster father, Stelar Ahkail, her research pursued ways to thwart Niyoreh Jirel. If the Demon armies could be removed from Niyoreh's hands permanently, made inaccessible to her or anyone, Liræn's daughter would be satisfied.

She forged the monstrous Kirzelæn, a crystal with a thousand scintillating facets, to generate from Essænce a spherical field of constraint. A private experiment imprisoned the powerful fiend who had nearly slain her years before. Personal confusion convinced Mhari that the lodestone could incarcerate the unsummoned demons, and she continued to aid her hosts. Niyoreh designed the underearth citadel wherein her Demon armies might dwell, instructing Pæl and Mhari to implement her desire.

A seared realm, later named Gethæna, formed under the inspired imaginations of father and daughter. The fascinating Kirzelæn lay at its heart, focusing the turbulent energies of a Flow of Essænce into the hot, brassy sky: the field of restraint withholding the high pressures of earth and magma and designed to constrain the Demons freed from the planes of Chaos.

In the eleventh hour, Pæl and Niyoreh fathomed the true sentiments held by Liræn's daughter. Within the core of the volcano cradling the Kirzelæn, a last, cataclysmic battle raged between the three. Drawn steel and channeled Essænce wielded by her foes threatened Mhari's person, yet compassion stayed her hand. Unable to slay her father, Mhari limited her now mature powers as a Flowmaster to self-defense. The struggle woke the mountain beneath the contestants, and laval fumes seeped from cracks in the floor, threatening a violent eruption.

Desperation moved Pæl to chant the final syllables needed to activate the Kirzelæn. Eight gemstone pillars crystallized from these coded resonances, improbably trapping Mhari within one of their number while completing the sorcery of constraint. The prison held its maker, but the Nightbird and the Mædu, Lucibel and Gadrel in alien skins, had also come home.



MHARI RIDÆN IMPRISONED

NIYOREH JIREL

Lightly tanned skin, deep violet eyes with slit pupils, and a pleasing countenance foster the idea that Niyoreh Jirel possesses all the incredible powers of the mind demonstrated by the original K'ta'viiri. The tight curls of her coal black hair spoil this illusion, but the Essence-lord is a formidable opponent, wielding many of the powers of her ancestors with a ferocity that rivals the cruelty of Kadæna herself. Born with a desire to rule others, Niyoreh barely survived her youth. Her yen for domination far outstripped her fledgling powers; only Pæl Dhæk's willingness to add his more developed skills to her schemes for ultimate control enabled Niyoreh to consistently avoid annihilation at the hands of her contemporaries. With Kadæna's death, the stage was set for Niyoreh's assumption of a leadership position.

With utter ruthlessness, including the use of infants as hostages, the immediate assassination (with no attempt to sway their loyalties by persuasion or flattery) of those who might resist, and the torture and execution of children before the cowardly, Niyoreh assured her dominance over many of Kadæna's followers. Pæl Dhæk performed these atrocities for the most part, obeying her orders in every detail. Once Niyoreh's rule was secure, he labored to discover the incantations which would free the Demons to serve as the

Essænce-lord's armies. Most heinous of his deeds, Pæl fathered Mhari Ridæn with Liræn Solmir, using a blend of imposture and outright force. This action backfired, creating greater cohesiveness among the worldslayers' foes rather than the division that Niyoreh had intended.

Niyoreh's other schemes fared equally poorly. Gethæna, although created to her specifications, remained useless as a barracks for Demons due to Mhari Ridæn's interference. The peoples of Kulthea proved less than docile as substitute armies. And Stelar Ahkail's order grew stronger, more effectively hampering the worldslayers' destruction of the lands with each passing year. Worse still, the Loremasters appeared across the Shadow World, teaching individuals and civilizations those skills which would enable them to flourish. In desperation, Niyoreh surrendered herself to the dissonance that haunted her dreams while she slept and lurked just at the periphery of her vision by day. She had reason to hesitate. The Unlife devoured the essential facets of her soul, leaving but a shell of her personality. Yet it provided her with unimagined strength. The fortunes of the worldslayers began to turn.

The events following Niyoreh's corruption are documented in the histories: the successful release of the Demon armies, the spread of dark Cults and evil Orders, the subversion of entire populations to the Unlife's false teachings, and at last the coordinated attack on those who remained free of the Unlife's taint. Yet, the Free Peoples won the war.

Niyoreh constructed a vault within the sinews of Gethæna's soil. A strange mixture of science and Essænce, it would allow her and Pæl Dhæk to sleep undisturbed for centuries or even millennia, waking the pair only when world events were such that the worldslayers might make a successful bid for power.

Age: ? (Appears≈36). **Eyes:** Violet. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Lean. **Height:** 6'0". **Race/Sex:** Lord of Essænce (Althan)/F. **Skin:** Tanned. **Demeanor:** Commanding. **Dress:** Flowing robes of red silk. **True Attitude:** Hungry for absolute control over every living being on Kulthea. **Home:** Currently, the vault below Paltæl in Gethæna.

Hits: 270. **Melee:** 265lk. **Missile:** 240ky.

AT(DB): 20(-170/-270*). **Sh:** Y. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 35. **PP:** 2660.

Lvl: 95. **Profession:** Mentalist/Sorcerer/Evil Magician. **Stats:** SD-108; Co-111; Ag-103; Me-114; Re-107; St-105; Qu-108; Pr-117; In-112; Em-115. **AP:** 98.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±20, DSpell 100, Climb 100, Ride 100, Swim 90, DTraps 80, PLocks 80, S&H 70, Perc 160, Strength 100, Speed 100, Balance 100, Leaping 100, Landing 100, Arlak 7, Chfra 7, Danari 10, Dyar 10, Erlin 7, Itanian 10, Iylar 8, Lugro 10, Miir 8, Rhaya 7, Shay 8, Uluka 7, Ennis-Sokal 18, Iruaric 15, Kugor 10, Old Emer 10, Aludos 10, Kuskarük 10, Logos 10, Sylmaria 10, Uscurac 10, Xytos 10, Runes 80, St&W 140, Channel 100, Acrobat 60, Act 70, Dance 50, Dive 120, FAid 60, Forag 40, Frenzy 70, Gamb1 60, Math 20, Med 20, Music 50, Nav 80, PSpeak 150, Sail 40, Sed 180, Signal 50, Sing 40, Ski 40, Smith 40, SpMast 80, StarG 120, Subdue 140, Track 30, Trade 20, Trick 70, Tumb1 100, WeaW 50.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 95. Directed Spell OB: 195. All Open Essence, Open Mentalism, Base Mentalist, Base Sorcerer, Base Evil Magician, Base Navigator, and Base Warding lists to 50th level.

*Additional DB is from *Deflect True*.

Special Abilities:

Racial Abilities: Niyoreh has all the special abilities inherent in the K'ta'viir race. (See the *Shadow World Master Atlas*, PP 92-93.)

Strength of Body: Niyoreh resists all attacks as a Large Creature.

Channels of the Unlife: Pure destruction streams from Niyoreh's fingertips; the effect looks like quivering hot air; it is far more devastating: any living being in its path is torn from the Essænce and utterly destroyed (including the soul); frequency 1x/week; range 100'; duration 3 rnds; level 25.

Robes: Red silk; non-encumbering; stops bleeding up to 30 hits/rnd; heals wearer 20 hits/rnd.

Wall Shield: Clear læn; floats before the bearer; can be used against rear attacks; adds +100 to DB; controlled by clear læn ring worn on bearer's hand.

Ring: Clear læn; controls shield; +30 to RRs vs. Essence.

Armband: Gold, shaped like a serpent, coils around the upper arm; x7 PP multiplier; summons a pit viper, a cobra, or a python 7x/day to fight for 7 rnds for the wielder.

Pit Viper—Level: 3, Size/Speed: S/BF, Hits: 40, AT(DB):

1(40), Attack OB: 40SSSt/poison, Critical Table: Normal.

Cobra—Level: 3, Size/Speed: S/VF, Hits: 40, AT(DB): 1(40),

Attack OB: 30SSSt/spit poison, Critical Table: Normal.

Python—Level: 5, Size/Speed: L/MD, Hits: 130, AT(DB):

3(0), Attack OB: 70MBi/60MGr/90LGr, Critical: decrease severity level by 1.

Long Kynac: *Blade of Chaos*

- 1) Of Slaying Demons, the blade destroys or absorbs the spirit of any Demon of Essænce it kills.
- 2) The spirit of a captured Demon may be fired as an attack, its nature depending on the nature of the captive:
 - a) Fire Demon: *Fire Ball, Fire Bolt, Triad of Flame, Corner Fires, or Following Fires*; use Heat criticals and Plasma criticals; damage=25 x hits.
 - b) Air Demon: *Stun Cloud, Vacuum, Whirlwind, Death Cloud, Great Vacuum, or Hard Wind*; use double Electricity criticals or double Impact criticals, as appropriate; damage=25 x hits.
 - c) Light Demon: *Shock Bolt, Lightning Bolt, Corner Lightning Bolt, or Following Lightening Bolt*; use Shock and Electricity criticals; damage=25 x hits.
 - d) Water Demon: *Water Bolt or Triad of Water*; for any one critical, roll twice on the Impact critical table; damage=25 x hits.
 - e) Earth Demon: *Tremors* or a ball of stone materializes at the blade's tip and is hurled at the target (use the warhammer table, +100 OB); damage=25 x hits.
 - f) Doombringer: *Lightning Bolt*; with any critical result roll on all three of the following tables: Shock, Electricity, and Depression; damage=20 x hits.
 - g) Procreator: *Bolt of Depravity*; use the Cold Bolt table and the Cold criticals; damage=12 x hits; target (whether male or female!) is pregnant with half-human half-demon child if he or she fails the RR by 75+; 75% chance a woman dies in childbirth; 95% a man dies as the perverted babe claws its way out of his body at term.
 - h) Ordainer: *Dark Absolution, Ice Bolt, Cold Ball, Triad of Ice, Fire Ball, Fire Bolt, Triad of Flame, Corner Fires, or Following Fires*; use double Cold criticals or Heat and Plasma criticals; damage=60 x hits.
 - i) Soulslayer of Murlis: *Dark Absolution or Nether Bolt*; use Disruption and Stress criticals as specified by table; damage=15 x hits.
 - j) Singular Demon: target is possessed by the demon; target may make RRs 1x/day to wrest control from the demon for that day; exorcism or spells from the Dark Summons list are required to permanently free the victim of the Demon.
- 3) +50 long kynac.
- 4) Non-fumbling.
- 5) Stores 5 Demons at a time.

Kynac: +25 OB, balanced for throwing, returns to thrower.

Pectoral: Broad gold collar set with cabochons of jade, lapis lazuli, malachite, and carnelian; radiates an aura which slows incoming attacks; acts as AT 20.

Sandals: Red dragonskin thongs with straps wrapped around the ankles; allows wearer to walk at 30 mph within a Flow of Essænce as though it were a paved highway.

PÆL DHÆK

Possessing the purple iris, the slit pupil, and the coal black hair common to his K'ta'viir ancestors, Pæl lacks some of their other characteristics. His skin is pale, and his spirit is equally lackluster. Although wielding the awesome powers of a Lord of Essænce, Pæl consistently places his will at the disposal of stronger individuals. As a baby, he gave over his toys without protest to Rænis Mirinar, his playmate. In childhood, he administered childish tortures to his friends at the demand of the pod bully, Kæmer Pranid. As a youth, he protected Niyoreh Jirel from her jealous pod members at her orders.

Although Pæl obeyed Niyoreh for the duration of the worldslayers' attempts to control Kulthea, the performance of one order cracked a chink in his subservience: the fathering of Mhari Ridæn. Holding the infant but once in his arms, Pæl felt the first stirrings of love in his fear-hardened heart. The seed remained dormant for many years, sprouting only when Mhari worked at her father's side creating Gethæna, and flowering only after Pæl joined Niyoreh in the battle to kill his daughter. Too late in maturing to save Mhari from her fate, Pæl's affection gave him the courage to defy Niyoreh secretly in one matter. When he laid himself at the Essænce-lord's side in the vault that would preserve them throughout millennia of time, Pæl set the controls on his support system differently than was planned. He would awake as soon as circumstances were favorable for the liberation of Mhari Ridæn from her crystal prison. Free of Niyoreh's domineering will, Pæl would make restitution to his daughter and attempt to claim the personal integrity he had never possessed.



PÆL DHÆK

Age: ? (Appears≈40). **Eyes:** Violet. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Lightly muscled. **Height:** 6'6". **Race/Sex:** Lord of Essænce (Althan)/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Unassuming, hospitable. **Dress:** Blouse, tabard, leggings, and cloak of blue-black silk. **True Attitude:** Timid, with a hidden spark of courage. **Home:** Currently, the vault below Paltæl in Gethæna.

Hits: 265. **Melee:** 225baw. **Missile:** 210chegain.

AT(DB): 1(-160/260*). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** A/L.

MovM: 35. **PP:** 2000/4000.

Lvl: 50/100. **Profession:** Mentalist/Mystic/Alchemist. **Stats:** SD-95; Co-107; Ag-109; Me-117; Re-112; St-106; Qu-102; Pr-93; In-106; Em-103. **AP:** 91.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±8, DSpell 80, Climb 90, Ride 110, Swim 90, DTraps 50, PLocks 50, S&H 70, Perc 170, Strength 100, Speed 100, Balance 100, Leaping 100, Landing 100, Ægron 6, Hæsig 6, Varnese 6, Danari 8, Dyar 10, Erlin 9, Itanian 10, Iylar 8, Lugro 7, Miir 10, Rhaya 10, Rhiani 6, Shay 8, Enris-Sokal 18, Iruaric 17, Kugor 14, Old Emer 10, Aludos 10, Enruth 9, Krônnyt 10, Kusharûk 8, Sylmaria 10, Uscurac 10, Xytos 10, Runes 180, St&W 210, Channel 100, Acrobat 80, Act 120, AnimalH 40, Caving 40, Cook 40, Dance 40, Dive 70, False 80, FAid 50, Fletch 80, Gambl 40, LWork 80, Math 80, Med 40, Music 70, Nav 50, PSpeak 80, Rope 40, Sail 40, Sed 180, Signal 20, Sing 40, Ski 40, Smith 150, SpMast 80, StarG 100, Stone 50, Subdue 80, Trade 40, Trick 120, Tumbl 80, WeaW 40, Wood 80.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 50. Directed Spell OB: 130. All Open Essence, Open Mentalism, Closed Mentalism, Base Mentalist, Base Evil Mentalist, Base Mystic, and Base Navigator lists to 50th level.

*Additional DB is from *Deflect True*.

Special Abilities:

Racial Abilities: Pæl has all the special abilities inherent in the K'ta'viir race. (See the *Shadow World Master Atlas*, PP 92-93.)

Strength of Body: Pæl resists all attacks as a Large Creature.

Bracers: Gold wrought to resemble squid tentacles, worn around the upper arms; enable wearer to fly at will, 100 mph.

Belt: Black dragonskin studded with arinyark cabuchons; stores up to 7,000 PPs; wearer may Channel his own into it to fill it; he may then use these PPs at will as he desires.

Belt Buckle: Huge black opal; x10 PP multiplier; summons a roc that will serve as a mount and/or fight for the wearer of the buckle, 1x/week, for 24 hours.

Roc—Level: 20, Size/Speed: H/FA, Hits: 580, AT(DB): 4(60), Attack OB: 140HCl/90LBa/120Hpi; Critical Table: Large.

Cloak: Hooded; turns invisible at wearer's will; with hood up, it will conceal its wearer and all on the wearer's person; unencumbering.

Tabard: Blue-black silk, ornamented with a squid embroidered in black horse hair (very hard to see); protects wearer from extremes of temperature (-273°F-5,000°F) and from elemental attacks (+150 to RR); adds +45 to DB.

Ithloss Greaves: For both arms and legs; enchanted to give wearer AT 18 and add +80 to his DB.

Shaalk Gloves: Protect hands when wearer catches returning chegain; also protect hands from extremes of heat or cold (-273°F-5,000°F) such as might occur during work at a forge.

Keron Baw: *The Accursed Axe*

- 1) Delivers Depression criticals in addition to any Krush and Slash criticals.
- 2) Delivers a curse from the Curses list with any 'E' critical; roll D50, result is level of spell, round down if no spell at that level (e.g., a result of 12 would yield *Curse of Shar Bu*, the 11th level spell).
- 3) +60 baw.
- 4) Casts any spell from the Darkness list at will, up to 100 PP each day.

Chegain: +45, returns to trained thrower.

MHARI RIDÆN

More powerful than either Niyoreh or Pæl alone, although unable to defeat their combined forces, Mhari Ridæn resembles her ancestors the least of the three Flowmasters. Possessing her father's pale skin and her mother's blue eyes, only her slit pupils and long, straight, blue-black hair reveal her K'ta'viir blood.

The Kirzelæn holds Mhari outside of time, mercifully suspending her awareness until her crystal prison should be broken. Despite the long oblivion, she will show no disorientation upon her release. A rapid assessment of her rescuers will yield immediate action to destroy them if they prove aligned with the worldslayers. Her mental powers make questioning unnecessary: Mhari knows an individual's thought before he does himself. Should her liberators prove untainted by the Unlife, the Essænce-lord will heal their bodies of any wounds while expressing gratitude for her freedom. She will not linger long.

She knows the destruction of the Kirzelæn will have broken Gethæna's sky in a cataclysm of immense scale. After the explosion, a rain of debris will bring death and destruction to all the inhabitants. Mhari's compassion and healing will be needed nowhere else so desperately. Only when the damage of her release is mended may she seek her own ends. The release of her father from his own prison of fear and cowardice is but the first of her goals.

Age: ? (Appears≈27). **Eyes:** Dark Blue. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Slender. **Height:** 6'2". **Race/Sex:** Lord of Essænce (Althan)/F. **Skin:** Pale. **Deemeanor:** Nurturing, empathetic. **Dress:** Gown of blue-black silk. **True Attitude:** Compassionate. **Home:** Currently trapped in Shæhesh in Gethæna; her former home has long since been destroyed.

Hits: 275. **Melee:** 285irgaak. **Missile:** 265gé.

AT(DB): 1(-155/255*). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 35. **PP:** 4500.

Lvl: 125. **Profession:** Lay Healer/Alchemist. **Stats:** SD-113; Co-109; Ag-111; Me-102; Re-99; St-103; Qu-104; Pr-114; In-1115; Em-119. **AP:** 106.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±15, DSpell 100, Climb 95, Ride 120, Swim 90, DTraps 80, PLocks 80, S&H 170, Perc 174, Strength 100, Speed 100, Balance 100, Leaping 100, Landing 100, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Arlak 10, Chîra 9, Danari 8, Erlin 10, Itanian 9, Iylar 9, Kuluk 8, Lugro 8, Miir 9, Rhaya 6, Shay 8, Shulur 9, T'loc-loc 10, Uluka 9, Enris-Sokal 15, Iruaric 19, Kugor 12, Old Emer 10, Aludos 10, Enruth 10, Krônnyt 7, Logos 10, Sylmaria 16, Usarac 10, Xytos 15, Runes 190, St&W 220, Channel 120, Acrobat 70, Act 150, AnimalH 70, Caving 40, Cook 60, Dance 130, Dive 80, False 70, FAid 160, Fletch 50, LWork 50, Math 90, Med 140, Music 90, Nav 110, PSpeak 102, Rope 70, Sail 80, Sed 120, Signal 80, Sing 140, Ski 70, Smith 100, SpMast 110, StarG 150, Stone 70, Subdue 150, Track 70, Trick, Tumb 80, WeaW 90, Wood 60.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 125. Directed Spell OB: 225. All Open Mentalism, Closed Mentalism, Base Mentalist, Base Seer, Base Lay Healer, Base Bard, Base Mystic, Base Alchemist, Base Navigator lists to 50th level. All Base Warding lists to 90th level.

*Additional DB is from *Deflect True*.

Special Abilities:

Racial Abilities: Mhari has all the special abilities inherent in the K'ta'viir race. (See the *Shadow World Master Atlas*, PP 92-93.)

Strength of Body: Mhari resists all attacks as a Large Creature.

Girdle: Platinum mesh, encircling the waist with a triangular yoke front and back, spangled with arinyark cabuchons and star sapphires; stores up to 3,000 PPs; wearer may Channel her own into it to fill it; she may then use these PPs at will as she desires; gives wearer AT 20 and adds +120 to her DB.

Sash: Blue-black silk twisted and tied just above Mhari's girdle, fringed ends; permits wearer to cast spells from the Base Lay Healer lists at no PP cost to herself, up to 500 PP/day.

Pendant: Lapis lazuli figurine shaped like a tiger hanging from a platinum chain; x9 PP multiplier; summons a tiger to serve as a mount and/or fighter for the wearer, 1x/day, for 9 hours.

Tiger—Level: 10, Size/Speed: L/VF, Hits: 245, AT(DB):

4(30), Attack OB: 75LCI/90MBa/110LBi; Critical: Normal.

Gown: Blue-black silk, hangs to the floor; protects wearer from extreme temperatures (-273°F-5,000°F) and elemental attacks (+150 to RR); adds +70 to RRs vs. Essence, Channeling, and Mentalism.

Chemise: White silk shift worn under a gown; stops bleeding up to 20 hits/rnd; heals wearer 15 hits/rnd.

Irgaak: *Sword of Slumber*

- 1) If the weapon delivers hits, the target must also resist a *Sleep* spell.
- 2) If the weapon delivers an 'A' critical, the target must also resist a *Fear* spell.
- 3) If the weapon delivers an 'B' critical, the target must also resist a *True Charm* spell.
- 4) If the weapon delivers an 'C' critical, the target must also resist a *Geas* spell.
- 5) If the weapon delivers an 'D' critical, the target must also resist a *True Hold* spell.
- 6) If the weapon delivers an 'E' critical, the target must also resist a *True Sleep* spell.
- 7) +50 irgaak.

Gé: +35, returns to thrower via teleport.

Anklet: Strands of braided sea pearls; wearer is completely at home underwater—may breath and move without restriction.

Sandal: Leather sole secured to wearer's foot and ankle by platinum chains, designed as thongs to accomodate toe rings of the wearer's choice; wearer may walk on air at speeds ranging from 5 mph to 200 mph.

Toe-rings: Pair of simple bands of lapis lazuli; each attached to Mhari's sandals; permits wearer to swim within Flows of Essænce, traveling at the same rate as the Flow.

2·THE LOREMASTERS

Gethæna, wracked by strife and discontent, has long been a fruit ripe for plucking by the Unlife. An Ishru, promised power and freedom, might surrender his will to its designs, so much darker than his own. A rebellious Eh'taza, offered the defeat of his masters, might serve its wishes, so much bloodier than his own. Yet the Unlife has obtained no foothold in the underearth realm. Even the advent of man, which opened still another portal to this monstrous force, has not given it expression. Only the simple evils, practiced by Dain Sædhu and Ishru alike, darken Gethæna. The consuming thirst for destruction manifested by the Unlife is held at bay thus far by the Loremasters.

As foe to the Unlife, Jaizel Arbeleth's actions within the cavern-kingdom, although unorthodox, were not ill-chosen. Under his guardianship, from the time Lucibel first broke bread with him through to his indictment of the Council of Loremasters, Gethæna remained safe. No taint of the Unlife polluted the works of evil perpetrated within her bounds.

Yet Gethæna remains vulnerable to the Unlife, and Pserchia Qæa, as the presiding Loremaster, owes her best efforts against this dread enemy. The lesser depravities of the Ishru, motivated solely by obsession and mania, take a low position in her hierarchy of concerns. Only so far as these vices might serve the Unlife do they possess importance in her eyes. The archaic conflict of good against evil, an integral part of Jaizel's psyche, has not even a toehold in the current guardian of the realm.

EXCERPTS FROM THE LIBRARY AT NOMIKOS

The tale of the indictment of a Loremaster and the transferral of his responsibilities to another is obscure, but recorded nonetheless among the histories of the Library at Nomikos. Some fragments from these tomes appear below.

6 TRALIN 98.531 SECOND ERA (OF IRE)

Early in the spring, under the fragrant blooms of the cherry trees, Jaizel was made a Loremaster. Hair white as swan's down floated from his head carried so proudly erect as he ascended steps to a dais. Muscled limbs clothed in white, the color of innocence, bent in submission while he knelt to receive his office. Born of a Loremaster and raised among them, he had aspired from childhood to that exalted station. The short ceremony in his twenty-fourth year fulfilled his aspirations. With the flame of youth still bright in his solemn bronzed face, he joined the ranks to fight against the subtle forces of the Dark.

19 NORN 99.157 SECOND ERA (OF IRE)

Mature and experienced, yet retaining the image of youth, Jaizel Arbeleth strode among the brilliant, falling leaves of autumn. More than the season of a hemisphere, it was the autumn of a civilization, the autumn of an epoch. The new menace of the Unlife grew stronger and more bold. In one small shadow of this fading world, Jaizel stumbled upon Gethæna. Dismay struck his heart at the sight of this unbreached and unchallenged citadel of evil. Here was work for the pure, the faithful, and the mighty. Jaizel pledged himself without hesitation, and began the long labor to give the powers of Light a hold in this exotic, yet fetid pit.

3 FIRIN 99.986 SECOND ERA (OF IRE)

Crystalline intricacies of air and ice descended from cold winter clouds as the Council of Loremasters indicted Jaizel Arbeleth for his behavior concerning the underearth realm of Gethæna. Of excessive interference: guilty. Of infringement upon human autonomy: guilty. Of catalyzing the intentions of evil: guilty. With a ceremony more brief than the first, Jaizel's rank, privileges, and responsibilities were stripped from him.

30 ILARN .007 THIRD ERA (OF IRE)

Buds swelled and blushed beneath a film of ice as the Loremasters took up their interrupted tasks. The Wars of Dominion were over. The demons, the cultist Priests, and the minions of the Unlife lay dead or in hiding. The remnants of civilization were faced with the task of taking root again in order to flourish. Dead heroes were forgotten as the survivors took responsibility for the kingdoms of humanity. The Loremasters ventured forth more subtly than before to fortify men against the next attack by the Unlife.

11 TRALIN .018 THIRD ERA (OF IRE)

In response to springtime rains, the cherry trees blossomed again over the making of a new Loremaster. Blond hair, almost green, streamed from her proud head as she mounted the steps to the dais. Slender, supple limbs, clothed in willow green, the color of rebirth, knelt in submission. With the conclusion of this ceremony, Pserchia Qæa was a Loremaster, no longer a Navigator. Her first assignment would be Gethæna.

22 SORITH .026 THIRD ERA (OF IRE)

The verdant rustle of summer went unwitnessed by Pserchia Qæa, who had passed underearth many years ago. She reviewed the fruits of Jaizel's labors and found them good. The Dain Sædhu, descendants of the brave volunteers who first settled Gethæna, were a prosperous and happy people. The Ishru, tormented by the mere presence of humanity within their kingdom, were slowly progressing from youth into adulthood. The passage of time would witness a miracle.

48 SORITH .135 THIRD ERA (OF IRE)

The warm hum of summer insects went unnoticed by Pserchia who remained under earth. She had sought Jaizel Arbeleth for years of days and found him on this one. In a small heresy of her own, she proposed a partnership between herself and the arch heretic. His work was too good to be ignored, and his guidance might make the difference between Gethæna's successful resistance of the Unlife versus her submission to its will. Despite differing intentions, the two would labor together for the benefit of the cavern realm.

JAIZEL ARBELETH

A well-established role in Dain Sædhun legends exists for Jaizel Arbeleth. When trouble loomed, a frequent happening, he appeared unsummoned to bring aid at the crisis. Whether his own sword-wielding arm, a wise word to leaders, or a clever trick to bedazzle the enemy, his help delivered victory to his allies and was chronicled by the sages and the storytellers. Last seen more than a century ago, the fallen Loremaster rarely performs such flamboyant rescues anymore. He is no less concerned with the fate of the Dain Sædhu, but his labors are harnessed to the people as a whole rather than to individuals.

Unlike Pserchia Qæa, Jaizel intends that the strict hierarchy governing the Ishru and their subordinates be retained intact along with the imprisoning forces of the sky. These constraints must endure another millennia while the Ishru attain full maturity, since their transformation is crucial to the feasibility of their release from Gethæna. Born in a time before the coming of the Unlife, Jaizel holds old-fashioned ideas about the nature of good and evil. He believes that the struggle enmeshing all of creation is one in which Light faces Dark. The Unlife is merely one of the evils harnessed by Shadow. And the actions of the immature Ishru are another which Jaizel refuses to risk inflicting on the surface lands of Kulthea.

This semantic heresy, more than his actions in Gethæna, earned Jaizel his dismissal from the ranks of the Loremasters, an organization that normally grants considerable autonomy to its members. Contrasted against a world view in which all of Creation is pitted against ultimate destruction, the goal of the Unlife, Jaizel's opinions seemed not only bizarre, but potentially disastrous to the aims of his cohorts. Due to the Council's policy of noninterference, the ex-Loremaster continues to reside in Gethæna, supposedly as an ordinary citizen of the realm. Yet all of his considerable powers are bent toward those plans he held before his indictment, and his influence is likely to be anything but ordinary.

Age: ? (Appears≈35). **Eyes:** Dark Grey. **Hair:** White. **Build:** Muscular. **Height:** 6'8". **Race/Sex:** Dyari/M. **Skin:** Tanned. **Demeanor:** Varied, whatever will best serve his purpose. **Dress:** Quilted white cotton tunic, white suede leggings, white boots, white silk cloak, mantle made from the pelt of a white panther or white caftan and soft ankle boots. **True Attitude:** Compassionate, over-responsible. **Home:** Tælethrand in Gethæna.

Hits: 110. **Melee:** 85bs/90MA. **Missile:** 85cp.

AT(DB): 1(-110). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 300.

Lvl: 25. **Profession:** Monk. **Stats:** SD-87; Co-95; Ag-99; Me-87; Re-76; St-98; Qu-100; Pr-100; In-93; Em-100. **AP:** 93.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ± 5 , Climb 50, Ride 50, Swim 50, DTraps 20, PLocks 20, S&H 50, Perc 90, Strength 70, Speed 70, Balance 70, Landing 70, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Dyar 10, Erlin 9, Iylar 9, Rhaya 8, Rhiani 7, Shay 10, Uluka 10, Enris-Sokal 10, Iruaric 7, Aludos 8, Runes 30, St&W 30, Acrobat 50, Act 120, AnimalH 40, Cook 50, Dive 15, FAid 90, Fletch 50, Forag 40, Math 20, Med 20, Music 50, Nav 20, PSpeak 50, Rope 20, Row 20, Sail 20, Sed 50, Signal 20, Sing 20, StarG 20, Subdue 90, Track 50, Trade 50, Trick 20, TumbL 50, WeaW 50.

Spells: Monk's Bridge, Body Reins, Monk's Sense, Body Renewal to his level. To 10th level: Unbarring Ways, Detecting Ways.

Sword: +30 bastard sword, of *Slaying Nuld*.

Composite Bow: +20.

Bracers: +15 OB.

Cloak: White silk; +25 DB; *Invisibility to 1'* 6x/day.

Rularon Headband: +50 against Mentalism RRs, detects invisible at will, acts as a helm.

PSERCHIA QÆA

One of the Panthii, a dwindling people possessing lifespans of 1000 years or more, Pserchia Qæa moves with a grace unrivaled by those of lesser races. She is a tall, slender woman with a banner of green-gold hair streaming from her proud head. She often wears willow green to match the color of her observant eyes. Mastery of both the Essence and the sword is hers, yet she seldom employs these skills. Secrecy and discretion combined with the precise placement of knowledge among those whom she must manipulate (to improve a culture's health) are her tools.

Originally a young Navigator of the Ovain Talunea, Pserchia held a low position in the hierarchy of power. All assignments involving travel to the most ill-favored places within the guild's territory came to her, including those involving Gethæna. The clients wishing transport to the underearth realm were few, but Pserchia developed a fondness for the gem-like kingdom and its fabulous inhabitants. Years later, one among the elite of the Ovain Talunea, Pserchia reserved journeys to Gethæna for herself alone, refusing to share its pleasures with her cohorts.

Later still, after the Wars of Dominion, Pserchia left the Ovain Talunea. She was made a Loremaster. Victory over the Unlife had proved costly to both the peoples and cultures of Kulthea and their guardians; the ranks of the Loremasters were thin. Yet their labors were needed at this time more than ever before. Special policies developed to cover the emergency, together with Pserchia's expertise on the Gethænan situation, motivated the Loremasters to bring the ex-Navigator into their ranks.

Pserchia frequents the courts of the Ishru, where her low profile allows her to move unhindered in a search for information. The rebel Eh'taza have been her primary focus, along with forming an accurate assessment of the character of each grand duke. Like Jaizel and the Nictum Aureate, she believes that Gadrel and Satarchian remain the sole obstacles to releasing the Ishru from their prison. Unlike Jaizel, she hopes to find a method to effect their transformation more quickly than the millennium of further imprisonment that he prescribes. However, the creation of the Narsirabæn and the Heresia Combata's plans for their use have changed her timetable from years to months.



PSERCHIA QÆA

Age: ? (Appears=28). **Eyes:** Green. **Hair:** Greenish gold. **Build:** Slight. **Height:** 5'7". **Race/Sex:** Panthë/F. **Skin:** Tanned. **Demeanor:** Nonchalant. **Dress:** Supple green hose, low boots, a pleated tunic whose folds sport embroidered willow leaves and fronds, a loose belt of silver about her hips, a collar of silver set with pale jade, a jade clip securing her braided hair, and a slim broadsword with a malachite pommel or a willow green caftan and soft ankle boots. **True Attitude:** Compassionate, practical. **Home:** Currently Tælethrand in Gethæna.

Hits: 85. **Melee:** 100bs. **Missile:** 70sl.

AT(DB): 1(-65). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 216.

Lvl: 18. **Profession:** Mentalist. **Stats:** SD-85; Co-94; Ag-98; Me-88; Re-89; St-99; Qu-100; Pr-102; In-102; In-91; Em-93. **AP:** 92.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ± 1 , DSpell 50, Climb 50, Ride 40, Swim 40, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 40, Perc 45, Speed 35, Landing 35, Ægron 8, Hæsig 8, Varnese 7, Erlin 6, Rhaya 7, Rhiani 6, Shay 9, Iruaric 3, Logos 7, Runes 75, St&W 75, Acrobat 30, Act 50, AnimalH 30, Cook 5, Dance 30, Dive 30, FAid 75, Forag 50, GambL 5, Math 20, Med 50, Music 50, Nav 90, PSpeak 50, Row 30, Sail 50, Sed 50, Signal 30, Sing 30, Ski 20, StarG 50, Subdue 50, Track 30, Trade 30, Trick 20, TumbL 20, WeaW 30.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 18. Directed Spell OB: 68. All Base Mentalism lists, all Base Navigator list, Delving, Cloaking, Damage Resistance, Attack Avoidance, Self Healing, Mind's Door, and Detections to her level. To 10th level: Shifting, Movement, Speed.

Compass: The spyglass compass of the Ovain Talunea.

Sword: +25 broadsword, detects illusion at will.

Sling: +30.

Collar: acts as a helm, +15 to all RRs, x3 PP multiplier.

Belt: *Invisibility 1' R* 5x/day.

Hair Clip: +20 DB.

3 THE NAVIGATORS

Two guilds of Navigators handle most travel to Gethæna, although a client who visits the underearth realm as one stop among many keeps his original guide, whether that individual is one of these two guilds or not, as is customary. The Yja Inrelu carry travelers to Gethæna less frequently than their partner guild, the Ovain Talunea, who provide the bulk of the transportation.

THE OVAIN TALUNEA

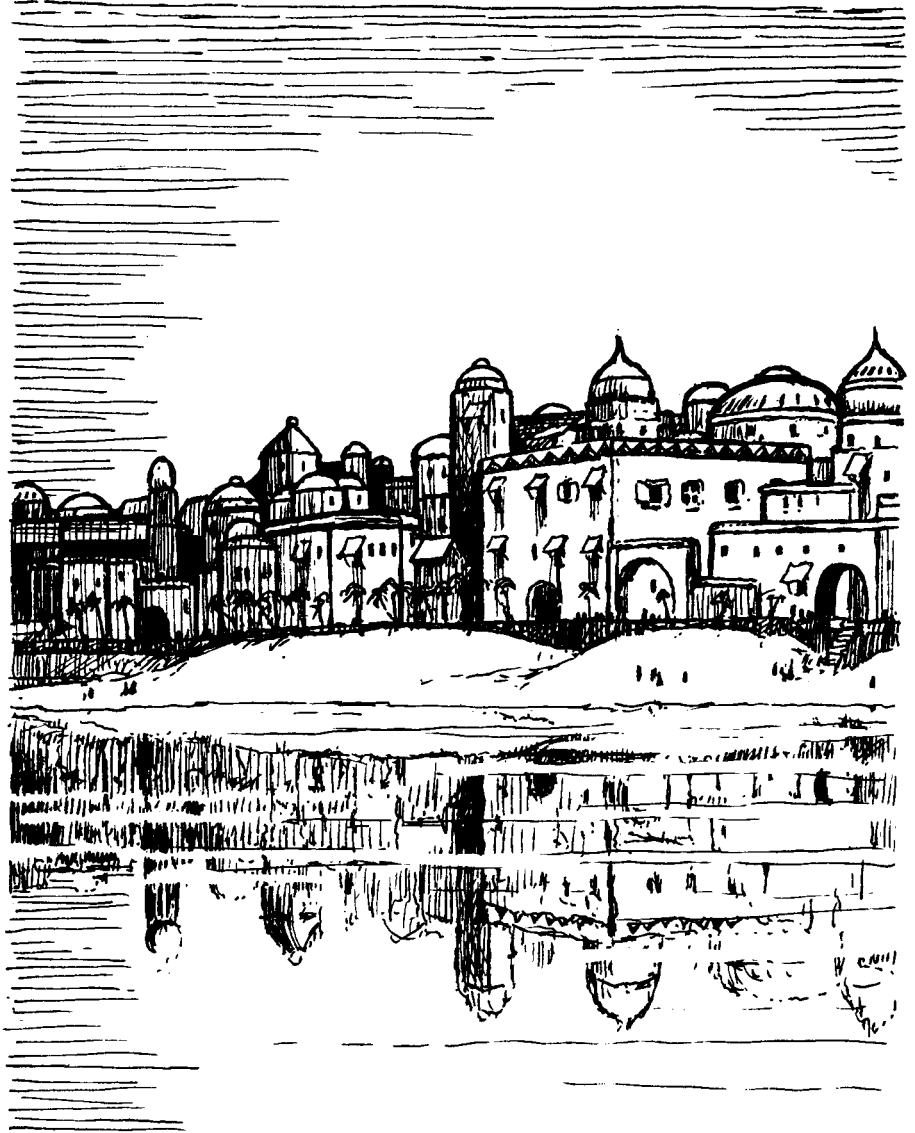
This Guild of Navigators allows both men and elves within its membership. More congenial than most, they will converse politely with clients on any number of subjects, avoiding the mention of only professional matters. The insignia of the Ovain Talunea, a silver sun, appears in miniature on the grass green tunics that serve as uniforms. The Compass carried by each member resembles a small spyglass covered in moss green leather. One anomaly, seldom noticed, occurs in the lenses which are faceted gemstones rather than smoothly ground crystal or glass. The Ovain Talunea often gaze through their Compasses, but the sights they see remain unknown to outsiders, none of whom have been granted the privilege of viewing these wonders.

The Ovain Talunea have the central desert lands of Uj under their jurisdiction for a large portion of the year. The reality that underearth Gethæna is located within this area is largely ignored by them. The Loremasters have subtly reinforced this policy, desiring the isolation of this troubled realm from the rest of the world. Few Navigators will undertake a journey below.

THE YJA INRELU

The Yja Inrelu accept only persons whose innate character displays extreme reserve and cold hostility. Rigorous screening procedures eliminate applicants with even the slightest tendency to warmth or the offering of unasked and uncompensated help. Members of the Yja Inrelu navigate Kulthea superbly, but grant no favors and perform no deeds outside the strict confines of

their job responsibilities. Their insignia is a silver cloak pin in the shape of a serpent devouring its own tail. The pin secures the purple cloaks that are the Yja Inrelu uniform. The Yja Inrelu compass is a flat, clear disk inside of which flows an oily, iridescent liquid that continually changes color.



STONDEPIN



· PART VII ·
CONFRONTING THE TORTURER



HE WALL WAS TOO HIGH TO SEE OVER. PEATH SCOWLED.

He was certain something evil was happening on the other side. And he intended to do something about it.

Setting his jaw, the mage reached for a handhold in the cracks between the unmortared stone blocks. Before he transferred his weight, something jogged his elbow. He nearly shouted—which would have betrayed his presence. “Charón steal your brains for food,” he hissed, turning.

A huge lion, its shoulder as high as Peath’s chin, paced next to the wall. An unconscious rider was belted to the mount’s saddle. But Caidh, nearby with a grin on his face, received all of his twin brother’s astonished attention.

“What in Orhan’s grace are you doing here?”

“I just won an argument with a Navigator.” Caidh smirked. “His superiors required that he bring us to the very nearest healer in Gethæna. They said he could always have checked with the guild if he didn’t know of any nearer than Kaitaine. I guess this house must be even closer than Tangeval. He had to refund most of my gold, too.”

“Never mind all that. I mean: how did you get here in the first place? You weren’t having any luck binding Demons.”

“I succeeded.” Caidh paused. “I’ll tell you the story later. I’ve got to find a healer for Hæn here. He’s in a bad way.”

Peath grabbed his arm. “Caidh, you won’t find one here. Listen.”

A child’s sobs could be heard and a man’s voice. “Ah, the tears mingle with the blood. Exquisite. Perfection itself. One more caress with the dagger across your shoulder, my sweet, and then another.”

Caidh stared at Peath, forgetting his intent to balk his brother in any and all undertakings. He murmured: “Don’t just stand there. Come on! We’ve got to do something.” He cupped his hands to boost his twin over the wall, and Peath lifted his left foot into their clasp.



This scenario provides the PCs with their first game time encounter with one of the Ishru. Confronting Gadrel should give them more than just an intellectual understanding of the cruelty characteristic of the Torturer's actions. Certainly, it will be hard for them to rescue a kidnapped child without then doing more to end the menace that hangs over every Dain Sædhun family.

1 THE TALE

Centuries ago, when the Ishru engaged with more vigor in warfare against one another, Gadrel and Lucibel allied themselves against Satarchian in a particularly virulent campaign directed against the Adversary's person. For five years, the beleaguered prince spent more time dead than alive. With each return of body and spirit to familiar haunts, Satarchian would encounter Gadrel or Lucibel or a trap of their devising. The two allies were kept very busy, but not so occupied that they found no time for other pursuits.

Lucibel was indulging a predilection for excessive romantic melancholy that involved hopeless love, lace-edged handkerchiefs tucked close to his heart, and much sighing. At first, he confined the new hobby to the Taza forming his court. But these individuals had sought his favor too long to exhibit really solid resistance to their master's advances. Lucibel soon looked elsewhere for his amusement. His fancy lit upon a Dain Sædhun woman dwelling in Stondepin.

She was beautiful, possessing smooth, creamy skin, a face alight with joy, and hands whose gestures recalled the gentle flutter of a butterfly's wings. Nulænu also belonged to a very unusual tædhi. Composed of solely herself and one man, Ræmir, the couple remained devoted exclusively to one another. Nulænu was pregnant with their second child when Lucibel first noticed her and began to court her. Motivated initially by his desire to avenge thwarted love, the Ishru thought Nulænu should prove an ideal subject for his experiment.

Unlike most Dain Sædhun women, she did not react in fear to Ishrun attention, retaining her poise and grace despite the inherent danger in the situation. With kind, but resolute, firmness, Nulænu denied Lucibel any hope of romantic consummation while extending her warmest friendship. With Ræmir's support, she included him in the merry amusements that took place in the quiet of kharufier in the tædhi's courtyard, went for long rambles with the prince across the grasslands just outside the city walls, and listened sympathetically to his frustration with his way of life. For the first time in his history, the Ishru could rest secure in the disinterested affection of another. His fits of pretended melancholy decreased in frequency and then ceased altogether as Lucibel forgot his affectations and pretension under the sunny attention from a new friend. Unfortunately, his prosecution of the war on Satarchian also faltered.

Gadrel had initially watched Lucibel's gyrations through his Taza and subsequent desperate resolve to focus on a Dain Sædhun woman with much laughter and vicarious delight. Here was a new game that promised entertainment that would endure. Joining Lucibel in the spirit of the thing, Gadrel too approached Nulænu. Yet, to him, she responded with a steadfast reserve that seemed cold when compared to the gaiety she demonstrated toward Lucibel. Angry, but fascinated by the role of rejected rival, Gadrel continued to seek Nulænu's affections. She never granted them, and Gadrel's ambivalent amusement turned to bitter jealousy. He determined to win her love, if it were the last deed he ever accomplished.

Lucibel warned him away, but this only fueled Gadrel's rage. Seriously alarmed at the possible consequences that might accrue to his human friend, Lucibel dropped his vendetta against Satarchian altogether to concentrate with Ræmir on protecting Nulænu against her infuriated suitor. The task was an impossible one, requiring unbroken vigilance and supreme cunning. Whenever Lucibel broke his vigil or incorrectly guessed Gadrel's next move, Nulænu paid for his mistake. Gadrel's behavior grew increasingly malicious; the gifts of fruits and flowers had changed to verbal cruelties and eventually led to physical abuse. Nulænu's health began to suffer, and she died in childbirth.

Lucibel never forgave Gadrel for his friend's death, and his enmity runs deep to this day. Yet, Gadrel's hatred runs equally deep. His ally had betrayed the unspoken creed of the Ishru: inflict pain lest the pain of existence inflict itself on you. And a mere mortal had resisted his charm so thoroughly as to not even perceive it. Gadrel's bitterness towards Nulænu would find expression in hostilities against all her descendants.

The story has been forgotten among the Dain Sædhu, but its ramifications survive untarnished by time. On mornings when Gadrel needs a little pick-me-up or evenings when he desires some easy entertainment, he visits the children's children's children of Nulænu and tortures them according to his fancy.

Fæna experienced Gadrel's wrath in her childhood, when the Ishru removed the girl to his retreat on the plains below his castle for a month. There, she witnessed the mental and physical torture that the Lord of Twin Aspects so enjoyed inflicting on his most intimate friends. Fæna herself remained physically unscathed, but deeply troubled by the scenes she was compelled to watch. Following the delivery of a comprehensive statement upon her return to her tædhi, she never again referred to the events that transpired under Gadrel's twisted supervision.

Of course, the story did not end there, although Fæna tried to pretend that it had. As an adult, she formed her own *tædhi* with three of her closest friends: Bron, a scholarly historian who continually questioned all his acquaintance concerning the details of their interactions with the Ishru, his area of expertise; Mhora, a vivacious woman who produced and directed theatrical compositions; and Pær, a serene artisan whose woodworking exhibited something more than beauty, perhaps spiritual enlightenment, perhaps merely love for each moment of life and experience. The four partners had three children: Arzhæna, Lænu, and Wilæs.

Arzhæna's thirteenth birthday was made memorable by the kidnapping of her younger brother. Four men, masked and hooded in white, took him from the flower garden outside his home while he plucked a bouquet intended for Arzhæna's pleasure. Lænu, but five years old, cried every day for the next year, missing Wilæs. And Arzhæna turned pale at the news, fearing it was somehow her fault. But Fæna said not a word. The ring found in the garden where her son was stolen told her all she needed to know. She had seen the lithe, metallic form of a lizard with baleful yellow eyes wrapped around a man's finger before, for a month of her childhood. Fæna ate nothing but bread and water for five years. She grew very thin, but volunteered no explanations for her behavior.

The soldiers sent after Wilæs followed the tracks left by his abductors easily, but these ended abruptly amidst the plains. A more scattered search turned up nothing, and the boy was never seen again. Yet, neither did the tale end here. The *tædhi* gained a new partner, Nenæ, a sculptor whose fountains graced many of the plazas of Stondepin. She gave birth to a daughter, Chæru, whose laughter brought cheer and merriment to the house again. At Chæru's fourth birthday, Stavin, a boyishly optimistic city planner, joined the *tædhi*, and it seemed the old troubles were over, to be forgotten forever.

The *Tædhi* Formed by Nulænu's Descendant

Fæna = Bron = Mhora = Pær = Nenæ = Stavin
 Arzhæna Wilæs Lænu Chæru

Yet, the enmity of the Ishru endures beyond the scope of man. Gadrel struck again, soon after Chæru's sixth birthday and her beginning studies under her first teacher. The little girl was removed from her bed during *kharufier* by the Ishru in his feminine aspect. Like Fæna, Chæru has been taken to Gadrel's retreat on the plains. Unlike Fæna, she will be tortured directly by the Ishrun prince himself, in a cold fury stemming from memories stirred by a recent encounter with Lucibel and a dream beheld while sleeping.

2·THE NPCs

The following text details the individuals involved in the preceding tale as well as those who have a part in the adventure that arises from it. Any of the Dain Sædhun characters might easily and enjoyably be converted into player characters. Indeed, it is recommended that at least one of these NPCs be employed as a PC: Arzhæna, Lænu, or Stavin being ideal for this purpose. Additionally, one of the PCs should be the descendant of Mhari Ridæn, a great great grandson or granddaughter. Kaia kus'Urnuinen, described below, is of Mhari's lineage, but the GM or the player may choose to create another character inheriting the *Essænce*-lord's bloodline.

FÆNA

Time has brought dignity to Fæna's countenance. Her features are severe, and grey streaks her black hair, but the sad wisdom in her eyes encourages new acquaintances to trust her. She is a reserved woman, and feels her silence concerning her previous dealings with Gadrel is to blame for her *tædhi*'s current afflictions. She believes Wilæs is dead and holds herself responsible as his murderer. Yet, even the loss of her son did not induce her to retell the horrors she witnessed in Gadrel's company. And thus she holds herself doubly responsible for Chæru's abduction. She believes she will never see the little girl again, but says nothing, not wishing to dampen the *tædhi*'s determination to find and rescue Chæru. She knows that when they fail, the depression each felt at Wilæs' disappearance will return. She secretly plans to take her own life when Chæru is given up as permanently lost. The successful rescue of the child, should it occur, will change Fæna forever. The story of her own abduction as a child will come pouring out, for the first time as an adult, and its

power over Fæna's viewpoint will diminish. She will forgive herself for Wilæs' death, experiencing a newfound peace of mind.

BRON

Bron is a man of sorrows too. He has lost a son. And most recently, a daughter. Unlike Fæna, his *ræliru* (Æ. "Wife-mate"), he has not lost faith. He hopes to recover Chæru, although he knows that the odds are against it. He is a silent, majestic man, full bearded, a true patriarch. He radiates quiet strength, and his presence fills the room. A stranger would never know that he is unable to walk until he wheeled his specially made chair to move into another room. He is a cripple due to a wasting disease that withered his legs. The loss, along with his other losses, has not embittered Bron, but has given him a keener appreciation for those blessings he still enjoys. Now, of course, he is gravely worried, little given to mirth; but times of joy see him jovial and full of humor. Memories of Wilæs are particularly vivid in his thoughts right now, and he grieves the loss of his son while working for the recovery of a daughter and fearing her death.



NOKOR ÆNAN

MHORA

Possessed of a sharp tongue, an ascorbic sense of humor, and a vivid enjoyment of the ridiculous, Mhora's laughter has become brittle in the current crisis. She continues to crack jokes, at which only Stavín chuckles, but her eyes betray the worry that haunts her. The rehearsals for the play currently being readied by her for performance have been temporarily suspended. Mhora will not return to the practice rooms at the theater until Chæru is rescued or despaired of.

No grey streaks Mhora's blue-black hair which she wears in a braid pinned around her head. Her beauty, although angular like Fæna's, is founded on larger bones and stronger features. While Fæna might be compared with the delicate bloom of the meadowland laceflower, Mhora possesses the more vibrant looks of the Ɔothouse bird-of-heaven.

Even amidst her anxiety and grief over Chæru's abduction, Mhora retains considerable charm of demeanor. When the rescue party is assembled, her words will instill some vigor and spirit into its members' hearts as they depart Stondepin. Should some of the group prove reluctant to undertake the task, Mhora's pleas will persuade them, if anything can influence the shirkers, to adopt a more courageous viewpoint.

PÆR

Of all six partners in the tædhi, Pær alone has retained his serenity. He continues to wield chisel and file in his workshop and to smile his slow smile when someone he loves enters the room. He has done nothing to facilitate the rescue of Chæru, yet his stolid strength anchors the actions of his Liru (Æ. "Life-mates"). Bron, Fæna, and Mhora each come separately to his chamber to sit quietly in the peace that radiates from Pær. Nenæ slips in to share her struggles to support Fæna's spirits while keeping faith that her little girl will return safely. And Stavín seeks the woodworker's praise for all the arrangements he continues to make for Chæru's rescue. Pær himself confides in no one, but he has ceased work on the cabinet commissioned by the Alcald to carve a small sculpture from a block of imported birch. Each day the features of the piece become clearer, closer in resemblance to Chæru.

Pær is a short (5'10"), stocky man with curling, red hair and vivid blue eyes—one of the rare inheritors of this coloring among the chestnut tones of the Dain Sædhu. His gaze is open and steady, like the movements of his hands, and he speaks little. Yet, after periods when his friends and family have passed through laughter or grief or heartpounding anxiety, the output from Pær's workshop almost doubles for a time.

NENÆ

Young and graceful, with a musical voice, Nenæ does not understand the grim sorrow displayed by Fæna. It frightens her and threatens the optimism she holds regarding her daughter's safe return. Refusing to acknowledge that she may never see Chæru again, Nenæ plans with Stavín each morning the next steps to be taken for the little girl's rescue. The rest of the day she bakes cookies, rubs Fæna's tense shoulders, works in the garden, and tells Fæna about the interesting personalities she has met in the course of designing the city's water sculptures. Nenæ is not currently involved in a fountain project and plans to continue idle for several more weeks to allow for some uninterrupted time with Chæru when the child is recovered from her abductor.

Slim and supple, Nenæ has the nut brown skin and chestnut hair typical of the Dain Sædhu. Her brown eyes hold a special sweetness, and her gait and way of gesturing are unusually smooth. These qualities create the illusion of beauty where only an ordinary attractiveness is present.

STAVIN

Boyishly lanky and full of energetic eagerness, Stavín charged for the front door when told that Chæru had been kidnapped. He was ready to pursue her abductor alone to bring the child back home. Fæna and Pær restrained him long enough to ensure that his successful escape from the house took him to the city guard rather than out Stondepin's gates. On his way there, Stavín encountered the travelers from Kulthea's surface, and, mindful of Fæna's criticism of the local watch, hired them to rescue Chæru. He intends to accompany the adventurers, despite his tædhi's resistance. Only the strangers' veto will keep the young city planner in Stondepin.

Stavín is tall, excessively thin, and unable to keep still. Sweeping gestures with his arms, vigorous pacing, and an expressive voice characterize his conversation. Behind his headlong enthusiasm, an accurate eye for detail ensures that Stavín's plans and actions are effective. Being nearsighted, he wears spectacles which he frequently loses amidst his kinetic movements. His straight, brown hair, although short, still flops into his face and must be brushed aside, usually to the detriment of the aforementioned spectacles. He wears a dahlusa rather than a noru, but even this more practical garment seems to become caught on door knobs, drawer handles, and other odd protrusions.

Age: 32. **Eyes:** Brown. **Hair:** Mouse Brown. **Build:** Gangly. **Height:** 6'3". **Race/Sex:** Dain Sædhu/M. **Skin:** Tanned. **Demeanor:** Enthusiastic. **Dress:** White silk dahlusa. **True Attitude:** Thorough. **Home:** Stondepin.

Hits: 24. **Melee:** 45sc. **Missile:** 45cp.

AT(DB): 1(-5). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 5. **PP:** 0.

Lvl: 1. **Profession:** Rogue. **Stats:** SD-69; Co-99; Ag-97; Me-78; Re-91; St-99; Qu-84; Pr-54; In-61; Em-48. **AP:** 84.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±3, Climb 10, Ride 10, Swim 10, DTraps 10, PLocks 10, S&H 15, Perc 15, Speed 10, Balance 10, Ægron 8, Hæsig 3, Varnese 4, St&W 5, AnimalH 5, Cook 50, FAid 5, Math 50.

Scimitar: Borrowed from a friend, +5 (non-magical).

Composite Bow: Borrowed from a friend, +5 (non-magical).



AN IRNWOOD

ARZHÆNA

Arzhæna and Wilæs were inseparable as children despite the age difference, five years, between them. They shared a plot in the tædhi's garden, planting ugly Terebizan artichokes to satisfy Wilæs' curiosity alongside the delicate meadow roses that delighted his sister's love of beauty. They roamed the city together in their leisure hours, Wilæs engaging passersby in conversation while Arzhæna regarded street scenes intently, memorizing them for the sketchbook she kept at home. They protested so vociferously when Wilæs began his studies under a teacher other than his sister's that their parents changed the arrangement, allowing the siblings to learn together.

Arzhæna enjoyed excellent health as a child except for the blinding headaches that occasionally immobilized her for several days in a row. As she grew older, flashes of light and color enlivened her darkened vision at these times. Eventually the strange chromatic display evolved into dreamlike images of people and events. The girl's tædhi were quite familiar with her disabling migraines, but she kept her visions secret. Some seemed merely the product of fantasy and imagination, while others dramatized events documented in the histories or portrayed scenarios that would come to pass in Gethæna several days later. Arzhæna felt embarrassment concerning her ability to see the future and vaguely responsible. Perhaps the foreseen events would not arise if she did not see them. She tried using will power to suppress the gift, but the visions continued.

Seven days before her thirteenth birthday, Arzhæna beheld a scene in the reflecting pool of the tædhi's courtyard. Her brother Wilæs was plucking a bouquet of meadow roses from the banks of blooms at the back of the house. Three men garbed in white tunics and hose with feathered masks over their faces and another clothed in grey with a velvet mask and a ring in the shape of a lizard vaulted over the embankment and seized the lad. They gagged him, bundled him in a cloak, and carried him away at a run. Arzhæna gave a sharp cry as she toppled into the water. Much fussing ensued when Pær dragged her out of the pond for Fæna and Mhora to dry her off and demand an explanation. Arzhæna glibly replied that she'd been watching a hawk circling in the sky while walking across the courtyard and that her plunge was the result of not watching where she was going. She'd gotten quite good at lying.

However, she refused to leave her room, even on the morning of her birthday, and continually demanded that Wilæs attend her. She was allowed to have her way. Her brother played card games with her from the first watch to the fourth of each kharufræl and catalogued his rock collection through the later watches or told her stories about the people he'd met when the two of them used to roam the city streets together. He displayed amazing patience for a lad his age (8 years), but the prison of Arzhæna's room grew stifling as the days

passed. Wilæs began to wonder if his sister would ever return to her adventurous manner of old. He determined to escape long enough to pick some flowers for Arzhæna's birthday and snuck out while Fæna brought in the "invalid's" luncheon.

Arzhæna's vision proved true, and the boy disappeared while assembling his sister's birthday bouquet. The ring adorning the hand of the kidnapper in grey was found beside the scattered blooms dropped by Wilæs in the struggle. The city guard was called, and Mhora accompanied them on their search for the missing child. Arzhæna refused all sustenance and comfort while the efforts for Wilæs' rescue went forward, creating additional worries for the tædhi. When Wilæs was given up for lost, Fæna called her brother, Dælin, to the girl's bedside.

His tædhi was composed of individuals well versed in the martial arts, the practice of meditation, and the ability to heal by the laying on of hands. His touch calmed the hysterical Arzhæna sufficiently to permit her to tell her uncle of the vision that, in her opinion, had caused Wilæs' abduction. A few calm words pierced her confusion, but Dælin recommended that the girl come to live in his tædhi where she could learn the disciplines that would enable her to better manage her gift. Arzhæna's tædhi agreed with reluctance. They had lost a son and did not wish to lose a daughter as well.

In the years that elapsed before Chæru's abduction, Arzhæna learned better control of both body and mind. Her visions were no longer accompanied by headaches, and she recalled their details more accurately. She could sit in meditation for several watches before wearying, and consistently won the sparring matches held each kharufræl. She continued to blame herself for Wilæs' disappearance, not due to an erroneous belief that she had caused his kidnapping, but because she had not warned anyone of its imminence.

When a messenger brought her news of her little sister's kidnapping, Arzhæna decided she would attend to Chæru's rescue herself. She intends to follow the tracks across the plains of Væshim with the hired adventurers undeterred by any protests from friends or family.

Age: 22. **Eyes:** Hazel. **Hair:** Dark Brown. **Build:** Muscular. **Height:** 5'5". **Race/Sex:** Dain Sædhu/F. **Skin:** Tanned. **Demeanor:** Self-assured. **Dress:** White silk dahlusa. **True Attitude:** Stubborn. **Home:** Stondepin.

Hits: 54. **Melee:** 55katana. **Missile:** 41shuriken.

AT(DB): 1(-66/-38)*. **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 0.

Lvl: 2. **Profession:** Warrior Monk. **Stats:** SD-90; Co-98; Ag-99; Me-77; Re-69; St-83; Qu-99; Pr-61; In-37; Em-44. **AP:** 79.

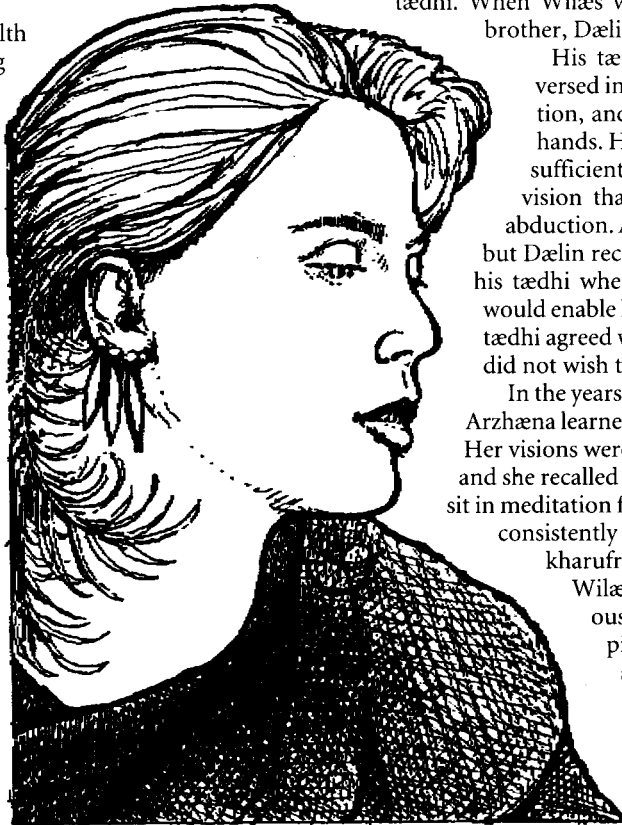
Skill Bonuses: Tonfa 36, MA Sw&T-1 46, MA S&T-2 41, MA S&T-3 41, MA S&T-4 41, MA St-1 36, MA St-2 36, MA St-3 36, MA St-4 36, Climb 34, Ride 20, Swim 5, S&H 30, Perc 21, Strength 12, Speed 27, Ægron 7, Hæsig 4, Varnese 4, Body Damage Stabilization 17, Hostile Environment 5, Iai 41, Ki 22, Med 22, Spatial Awareness 17, Yado 21.

*melee/missile

Katana: Gift from her uncle, well-crafted, non-magical.

Shuriken: Non-magical.

Tonfa: Ironwood, carved by a friend, +5, non-magical.



ARZHÆNA

LÆNU

Inheriting her father's pale skin, copper hair, and vivid blue eyes, as well as his quiet disposition, Lænu usually played alone as a child. Her intense concentration on the layers of a sedimentary rock, the veins of a fallen leaf, or the structure of a bird's feather bored her brother and sister. And her odd questions ("Do you think that the catdoves are gentle because their rage is imprisoned in their feather horns and can't get out?") puzzled or annoyed children of her own age.

Despite her aloof manner, Lænu formed strong bonds of affection to her family. She felt no guilt at Wilæs' abduction, but her grief was strong and lasting. While Fæna and Arzhæna dramatically refused sustenance and comfort, Lænu merely cried. Five years later, when Fæna began to eat food other than bread and water and when Arzhæna was immersed in meditation and kata lore in Dælin's tædhi, Lænu still shed tears each day. She began to wander outside the city walls, finding peace in watching the wind moving the grasses on the plains and ruffling the water in Lake Fomwæn.

Mhora grew concerned about these forays and delivered long lectures on the dangers beyond the confines of Stondepin. Lænu merely nodded and said nothing. The sentani, chipmunks, and grassland thrushes warned her of the approach of Nuld or a gleamtiger, and her newly mastered skill of leaving neither scent nor footprints where she walked ensured her safety.

Soon the time Lænu spent outside the city walls rivaled in number the hours she passed within them. Mhora's scolding peaked with furious words every time she set eyes on her wayward daughter, then decreased and ceased altogether when she realized that nothing she said would change Lænu's predilection for wandering away from the security of town. As tensions within the tædhi eased, Lænu requested and was given permission to spend one kharufier in the wild. She came to no harm, and her explorations in the grasslands eventually troubled her mother little.

One suynwæn, as kharufier gave way to kharufræl, Lænu crouched near a rock, studying the lichens growing on its surface. Nearby, three rabbits emerged from their warren to nibble the grasses near their home. Overhead, a hawk circled, then suddenly plummeted in a steep dive to earth. Lænu glanced back to the rabbits—two were bolting for their holes, but the third, the smallest and lame member of the group, remained frozen in fright. She watched in horrified awe as the bird of prey flashed downward, blood spurted, and the rabbit screamed. The death filled Lænu with a terrible understanding of the fragility of life and the knowledge that she needed to retain the lesson, not in bitterness, but in gratitude for the bounty she received each day.

While the rabbit's corpse still twitched, the hawk transformed into an old man, bending to touch the earth in thanksgiving. Without words, he beckoned to Lænu, bade her share his meal. His name was Byrtænu (Æ. "Bird Walking"), and he taught Lænu the ways of the shaman during the next years. The meaning of different bird songs, the uses of skins and roots, the proper method of fasting, the mystical phrases to be uttered when positioning a snare, and the flowing gestures to be made when closing a sentani's wound or mending a bird's wing were but a sampling of the lore the girl learned.



WILÆS

Byrtænu ended her time as student with the gift of a book and solemn and startling words. "Lænu, sister of the sentani and daughter of the earth, our years together are at an end. The soil, the sky, and your fellows will now teach you the knowledge your youth yet lacks. You must take the stillness and the rhythm of the grasslands into the cities where you will dwell. And we must say a farewell that will span your lifetime.

"When my bones grew old and my spirit ached for the atastazhi beyond the river of light, the springs of the earth told me that one more seeker awaited my presence. I roamed the plains several tens of years before you were born and grew bold enough to venture within my realm. Now my teaching is done, and I bid you joy amidst your suffering, serenity within your pain, and balance when confronted by paradox. Farewell, my friend!"

Even as Lænu started forward to embrace her teacher, Byrtænu's body grew transparent, filled with light, and faded to nothing.

Lænu obeyed Byrtænu's last command. She returned to Stondepin and took work as a guide for travellers journeying between the four Dain Sædhun cities. Partnership with the sandlions came naturally to her, and the shaman's wilderness skills rapidly earned the respect of her comrades. As she made new friends among them and braved the dangers common along the roads, Lænu adopted their casual, workmanlike manners and coarse sense of humor. The beauty and cruel balance of the wild remains in her thoughts, but rarely finds expression in her speech.

The young guide had just returned from a dusty journey to Kangled and was breaking her fast with Mhora when Chæru's abduction was discovered. Like Arzhæna, Lænu will participate in the little girl's rescue, utilizing all her shamanistic powers to ensure its success.

Age: 20. **Eyes:** Blue. **Hair:** Coppery red. **Build:** Lean. **Height:** 5'8". **Race/** **Sex:** Dain Sædhu/F. **Skin:** Fair. **Demeanor:** Casual, practical. **Dress:** White silk noru. **True Attitude:** Reverence for the natural world. **Home:** Stondepin.

Hits: 30. **Melee:** 25qs. **Missile:** 30sl.

AT(DB): 1(-20). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 6.

Lvl: 3. **Profession:** Animist. **Stats:** SD-37; Co-83; Ag-99; Me-90; Re-44; St-61; Qu-99; Pr-77; In-98; Em-69. **AP:** 72.

Skill Bonuses: Climb 10, Ride 50, Swim 10, S&H 10, Perc 10, Ægron 6, Hæsig 2, Varnese 2, Runes 25, St&W 25, Channel 40, Cook 10, FAid 25, Forag 10, Music 15, Sing 10, Subdue 5, Track 15, WeaW 5, Wood 5.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 3. Blood Law, Bone Law, Herb Mastery, Nature's Protection, Animal Mastery, Nature's Lore to her level.

Wooden Flute: Carved by Lænu, +5 to musical skills.

Quarterstaff: Made from a sapling ironwood, gift from Brytænu, +5 (non-magical).

Slings: Made by Lænu under Byrtænu's supervision, +5 (non-magical).

CHÆRU

Sunny tempered and full of the joyous sweetness that characterizes her mother, Chæru experienced none of the fears that typically shadow an individual's passage through infancy and childhood. She was frequently willful and stubborn, but always gave in with a laugh when her elders insisted. She didn't like going to bed on time (being around people was too much fun), but she wasn't afraid of the dark. Her sojourn in Gadrel's care has changed all that.

Bleeding from a variety of wounds, some scratches, others deep gouges into her flesh, the child is almost catatonic. She has retreated to an inner room in her mind and no longer heeds the activities occurring in the world around her. Gadrel may damage her body, but he can do no more to her psyche. Initially, Chæru saw the Ishru as another teacher and offered her friendship with customary warmth and gaiety. She felt puzzled when the feminine Gadrel did not respond, but merely carried her onward in silence. Still unworried, Chæru asked questions about where they were going and what they would do there. The Ishru replied, "We march to my Retreat, and you had best stay silent until our arrival." The words were intended to be intimidating, but Chæru was not intimidated. She did, however, recognize Gadrel as a force to be reckoned with and made no more inquiries.

In the bedroom of the Ishru's Retreat, the female Gadrel was met by her male counterpart. The pair drifted into a casual embrace that blurred and pulsed as the two separate entities became one. The Lord of Twin Aspects had fused his dual identities and was ready for business. Chæru watched with interested eyes. She had never witnessed anything of the kind in Stondepin, and these novel events were immensely exciting. Gadrel picked up one of his whips, and still she was not afraid. Only when the sharp bits of flint knotted in the weapons coils slammed into her stomach did she feel alone and small and helpless.

When her rescuers arrive, Chæru will remain completely unresponsive. She is not unconscious, merely withdrawn. Whether or not Gadrel successfully delivers his death blow, she will not speak or make eye contact until waking from the sleep that Jaizel induces after healing her wounds. The minute her eyes open, tears and pleas to not be left alone characterize all her utterances. If asked why, she will look away and beg for a promise from Arzhæna, Lænu, or Stavín to never go away from her. "Please may I stay with you always? Please? Don't say no! Please?" The change in demeanor should be quite a shock to those of her tædhi. Jaizel will make the most headway in inducing her to talk about what happened in Gadrel's company. As she talks about it and the things she now fears, the little girl will recover more of her sturdy cheer.

WILÆS

Demonstrating unusual patience and tact with people as a boy, Wilæs might one day have become Alcald of the Dain Sædhu. His skin was pale, like Pær's, but his eyes and hair were dark. He was small for his age, but too well liked to provoke the wrath of bullies. His abduction by Gadrel severed him permanently from Dain Sædhu society.

Held captive initially by sorcery, Wilæs served as the Ishru's pageboy. He ran errands, carried messages, and spied on the Taza at Gadrel's request. He hoped that when his time of servitude was done, he might return home. Invisible bonds prevented his physical escape, but memories nourished his heart amidst the cruelties and spite rampant in Gadrel's court. As Wilæs grew older, the boy's responsibilities broadened. Playing the lute, serving sweetmeats, holding a bloodied dagger, or summoning Eh'taza to remove a mangled corpse became duties performed by Wilæs while Gadrel combined pain and torture with pleasure in the unique blend of entertainment the prince preferred. Less easily overwhelmed than his mother Fæna, Wilæs retained his inner strength while watching the obscenities that took place during his servitude under the Ishru.

Only when he became a victim himself did his psyche break. Summoned to Gadrel's library after the prince had spent several hours reading, Wilæs found a marble dissecting table in the chamber's center when he arrived. Four Taza clamped the youth onto the chill, white surface and adjusted the light illuminating the area. No sedative or anæsthetic herbs were applied. Gadrel surgically removed each organ from the boy's body and replaced it with one taken from another victim. The pain grew with each cut of the tiny knife wielded by the prince. A haze of red agony spread across Wilæs' vision, deepening into a black silhouette of thorns. It went on and on; Wilæs forgot where he was and who he served. He forgot the joys and sorrows of his childhood. He forgot the years with Arzhæna. And, last, Wilæs forgot his name.

He continued to dwell in the court of the Ishru, but Gadrel ceased to use his services. Assigned to tasks by the Taza who took pity on the disfigured youth, Wilæs turned blank eyes to his surroundings. His skin was a web of thin, white scars, and his mind was that of a two year old child. Gadrel had destroyed all promise once present in this Dain Sædhu. Only the power of a Loremaster or an Essænce-lord might restore him to his full faculties.

KAIA KUS'URNUINEN

Mhari Ridæn never gave birth to a son or a daughter, but the science and sorcery mastered by Stelar Ahkail's followers ensured that she had descendants nonetheless. When the opponents to the worldslayers sensed that one of their most powerful warriors was lost to them, a period of mourning immobilized the community for a time. Stelar and Liræn grieved their daughter's death, and many others mourned the loss of a friend. Mhari would not be forgotten soon.

When rational thought and action again became possible, the mourners returned to their laboratories to nurture cultures of cells. These batches of genetic material would eventually become Mhari Ridæn's children. Eight sons and daughters survived to maturity, and their deeds on the surface of Kulthea form the backbone of many legends. But this story focuses on the actions of the youngest. Named Kalimira, she settled among the mountain people of the Chukus Stani (Bh. "Highest Peaks"). As the histories relate, the sixth Dragonlord, I'hanir Pran'jaib, arose in their midst, seeking to change the peaceful herders' society into an army of warriors who would further the Sable Drake's desires for world domination. Kalimira fought against the dark seeds of hatred and malice that rest in every man's heart and whose violence I'hanir Pran'jaib's words sought to inflame. Kalimira prevailed at great cost. The people of the Chukus Stani retained their traditional pacifistic outlook, enraging the Dragonlord by their stubborn resistance and provoking his decision to exterminate them since he could not seduce them to his own ends. Kalimira met I'hanir Pran'jaib in single combat and lost her life while taking his.

Like her mother, Kalimira left many mourners behind. Unlike Mhari Ridæn, her sons and daughters had been nurtured in her own womb. One of her great great granddaughters, Urniunen (Bh. "Dawnmoon"), a subtle leader among the Chukus Dy'evruinus, gave birth to Kaia. The little girl was raised by her uncle, Dhuri Kus'ti, the clan's shaman. Unlike most men, who followed the sheep herds from pasture to pasture on long circuits that permitted a visit in their wife's house but once every six months, the shaman possessed his own household and dwelt there year round. Taught from her cradle the mysteries entwined in charms of braided goathair and bone beads as well as the power behind ritualistic dance, Kaia knew from the beginning that she was different from the other children of her Askusa (Bh. "Village" or "Hamlet"). The knowledge did not make her arrogant or bitter, since her temperament was naturally sunny. Rather she took special joy in the simplicities around her—the sunset, the washing of crockery, the stitching of hides, the games of Malupush, and the laughter of friends. Her uncle told the young girl of her lineage on the eve of her Chaluruka (Bh. "Coming of Age Ceremony"). While the drums beat, the elders chanted, and the shaman danced, Kaia pondered his words to her.

"You are one of the Chukus Dy'evruinus and you are not. Your nurture proclaims you of the mountains, but your blood is greater than ours. And blood will call to blood. Yours came from the veins of Urniunen who is descended from Kalimira, Slayer of the Wardragon I'hanir Pran'jaib. And Kalimira was born of one greater than herself, the Essænce-lord Mhari Ridæn, who wrestled with the Khalidreth Gha'ib (Bh. "Soul Destroyer" or "Unlife") itself. Blood will call to blood, and yours will draw you far from us. Love us fiercely, my beloved, for the time of loving is short. Your destiny lies with another people in another land among fear and darkness. Bear it well, Daughter of the Dawnmoon."

Kaia lived among the Chukus Dy'evruin another five years, learning her uncle's lore, assuming the management of his household as the aging nursemaid who had cared for her as an infant grew more senile, and laughing joyously with her closest friends. And the time was short as Dhuri Kus'ti had prophesied. Kaia knew her destiny was upon her when the strange humming throb that beat at her wrists, her ankles, and her throat spread throughout her entire body. She was not sick. Her blood was calling her deep into the earth.

A pack on her back and a grievous farewell behind her, Kaia descended into the limestone caverns where she had explored as a child. Through the twisting passage named Ah'marinar (Bh. "Mother's Way"), past the cavern hung with curtains, tapestries, and tassels of limestone, beside the mirror-still pond with gemstones in its depths, and through the massive columns of the Gh'uri I'hanib (Bh. "Last Cavern") she walked. Now she had come to unknown and unexplored hollows beneath the mountains. In them, she found darkness and fear, but always pressed onward, down and down through twisting crannies and crevices. Days elapsed, then weeks, then months, and at last a year.

She came to the Ash Lairs. Traveling was easier—often over a smooth-paved avenue through arching galleries of stone. Yet she was no longer unopposed by enemies. A clan of deformed Troglis attacked, spurred by a desire for her well-crafted overland possessions. She eluded them only to be surprised by a monster resembling a giant grasshopper—a rogue Krylite. It ignored her.

Soon after this encounter, Kaia emerged from the earth through an arch of black, volcanic rock. A plain of long, silvery grasses stretched before her, and a hot, brassy sky glared above her head. Though its name was not known to her, the Daughter of the Dawnmoon had arrived in Gethæna at Pæl Dhæk's call. She started across the grasslands of Væshim and soon encountered Gadrel's Retreat. Were these the people among whom her destiny would unfold?

The Ishru was outside in his garden, lounging beside a bleeding little girl. He was resting from his labors as a torturer. And Chæru's rescue party approached in the distance. The scene was set. The story that will follow belongs to the players and their decisions.

Age: 19. **Eyes:** Dark Blue. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Wiry. **Height:** 5'9". **Race/Sex:** Anzeti/F. **Skin:** Tanned. **Demeanor:** Lively. **Dress:** Trapunto coat over belted tunic and skirt, boots. **True Attitude:** Courageous. **Home:** The village Ulmaruska in the Chukus Stani (the mountains in the Spine of Emer just north of the Gap of Uj).

Hits: 33. **Melee:** 30MA. **Missile:** 15da.

AT(DB): 1(-15). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 15. **PP:** 4.

Lvl: 2. **Profession:** Dervish. **Stats:** SD-75; Co-93; Ag-95; Me-75; Re-60; St-90; Qu-96; Pr-93; In-98; Em-86. **AP:** 87.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±2, Climb 12, Ride 17, Swim 12, DTraps 5, S&H 22, Perc 27, Speed 10, Ah'Torinar ("The Tongue's Way") 7, Erlin 4, Shay 5, Runes 10, Channel 15, Attunement 27, Caving 22, Contort 12, Cook 7, Dance 30, Divination 17, FAid 7, Forag 17, Gamb 7, Hypnosis 23, LWork 7, Music 17, Power Perc 15, Rope 7, Symbol Lore 20, Ventriloquism 22.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 3. Fascination Dances, Deadly Dances, Travelling Dances to her level.

Drum: Gift from Kaia's uncle, +5 to Dervish spells.

Dagger: +5, Non-magical.

GADREL

Lucibel ordinarily avoids Gadrel, but the unexpected and gruesome death of a dog belonging to one of his Taza provoked him to visit Nokor Væshim. The Bestower in his feminine aspect received Lucibel with a sweet smile and a hand outstretched for a kiss. Ignoring her invitation, the Lord of Darkness stated his business.

"I prefer not to have you in my realm, but your trespass cannot be prevented. I refuse to have you in my castle. Nokor Ænan is not for your pilfering, and I will enforce my prohibition. Four paws hacked off a canine's legs and stuffed into its apertures is a deed of your design: perverse, cruel, bloody, and grotesque. Such displays displeas me. Stand warned. I require that you correct your behavior."

As Gadrel opened her mouth to utter some witty and wounding retort, Lucibel turned on his heel and departed. He did not expect the Torturer's cooperation, and the statement of his position sufficed. No discussion was necessary. Gadrel yawned, hiding her annoyance, and curled around the pillows of a divan for a nap. Nulænu appeared in her dreams, and the Ishru awoke in a fury. She travelled to Stondepin, removed Chæru from its confines, and began the torture of her victim at her Retreat.

The cruelties inflicted upon Chæru have inflamed rather than dampened the Ishru's rage, and the rescue party will discover him (male and female aspects reintegrated) in the garden gathering inspiration for more painful torture. He will engage Arzhæna, Lænu, or Stavín in dialogue while holding a knife poised above Chæru's heart. The rescuers will discern no buried sense of morality within Gadrel, although his conversation is entirely rational and sane. Attempts to awaken guilt, pity, or the desire to negotiate will amuse him. When the adventurers cease to bandy words and take action, Gadrel will stab Chæru. Still furious, he will turn his anger on himself by stepping undefended into the first blade raised against him, positioning his person such that it will prove a death blow.

BELIAL

Following Gadrel's death, Belial becomes master of the situation. He banishes the Nuld from the garden to make the Dain Sædhu more comfortable, requests Dagon to fetch the lifekeeping herb from the bedroom, and apologizes for Gadrel's behavior profusely. All the while, he works over Chæru's bleeding corpse, doing what he can to minimize the damage done. When Dagon returns with a small, stone pot, Belial uncorks it and applies the paste to Chæru's wounds, then smooths it over her skin, and finally wraps her in a silken quilt. He gives the adventurers instructions on how to reach Jaizel Arbeleth's residence and recommends that they start immediately. Gadrel may return at any time, and the little girl needs healing quickly.

Belial is a member of the Ordæum Novis and exhibits an idealistic viewpoint. A more complete description of Belial's person and character is located in Part V, *The Rebels*.

DAGON

Dagon's civility has none of the menacing edge present in the manners of many Eh'taza. His lustrous blue grey eyes (the same color as his short velvet cape) shine with an endearing honesty, and reserve melts in his presence. In solitude, one regrets one's loquacity with this new acquaintance, but the second thoughts come later still. To what use will this powerful Eh'taza put the secrets revealed?

Anything pertinent he will repeat verbatim to the Heresia Combata. But personal quirks and defects are usually safe. Dagon's philanthropic attitude is genuine, and he only abandons it in pursuit of the overthrow of the Ishru. His calming influence should help diffuse the hostility lingering after Chæru's rescue party confronts and defeats Gadrel.

Age: ? (Appears≈25). **Eyes:** Blue-grey. **Hair:** Golden blond. **Build:** Trim. **Height:** 5'9". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/M. **Skin:** Pale. **Demeanor:** Warmly hospitable. **Dress:** Short cape, tunic, hose, pointed velvet slippers. **True Attitude:** Shrewd. **Home:** Nokor Væshim.

Hits: 110. **Melee:** 155fa. **Missile:** 165cp.

AT(DB): 1(-55). **Sh:** Y. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 45.

Lvl: 15. **Profession:** Rogue. **Stats:** SD-72; Co-96; Ag-99; Me-75; Re-73; St-94; Qu-93; Pr-93; In-81; Em-79. **AP:** 93.

Skill Bonuses: MA St-1 60, Ambush ±24, Climb 45, Ride 60, Swim 60, DTraps 60, PLocks 60, S&H 75, Perc 75, Strength 50, Speed 50, Leaping 50, Landing 50, Ægron 6, Hæsig 8, Varnese 8, Runes 25, St&W 25, Acrobat 15, Act 50, Dance 60, FAid 50, Fletch 40, Gamb1 15, PSpeak 15, Sail 20, Sed 50, Sing 60, Ski 15, Subdue 40, Trick 30.

Spells: To 5th level: War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

Falchion: +25, intelligent, Delving Ways: *Death's Delving* 3x/day.

Gloves: +25 detecting and disarming traps, Illusion Mastery: *Phantasm* 15x/day.

Feather (in cap): +25 DB, protects head as helm.

Ring: +25 OB, x3 PP multiplier.

SCOX

A sardonic grin usually curves the Eh'taza's cynical mouth, and this moment is no exception. Gadrel's torture of Chæru, the rescue attempt by her tædhi, and the little girl's pain and terror are merely fuel for Scox's pessimistic amusement. Tall, blond, and clothed in grey, he is a twisted version of his brother Urian. His charm, which is real, derives from scornful, careless elegance rather than joyous beauty.

In the minutes before Gadrel stabs Chæru and then throws himself beneath his opponents blade, Scox may provoke the adventurers to more furious fighting by his verbal attacks. After the fight, he has sense enough to stay silent, although anyone meeting his gaze will note the gleam of nasty humor in his eyes. Belial will quite effectively quell any attempts by Scox—verbally, or by silent innuendo—to provoke another fight.

Age: ? (Appears≈26). **Eyes:** Grey. **Hair:** Ash blond. **Build:** Lean. **Height:** 6'0". **Race/Sex:** Eh'taza/M. **Skin:** Fair. **Demeanor:** Scornfully amused. **Dress:** Grey tunic, grey leggings. **True Attitude:** Pessimistic, cynical. **Home:** Nokor Væshim.

Hits: 100. **Melee:** 150bs. **Missile:** 125da.

AT(DB): 1(-40). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 15. **PP:** 192.

Lvl: 16. **Profession:** Thief. **Stats:** SD-74; Co-91; Ag-96; Me-73; Re-75; St-98; Qu-99; Pr-95; In-87; Em-100. **AP:** 92.

Skill Bonuses: MA St-1 30, Ambush ±32, Climb 80, Ride 60, Swim 60, DTraps 80, PLocks 80, S&H 80, Perc 80, Speed 50, Balance 50, Leaping 50, Landing 50, Ægron 8, Hæsig 8, Varnese 9, Shay 6, Runes 40, St&W 40, Acrobat 20, Contort 30, Dance 30, False 15, Gamb1 15, Math 40, Sail 30, Sed 80, Ski 15, Subdue 80, Trick 80, Tumb1 15.

Spells: To 5th level: Detecting Ways, War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce.

Sword: +30, sharpness: removes appropriate limb with critical of B severity or more.

Throwing Dagger: +35, teleports back to wielder's hand.

Ring: x4 PP multiplier, protection from cold criticals (reduces severity level by 2).

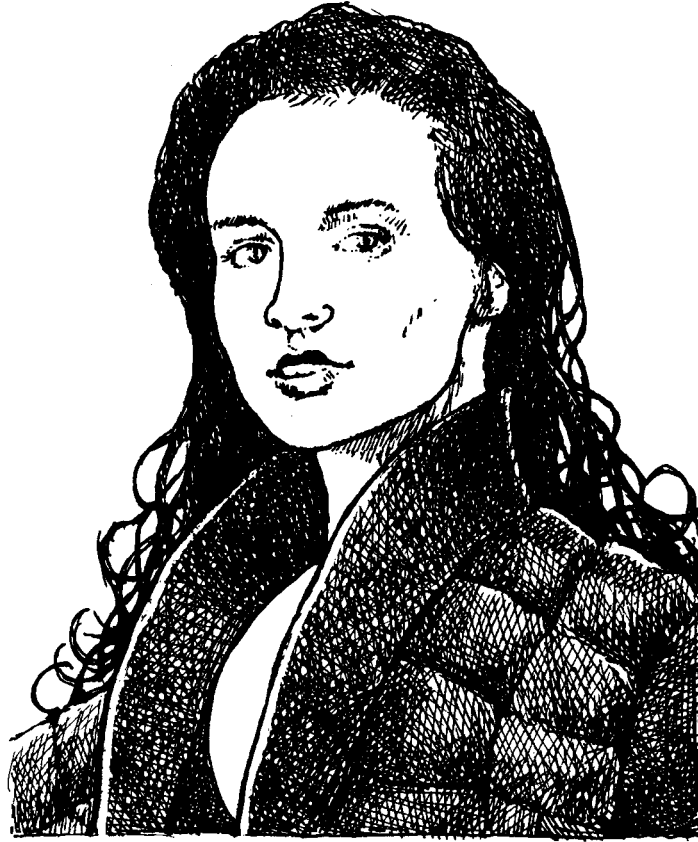
Ring: +20 DB, *Longdoor* 2x/day.

Earring: *Invisibility* 3x/day.

URIAN

Although Urian could dominate Belial, and perhaps even Gadrel himself, he remains in the background during the events of this adventure. He intends to master his master ultimately and will not sacrifice that goal for a lesser victory over the Ishru prince. Consequently, he does little to interfere with Gadrel's current pastimes, much as he deplores the suffering thus created. When he is assured that Eh'taza will defeat Ishru, then only will Urian confront the Lord of Twin Aspects. During Chæru's torture, Urian knows that he has the power to rule Gadrel in his male persona, but knows equally well that he would lose to the Ishru in his feminine aspect.

Following Gadrel's death, Belial has the situation well in hand and requires no assistance. Thus, Urian continues to lurk in the background. More information concerning the Eh'taza is located in Part V, *The Rebels*.



KAIA KUS'ORNUIENEN

3. THE LAYOUT

Gadrel's Retreat is located 30 miles due south of his war fortress, Nokor Væshim. An intimate dwelling for the Ishru and a guest, the retreat is built all of natural materials: irnwood, tanglewood, desert sandstone, and the black rock quarried from Gethæna's mountains with accents of braizium throughout. When the adventurers arrive, they will discover Gadrel in the garden, accompanied by six Nuld and five Eh'taza. The Ishru looms over Chæru, whose unclothed form he has laid on the pyramid of stone occupying one of the garden's corners. The child's skin is bleeding from nearly twenty superficial wounds. None are life-threatening, but all are painful and she will be scarred for life.

- 1. Entry.** Slate steps lead up to a plain door fashioned of the black irnwood. It is locked (Extremely Hard, -30, to open). Long, narrow windows to either side of the door permit visitors a glimpse of the foyer inside.
- 2. Foyer.** Floored with slate and paneled in the pale, reddish grain of the tanglewoods, the foyer is an irregularly shaped space with numerous hallways and doors leading from it.
- 3. Powder Room.** Floored with polished red marble and paneled in black irnwood, the chamber is equipped with running water and sophisticated facilities.
- 4. Hallway.** A wall of narrow windows views the garden on one side while folding doors giving access to storage define the other.
- 5. Practice Room.** Devoid of furnishings, the chamber's floor is covered in soft straw matting. Two long, narrow windows pierce the north wall. The wall overlooking the garden is a series of glass doors, often left ajar when Gadrel performs the stylized sequences of moves necessary for proficiency in the martial arts. The western edge of the room is defined by a brick wall that is the back of the hearth found in the adjacent chamber.

6. Meditation Chamber. Floored with the same soft matting of the Practice Room (#5), the Meditation Chamber is furnished with a low table of tanglewood and several cushions. Two small fireplaces in the massive brick hearth on the eastern wall each hold braziers. Wrought of bronze, these exude a cold flame when lit, cooling rather than heating the chamber. One long, narrow window occupies the north wall. A horizontal strip of glass, placed just below the ceiling on the west wall, adds further illumination to the room. The southern wall is fashioned of a series of long, thin windows, operable but too narrow to serve as doors into the garden. Gadrel frequently serves tea here to visitors who will become his victims.

7. Garden. A walkway of slate follows the perimeter of the enclosure. At its center, shallow steps form a rectangular depression whose surface is carved to portray a woman wrapped in thorny brambles that draw blood from her pierced skin. Glass doors from the Practice Room (#5) and the Sitting Room (#8) open onto the garden. Young irnwood saplings provide shade, while a

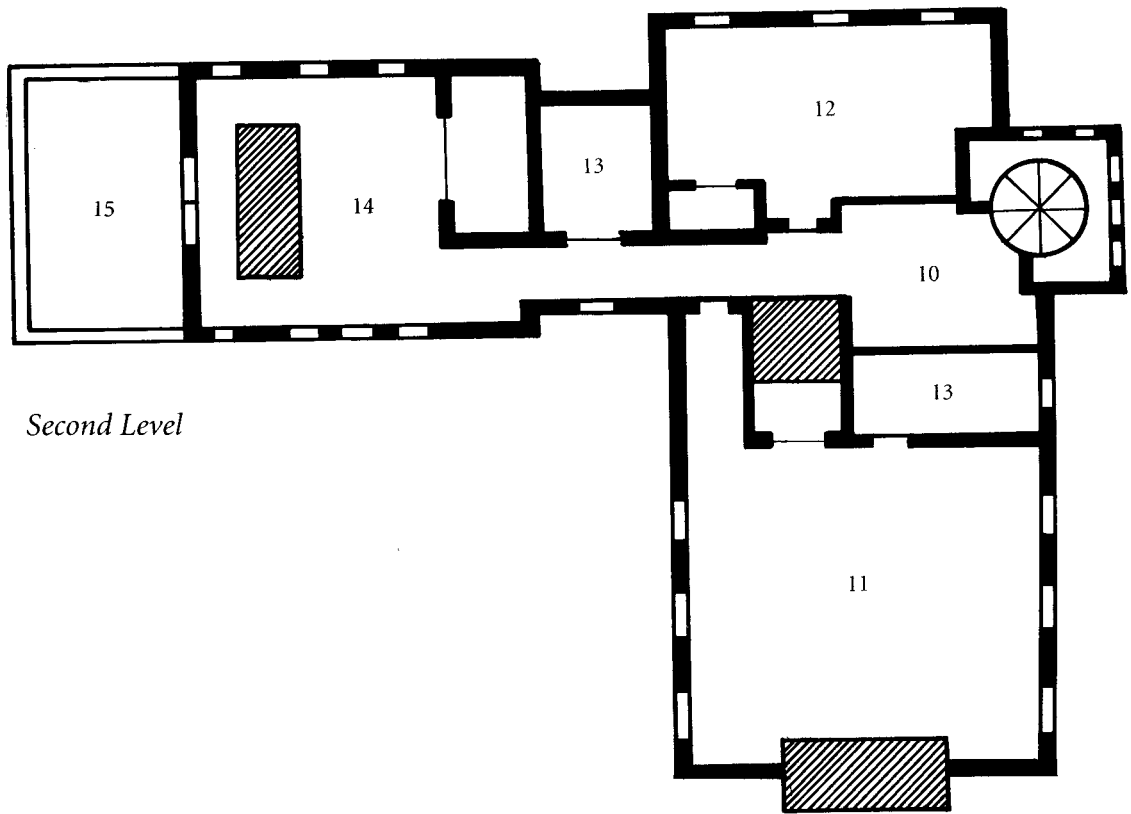
reflecting pool along one wall holds water that periodically splashes from the mouths of stone fishes leaning above the pool's surface. At one corner, blocks of stone rise in an irregular mass from the perimeter wall. The vertical surface of the tallest holds manacles placed to secure persons of varying heights. Chæru lies on the surface below the manacles, unsecured by anything save Gadrel's sinewy arm.

8. Sitting Room. Parquet of tanglewood with accents of irnwood forms the floor upon which rest low, cushioned chairs and stone tables. Woven hangings of men and women in varying stages of disembowelment adorn the paneled walls. Were it not for their subject matter, the composition and manipulation of color would make these tapestries quite beautiful. Glass doors on the west wall give access to the garden. Three narrow windows on the east wall provide additional light. The hearth on the south wall holds two small fireplaces with braziers like those found in the Meditation Room (#6).

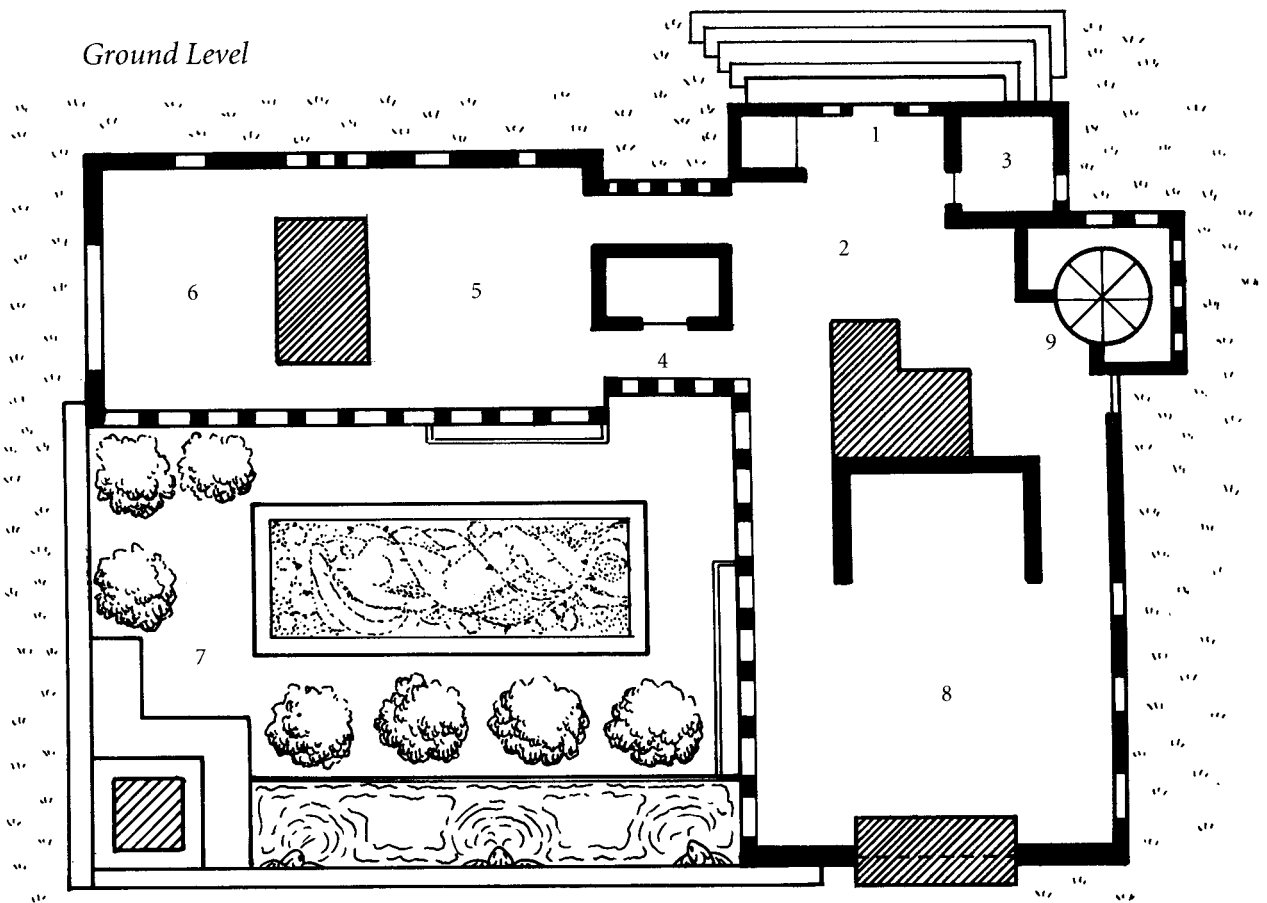
9. Stairway. An inglenook with two hearths, each holding a cold-burning brazier, faces the spiral staircase that provides access to the second floor. The treads of polished irnwood circle around a central pole of brushed braizium. Narrow windows of stained glass illuminate the stair well.

10. Hall. Matching tables, each with a small drawer holding paper, pens, and ink, occupy the south wall of the upper hall. A small hearth holds a cold-burning brazier.

11. Bedchamber. A short passage leads past a closet into a room whose parquet floor of tanglewood is scattered with rugs woven of grey, off-white, and brown goat hair and cushions covered by sheep's fleece. A quilt fashioned from a mosaic of tiny black and white pieces of fabric spreads across a low bed carved of irnwood. Hundreds of silk scarves fill a chest under one window.



Second Level



Ground Level

GADREL'S RETREAT

The mirrored vanity against another wall holds small crystal vials with glass stoppers, stone pots sealed with cork, and wooden boxes with tightly fitting lids full of powders, unguents, and elixirs. One particularly large braizium vessel contains 10 doses of a liquid that, when swallowed, turns the sensations of intense pain to exquisite pleasure for 2 hours. The imbiber still accumulates any hit points delivered and will die if sufficient damage is done, but cannot be stunned. A polished granite box holds 20 doses of a crimson powder that heals 75 hit points of damage when sprinkled on a wound. Knives of varying sizes lie among the containers.

A hearth on the south wall disseminates cool air from a cold-burning brazier. All the walls hold charcoal sketches of a single beautiful woman posed in different attitudes of extreme grief. A door on the north wall opens onto a bath chamber fitted with braizium fixtures and sophisticated facilities. The female Gadrel planned the appointments of this bedchamber, but her male twin sometimes stays here.

12. Study. A huge irnwood desk and cushioned armchair covered with tanned human skin dominate the room. Studies in both black and white and full color of human anatomy hang on the walls where the bookshelves leave space. The volumes on their shelves contain the histories of wars that have taken place all across the surface of Kulthea throughout time, methods of inflicting pain, interrogation techniques, and further anatomical studies of both men and animals.

13. Bath. Fixtures of polished granite and sophisticated facilities provide the required tools for good hygiene as well as luxurious bathing practices.

14. Bedchamber. One large wool rug, whose natural white fibers are woven to form a pattern of textured seashells across its surface, covers the black irnwood of the floor. A low bed, also spread in white, occupies the center of the room. A rack of whips, fashioned of knotted rope, leather, and briar fronds with thorns intact, or feathers, stands at the foot of the bed.

A shelf on the north wall displays bottles of lotions, ointments, and cordials. One vessel of blue glass contains 2 doses of a yellow liquid that brings the dead back to life if neither soul nor body has been destroyed. Another of green glass is filled with a salve (10 doses) that stops bleeding from any flesh wound.

A brick hearth at one side of the room holds a cold-burning brazier in a cavity on its east side and a variety of weapons supported by brackets on its west side. Pastels depicting men and women, dreadfully mutilated and scared, but healed and healthy, adorn the chamber's walls. The room was designed by the male Gadrel for his own use, but his female counterpart occasionally occupies it.

15. Balcony. A low wall of rough granite guards the perimeter of the balcony. Several chairs of weathered irnwood occupy its expanse.

4 THE TASK

Tracking Chæru's abductor to his place of retreat, safely removing the little girl from his grasp, and returning her alive to her family provide the challenges in *Confronting the Torturer*. Finding the location of Gadrel's retreat should be easy. Extracting Chæru from it will be harder. Returning the child to Stondepin alive will be impossible without Jaizel Arbeleth's help.

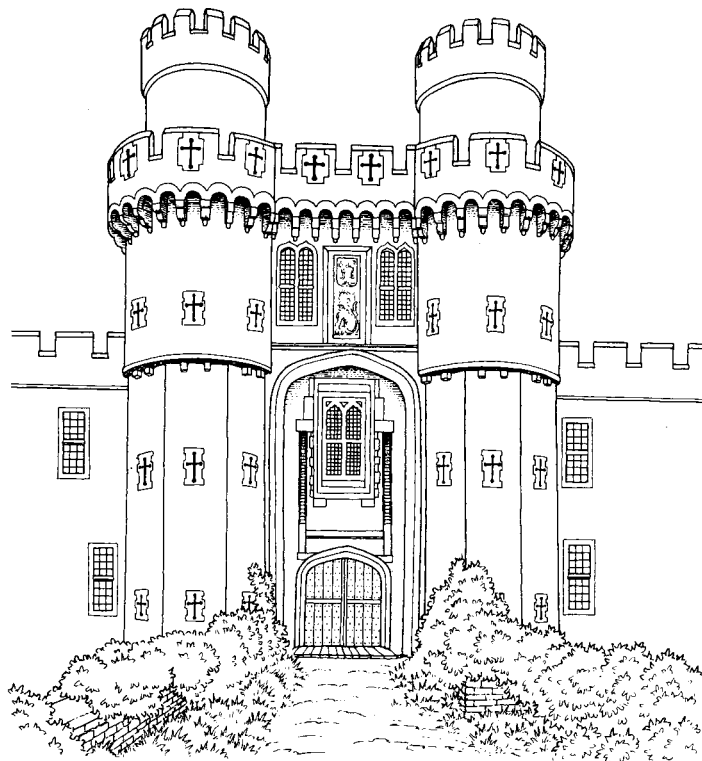
STARTING THE PLAYERS

Several different methods for starting the adventure exist, depending on the identities of the PCs. A group of Dain Sædhu, native to Stondepin and acquainted with Fæna or any members of her tædhi, require little other than an encounter with the grieving woman to motivate them to take action. If one of the PCs is the sister or bænu (Æ. "Father by Custom") of Chæru (Lænu, Arzhæna, or Stavín), the inclination to rescue the child becomes even more natural. The PCs should be introduced to the situation before the city guard has been called into the matter, giving them a chance to effect the rescue unaided, but with the hope of help arriving later.

A party of Dain Sædhu who do not reside in Stondepin, or adventurers visiting Gethæna and thus feeling no loyalty of to the local population, might be directly approached and hired by Bron at Fæna's urging. She remembers well the city guard's lack of success in the abduction of Wilæs. Perhaps these tough travellers from distant Tangeval, or the even more remote surface of Kulthea, might outsmart the Ishru as the locals could not.

Remember that visitors from the surface are rare. A navigator's fee for travel to Gethæna is steep; the average spelunker would require great luck to negotiate the miles of natural caverns linked by twisting cracks, chasms, and passages that connect the underearth realm to Kulthea's lands beneath the sky; and the freak Essænce storms that carry a few victims within Gethæna's bounds kill these unfortunates as often as they deliver them unharmed. A wealthy or extremely experienced group of adventurers might arrive in Gethæna by one of the means listed above. The Ash Lairs provide the learned with another route to the underearth.

However, the machinations of Pæl Dhæk are the more likely route to the underground kingdom for most surface dwellers. In the vault guarding Niyoreh Jirel's supine body, the mechanism of science and Essænce regulating her metabolism has awakened Pæl Dhæk from long sleep. The time is ripe for the shattering of the Kirzelæn that will release Mhari Ridæn from her crystalline prison. Pæl dares not leave the vault to directly free his daughter. The complex movement of a Worldslayer across terrain was one of the variables monitored by Niyoreh's machine that would trigger her awakening if combined with certain circumstances. And, in Pæl's opinion, Mhari's rescue must be effected behind Niyoreh's back.



NOKOR PERAN

His powers as a descendant of the K'ta'viiri enable him to control the weather and the behavior of animals, to precipitate certain geological events, to influence the deeds of men, to alter temporarily the course of an Essænce storm, and to see occurrences as far away as Mulira or Folenn (with the aid of Niyoreh's machine) from his present location. Although he refuses to leave the vault where Niyoreh sleeps, Pæl is bending all of his formidable abilities to securing a group of adventurers who will act for him. An Essænce storm deflected sufficiently to sweep suitable persons from the surface down to Gethæna, a Navigator leaned on psychically to waive the usual fee or to deliver champions to the wrong location, a vivid dream inserted into an Ishrun prince's sleep that prompts him to kidnap an innocent little girl: all these scenarios and more will be used by Pæl as needed.

AIDS

Gadrel has left a clear track through the long grasses of Væshim from Stondepin to his house of retreat. In fact, he did not actually travel this route, it being far slower than transportation via spells. However, he wants Chæru's family to witness part of his torture of the little girl or to at least hear another's report of it. The tracks across the plain will ensure the arrival of his audience. Of course, they will also make possible Chæru's rescue by sufficiently resourceful adventurers.

Additional help will arise from Gadrel's Eh'taza. Having tired of their master's vanity long ago (some now actively pursuing revolution), they will not act to hinder Chæru's rescuers, fighting only in self-defense. After Gadrel's death blow to Chæru, followed by his own suicide, Belial will direct the adventurers to Jaizel's residence for the sophisticated healing that only a Loremaster might dispense. The Eh'taza will order any hostilities from the Nuld to cease at the Ishru's death.

OBSTACLES

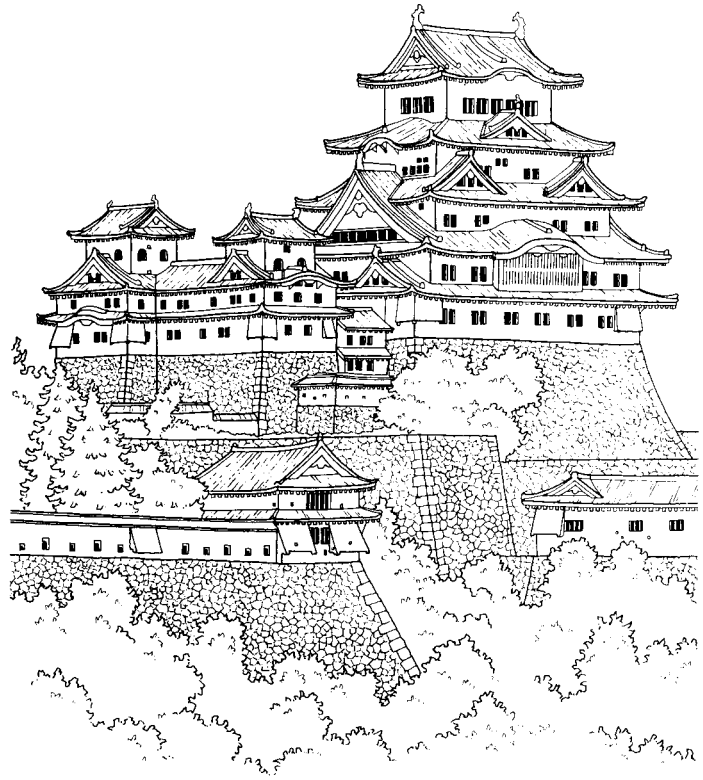
The presence of five Eh'taza and six Nuld in the garden of Gadrel's retreat would daunt any adventurer. These eleven foes backed by an Ishrun prince should seem overwhelming. Fortunately, Gadrel is focused entirely on Chæru and will interact with the intruders only verbally: with threats of his plans for the little girl. Nor will the Eh'taza provide any real obstacle aside from intimidation. The Nuld are the only true adversaries. Their effectiveness will be hampered by the Eh'taza's refusal to order them to attack and by Gadrel's preoccupation which distracts the Ishru from issuing the order.

Gadrel's close physical proximity to Chæru provides the other serious obstacle. Removing the child from his clutches before he kills her should be nearly impossible.

REWARDS

Chæru's tædhi is offering two star sapphires to each adventurer in the rescue party for Chæru's safe return. The gems are the size of grapes, each with a flawless star shining within its depths. In Gethæna, these gems are common (although the possession of so many does indicate that Chæru's tædhi is wealthy) and worth but 50 gold pieces each. On the surface of Kulthea, if disposed of properly, each gem could be sold for 1000 gp! In addition to this king's ransom of jewels, the adventurers will earn the respect of all Dain Sædhu who learn of their exploits along with substantial *færa* (Æ. "Community Standing"), the intangible Dain Sædhun medium of exchange.

NOKOR GAMESH



5. AFTERMATH

Chæru's death combined with Belial's administering the lifekeeping salve stored in Gadrel's bedroom and his directions to Jaizel Arbeleth's residence should send the adventurers to meet the fallen Loremaster. Jaizel will introduce them to a broader view of the events now transpiring within Gethæna. The knowledge should inspire them to acquire Mhari Ridæn's items of power. Subsequent adventures may lead to their pursuit of the Narsirabæn forged by Bathym and the eventual release of Mhari from her prison.



· PART VIII ·
LOREMASTER'S CONSOLATION



THE LOREMASTER'S SITTING ROOM WAS A COMFORTABLE apartment, but none of its current occupants were at ease.

"She's asleep now." Jaizel Arbeleth smiled at the three men hovering anxiously over the little girl. "When she wakes, she'll be fully healed. Physically, that is. Will her people be able to help her with the mental trauma?"

Peath scowled. "If we knew where she came from we might be able to answer that question."

"Perhaps you might find the answer, sir." Caidh suspected that anything Arbeleth attempted was eventually achieved. The man's calm resourcefulness seemed almost inhuman. And the strange machine—a cube of clear crystal lit from within by many points of colored lights—used to bring the dead child back to life was like nothing any normal person would possess.

Jaizel smiled again. "Perhaps I might. At any rate, I suggest you leave her in my care until we find her family. I should be able to make considerable progress in closing the wounds in her mind."

"I don't know how we can ever thank you enough!" burst out Hæn. "I wouldn't have an arm without your help. And Marinælla, my sandlion friend, would be blind in one eye."

"And you will all be famished if I don't feed you something soon." The Loremaster got to his feet. "We can talk more over supper." Jaizel hesitated. "Perhaps I should let this wait, but there *is* something you can do for me..."



The Loremaster Jaizel Arbeleth will prove a great help to PCs suffering from the encounter with Gadrel. However, Arbeleth rarely gives of his resources without compensation. And he has a task right at hand that needs doing.

1 THE TALE

His name was Gærin Borul, and his courage was greater than that granted most men. The noblest of his deeds should have earned him immortality in legend, but the ways of the world are not always just and he has long been forgotten by all but a few. His people were a collection of wanderers: thieves fleeing reprisal, innocent poor folk driven from their farms by the wealthy, egalitarian nobles severing ties with bloodthirsty tyrants, and a few free spirits who preferred the gypsy's life to a more settled existence. The odd assortment came together under Gærin's leadership over the span of several years, and his resourcefulness and persuasive tongue combined with his skill for mastering new languages enabled the band to survive comfortably for a decade. With mountain shepherds, they followed goats from pasture to pasture while partaking of cheese and milk. Among lowland farms, they harvested and threshed the wheat, recompensed by bread and wine. In the desert, they discovered new waterholes and were rewarded by a nomadic tribe with dune amber, dried cactus flesh, and camels. Among the trees of the forest, they ate nuts, roots, and berries, and gathered herbal remedies that sold well in the cities. They called themselves the People of the Journey, the Dain Sædhu.

Yet their journeying was fated to come to an end. The lands they traveled grew ever more unfriendly with the passage of the years. Returns to places they had visited before disclosed old friends to have died, departed their inherited holdings, or fallen on hard times. Dark cults and the terror they spawn seemed more prevalent. Ordinary folk grew more cynical and suspicious of strangers. Gærin found a welcome for his people with greater and greater difficulty each time the Dain Sædhu departed one fiefdom or duchy for another. He hoped persistent searching might discover a gentler, untrammled corner of the world where travellers were eagerly approached by the locals for news rather than shunned as though they bore plague.

The appearance of a bruise, in the shape of a ring, on Gærin's palm gave fresh urgency to his worries. His father had died of this mysterious malady, the old man's skin speckled with purple areolas, two years after the first blemish arrived. Gærin's people would not survive long after his death. A home of their own was necessary if the Dain Sædhu were to thrive.

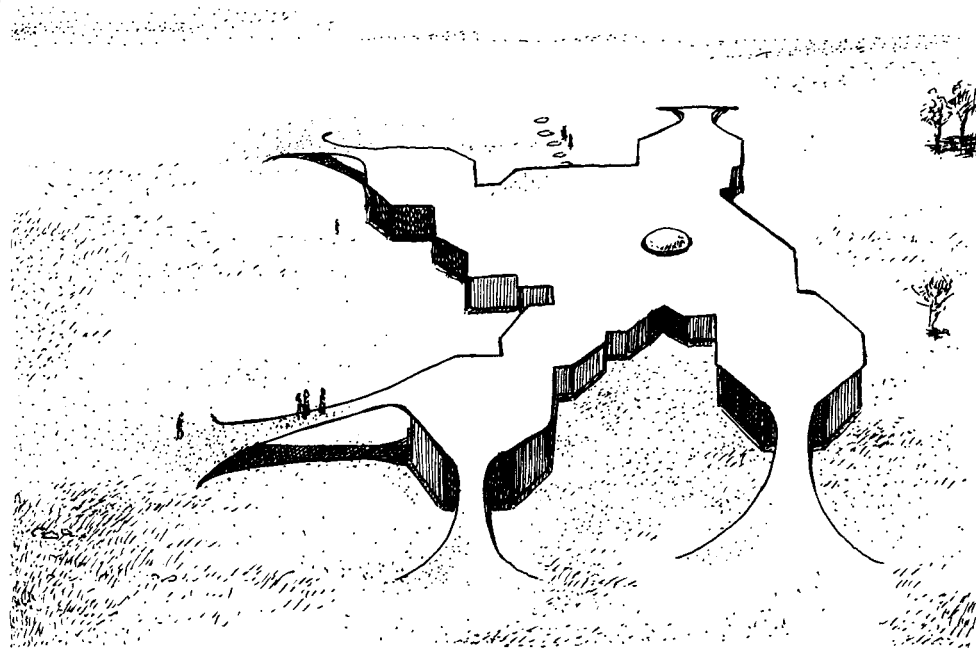
Jaizel Arbeleth met Gærin a year into his search for a Dain Sædhu homeland. The Loremaster would have cured the diseased man had it been possible. Unfortunately, the Dæheema (Fh. "Blood-death") is a disease bound into the genetic material of each cell in the afflicted organism's

body. Only an Essence-lord could cure such a syndrome. Instead, Jaizel offered Gethæna to the Dain Sædhu. He warned Gærin that the first man to encounter the Ishru would probably be killed by these jealous princes. Gærin volunteered to be that victim, and his sacrifice bought his people a realm of their own. (See Part IV, *The Coming of Man*.)

Following Gærin's death, Jaizel constructed the residence named Tælethrand from which he might supervise the integration of the Dain Sædhu into the underearth realm. Once this task was accomplished, he continued to dwell there while working toward the transformation of the Ishru. This task remains his first priority, but the fallen Loremaster holds himself responsible for the fate of the descendants of Gærin's people. On the rare occasions when a Dain Sædhu pilgrim travels to Tælethrand seeking help, Jaizel is generous with his time, energy, and resources. Yet, he always requires recompense in the form of good deeds, knowledge, or simple labor within his residence. "Very few are strong and humble enough to receive a gift without later suffering the stranglehold of greed and entitlement," declares the Loremaster while determining a pilgrim's form of payment.



THE PEOPLE OF THE JOURNEY



THE TÆLETHRAND

2·THE NPCS

JAIZEL ARBELETH

The Loremaster is a superb actor, and will assume the mannerisms he deems most useful for each situation he encounters. For the many centuries since his demotion by the Council of Loremasters, Jaizel has preferred to maintain a pose of ineffectual harmlessness. He pretends to defer to Pserchia Qæa, the Loremaster now monitoring Gethæna, while pursuing his own policies. Pserchia, of course, sees through the charade, but an outside observer may be fooled for a brief interval.

Toward the adventurers, Jaizel will behave like a fussy, old grandmother. Breathlessness and incomplete phrases strung together with anxiety (spoken, however, in a pleasant tenor) characterize his eagerness to heal Chæru's broken body while assuring the comfort of his new guests. His manner may initially cultivate contempt within the PCs, but his skills as a healer and the store of knowledge at his command should quickly convert this emotion to one of respect. Once the emergency is resolved and Chæru sleeps, Jaizel entertains his visitors with tea and polite conversation. In pseudo-confidential tones (of course, you already know the following, but...), the actor will discuss some of the peculiarities of the Ishru. While chattering, he mentions Bathym's creation of the Narsirabæn (weapons which can imprison the Ishru within a sphere of force permanently, see Part V, Section 2) as well as the Eh'taza's newest artefact, the Linnæn.

The Linnæn is a crystalline hand whose energy field duplicates that exerted by any of Mhari Ridæn's descendants. Bathym intends to use it to retrieve the Essence-lord's items from their storage places hidden within the monuments to Mhari that dot the land. Jaizel hopes to prevent the Eh'taza's success by sending the adventurers to either obtain Mhari's items first or to defeat Bathym's Taza when they arrive to do so. This is the task he requires in return for Chæru's healing. However, it is unlikely that he will state his terms so clearly. If he can motivate the PCs to begin this quest without telling them that he considers it payment for his hospitality, he will not mention the exchange of commodities. He will also make no mention of the Ordæum Novis and the Eh'taza's desire to make Jaizel king of Gethæna.

Jaizel's appearance is at odds with his demeanor. He is a nobly proportioned man with tanned skin, well-muscled limbs, a strong chin, and fearless grey eyes. The hair hanging to his shoulders is thick, healthy, and pure white. Its color is not a sign of age, but humans (in whose species, snowy locks signify age) may be misled. The Loremaster still wears white, just as he did when visiting Gethæna's sands for the first time. Sturdy boots, leggings of suede, a quilted cotton tunic, a leather belt studded with opals, a silk cloak topped by the pelt of a white panther, and his bastard sword with its intricately engraved hilt comprise Jaizel's garb when away from home. Within Tælethrand, he dons a simple caftan and soft, ankle boots.

PSERCHIA QÆA

Whether lounging against a spur of volcanic rock or reclining on a couch within Tælethrand, Pserchia displays a careless grace and lazy humor. Her slow,

easy speech contrasts sharply with Jaizel's staccatoed words, but the gaze of her willow green eyes is equally direct. If she is home when the adventurers arrive seeking Jaizel's help, she retreats to her bedchamber to avoid them. The woes of individual Dain Sædhu hold little interest for her. Later, when she hears Jaizel's report concerning the PCs, Pserchia will feel a need to assess the character and efficacy of the adventurers herself, but she will do so in the middle of their search for Mhari Ridæn's items. It is most likely that she will not be present when the PCs discover Tælethrand. Her goals draw Pserchia to frequent the Ishrun courts continuously.

Like Jaizel, Pserchia wears a caftan while relaxing (hers is willow green rather than white, and falls to her ankles rather than just below the knees). Her working garb is more elaborate. Supple green hose, low boots, a pleated tunic whose folds sport embroidered willow leaves and fronds, a loose belt of silver about her hips, a collar of silver set with pale jade, a jade clip securing her braided hair, and a slim broadsword with a malachite pommel adorn the Loremaster's person when she ventures forth from Tælethrand.

3·THE LAYOUT

Tælethrand, Jaizel Arbeleth's residence, is located in the grasslands of Gamesh. The structure's unique roof form makes it invisible from a distance. Sweeping fans of braizium slant from the roof down to the rolling plains, and scargrass grows in the foot of sod layered over the metal. The house might be just another shallow hill on the horizon.

At closer range, walls of textured braizium and windows of clear vitreæn are visible beneath the arching crescents that form bridges from ground to roof. Smooth stepping stones make a path to the front door. This portal, identical to those on the interior, is a field of energy produced by thin strips of crystal set into the door frame. The field resembles a planar splash of white light, but it is opaque and feels solid. A panel at the side of the door turns the field on and off at the touch of a hand. Someone to whom it is already keyed (currently Jaizel and Pserchia) may reset it to include access by others. It may be time-limited (e.g., the next seven days), indefinite until canceled, or permanent. Once permanent access is available to an individual, only he or she may delete his or her touch from the set of those that activate the field.

1. Front Access. Six inches above the ground, the threshold is level with the stepping stones leading up to it. A generous overhanging portion of the roof shields the stoop from the fierce Gethænan sky. The door is as described above.

2. Foyer. Floored with stone tiles of brown and white (as is the entire interior), the receiving area is lit by extensive windows. A vitreæn panel in the wall glows should the need for more light arise. Each room possesses at least one of these panels. Next to the closet, there are ten numbered pressure plates, a larger blank one, and another vitreæn panel. Experimentation will show that an object placed in the closet disappears when four numbered plates are pressed in sequence followed by the blank one. A number corresponding to the plates flashes on the vitreæn panel. Repeating the sequence on the numbered plates calls the number to the panel along with a label, e.g., 1596 CLOAK. Pressing the blank plate returns the object to the closet.

3. Parlor. Soft, thick area rugs and a surplus of pillows make this a comfortable room. The furniture consists of huge, nubby cushions strapped together to form armchairs and couches. All of it unfolds to make extra beds for guests.

4. Reading Room. A large, but not exhaustive, collection rests on the shelves covering the walls. The combination of literature, philosophical works, and factual material present suggests its purpose is well-informed pleasure rather than true scholarly interest. A round reading table and chairs of irnwood occupy the center of the room.

5. Sitting Room. A relaxing place containing a couple of armchairs and some small tables. Pserchia and Jaizel meet here to discuss and evaluate their Gethænan policies.

6. Study. Two large desks occupy spaces by the windows, one for each of the Loremasters. Shelves along the most extensive section of wall hold about 50 small crystalline cylinders. A small table on wheels holds a heavily magic object: a shallow braizium box with a keyboard of over 30 vitreæn pressure plates. Each key has a symbol on it: one of the letters in the Laminauræ alphabet. A knob on the side of the box, when spun, changes the set of symbols to any one of 25 alphabets, the Oræna among them. A vitreæn plate attached at the back of the box slants away from the keyboard to form a display screen. When one of the crystalline cylinders is placed in the hinged compartment at the side of the box, words in the alphabet selected appear on the screen. One of the keyboard keys removes the initial contents of the screen to allow more information from the cylinder to appear. Descriptions of Gethænan geography, flora, and fauna, Dain Sædhun culture, and Ishrun activities are stored on the cylinders. A copy of *Excerpts from the Library of Nomikos* (Part VI) may also be found.

7. Refectory. A large table of opaque, white vitreæn with matching chairs occupies the center of the room. Above it, a skylight brightens the space and provides a glimpse of the scargrass camouflaging the roof. A niche in one wall holds a slender pillar of essicrysta. This item generates, stores, and preserves the matrices that correspond to the objects recorded and removed from the foyer closet and several other points in the house. It should be noted that live specimens cannot be stored. (If a man were to stand in the foyer closet while the pillar was activated, all of the

inanimate objects on his person might be stored, but he would remain unharmed. Essicrysta can be forged to accommodate living creatures, but this fragment has not been thusly formed.) A screen of vitreæn in the nearby wall will scroll through the complete inventory of objects stored in the pillar. (Among other things, it holds the smashed remnants of a hang glider!)

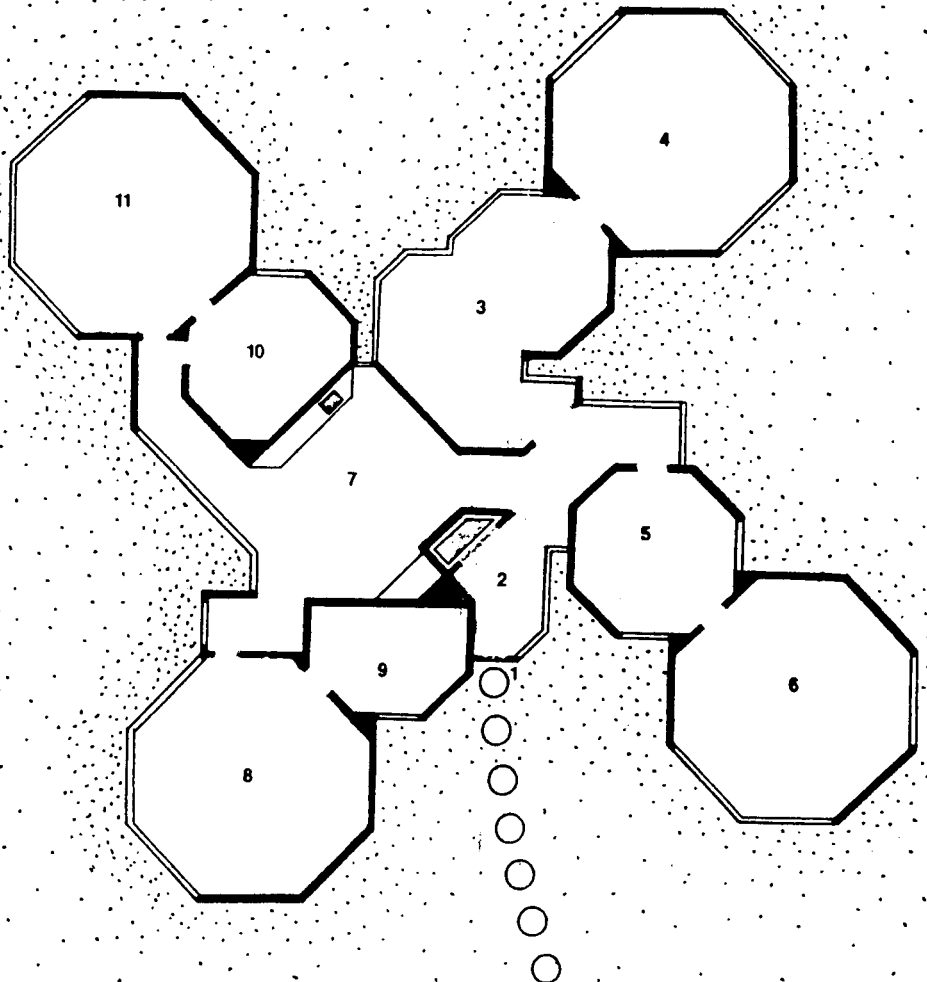
A counter at the other side of the room contains a sink with running water and supports a braizium box (2' x 1.5' x 1'). A clear vitreæn door occupies the forward side of the box along with a panel similar to the one by the foyer closet. Seven digit sequences will bring cooking dishes and foodstuffs to the interior of the box. Additional controls heat, cool, slice, dice, puree, etc. This magical device allows Jaizel and Pserchia to reserve their time for activities other than food preparation.

8. Pserchia's Bedroom. Tastefully appointed in white and willow green. Small wool rugs and cotton mats cover much of the stone-tiled floor. Thick drapes slide across the windows to create darkness for slumber. Near one wall, a plate of braizium is set into the floor. A panel on the wall, identical to the one located by the foyer closet, stores objects placed on the plate using 5 digit sequences.

9. Bathroom. All fixtures of næcryc. Hot and cold water. Very sophisticated facilities.

10. Bathroom. Same facilities as the other bath (#9). All fixtures of translucent, black vitreæn.

11. Jaizel's Bedroom. Elegantly appointed in black and white. A storage device similar to the one in Pserchia's bedroom operates using 6 digit sequences.



THE TÆLETHRAND

4 THE TASK

The adventurers must locate Tælethrand, make Jaizel Arbeleth's acquaintance, and persuade the Loremaster to heal the comatose child they have rescued from Gadrel's clutches. Due to its camouflaged design, Jaizel's residence is hard to spot. Vast grasslands surround the structure, and travellers might easily pass Tælethrand at a distance of 500 paces, never realizing the proximity of their goal. Gaining entrance to the Loremaster's abode requires merely a knock beside the front door, provided the PCs make no hostile moves. Jaizel is a philanthropist, but he is not foolish and will not permit enemies to enter his house.

STARTING THE PLAYERS

Loremaster's Consolation follows quite naturally from the aftermath of *Confronting the Torturer*. The newly rescued Chæru requires healing within three days that only Jaizel can provide. Will the adventurers be able to locate his hidden abode in time?

Should the GM choose not to utilize the previous adventure, many other starting points exist. Perhaps the PCs encounter a hostile company of Nuld and flee towards the legendary Tælethrand, hoping the hero of old will defeat their pursuers. Or a Dain Sædhun PC may leave his hometown to search for a lost heirloom, stolen long ago by an Ishrun prince. Hoping for sufficient information to begin his quest, the youth plans to consult the Loremaster. Any situation where one of the PCs requires the mythic hero's aid will serve as an adequate start for *Loremaster's Consolation*.

AIDS

Belial's headings for the compass, provided at the close of *Confronting the Torturer*, make the search for Tælethrand a feasible enterprise. (PCs starting from a place other than Gadrel's Retreat should be given compass headings from an ancient manuscript or an old family legend.) However, unless the PCs are extremely experienced at navigating by instrument rather than landmarks, the discovery of Jaizel's residence is not a foregone conclusion. The time pressure created by Chæru's steadily deteriorating condition adds tension to the situation. (Use the *Static Maneuver Table* together with the most skilled PC's navigation bonus to determine the amount of time that elapses before the adventurers locate Tælethrand.) Vivid descriptions of the slowly passing terrain—the fringes of the Forests of Hiroth, the looming crags of the mountain spur dividing Væshim from Gamesh, the endless grasslands—and the quickly passing time (kharufier cooling to kharufræl which in turn warms to kharufier again) should support the mood of anxiety.

The healing of Chæru's physical wounds, once Jaizel's acquaintance is made, should be easily accomplished. The Loremaster possesses a clear, crystal cube, three inches on a side, which he empathically attunes to the damaged individual. Patterns of light, corresponding to the patient's electrical processes, appear in the cube. Manipulating these patterns produces changes in the patient's hormonal and metabolic systems, allowing a skilled operator to repair even corpses. So long as the soul still lingers near the body (administering lifekeeping to one recently slain produces this condition), the dead can be recalled to life.

OBSTACLES

The concealed location of Tælethrand poses the primary obstacle in this adventure. While easily visible from nearby, the structure becomes more difficult to spot with increasing distance. At 1000 paces, it is almost invisible. Additionally, the grasslands of Væshim and Gamesh are dangerous lands through which to roam. Savage gleamtigers and hostile Nuld sweep the terrain in search of prey. Lingering on these plains (while searching for a hidden refuge) makes the likelihood of an encounter with the soldiers of the Ishru or a predatory gleamtiger quite high.

REWARDS

Whether the healing of Chæru, the defeat of pursuing Nuld, or some clues concerning the lost heirloom, the knowledge or help sought from the Loremaster will be obtained by the sincere pilgrim who travels to Tælethrand. In addition, the Loremaster's conversation is sprinkled with bits of lore exceedingly useful to adventurers in Gethæna.

Each of the Ishru will be characterized in a phrase indicating the proper mode for handling that prince. "Lucibel is subtle, but no longer malicious. You need not fear him. Orias is so detached and remote that he offers no threat to any resident of Gethæna. If you can get his attention, he might even help you. Sachiel enjoys mischief, and his pranks can be annoying. Yet, his intentions are never fatal, and his sense of humor is now tempered with some compassion. Amianthus, providing you do nothing to arouse his paranoia, scatters sage advice like largess. Satarchian is truly cruel, but resembles an infant in that he soon forgets prey that remains out of his sight. Gadrel is the worst of the lot. Avoid both his enmity and his interest, since he never forgets anything and his attention is always destructive."

A description of the Heresia Combata and the goal of its Eh'taza will occur somewhere amongst Jaizel's assessments of the Ishru. He mentions neither the Ordæum Novis nor the Nictum Aureate. In his view, the adventurers need know nothing about the former. The Loremaster himself remains unaware of the existence of the latter.

5 AFTERMATH

Jaizel's generosity has a price. In return for the favor granted, he will request the completion of a task: preventing Bathym's Taza from obtaining Mhari Ridæn's items. This quest is detailed in the scenario presented in Section 9, *The Legacy of Mhari Ridæn*.



› PART IX ›

THE LEGACY OF MHARI RIDÆN



NEMU BENT GRACEFULLY TO EXAMINE THE PEDESTAL supporting a statue of Mhari Ridæn. No sign of the secret door was visible in the smooth stone blocks. Kneeling, Nemu brushed a strand of hair from her face, then traced a rune against the stone. A thin line of glowing silver sprang to life. She held out one hand to her companion, a stolid young man wearing green armor.

Noryn placed a sculpture fragment, shaped from crystal to resemble a woman's hand, into Nemu's open palm. She touched the crystalline fingers to the center of the hexagon outlined in light. A twin hexagon of stone slid away into the pedestal. The opening was black with shadow. Nemu started to reach for its interior, then stopped.

Something approaching. Crouching, stalking, gliding forward.

Noryn peered curiously into the pedestal cache while Nemu rose to her feet, turning fluidly toward the stair she had climbed moments before. A sandlion, snarling with rage, erupted over the top step and launched itself at her. She murmured a word in the spell that might hold the beast, but it reached her before the first phrase was complete. Razor-sharp claws ripped across her throat. Noryn turned at last to face their adversary. He jerked his sword half clear of its scabbard before the sandlion swatted with its mighty paw. Noryn's head splattered like a raw egg against the statue's robes.

The two corpses lay like rag dolls amidst pools of blood. The sandlion sniffed at their broken limbs, then prowled back to the stairs.

A shout from below shattered the stillness. "Hæn! Are you alright? Why did she take off like that?"



The information gathered while the PCs work to obtain Mhari Ridæn's magic items will prove nearly as essential as the booty. Once possessed of the story of Gethæna's creation, they can begin to speculate on the desirability of the realm's destruction...or its metamorphosis.

1·THE TALE

Bathym is ready to launch the coup which will remove the Ishru from power and place the Heresia Combata as the ruling force within Gethæna. The fifteen Eh'taza who comprise the Heresia control 160 Taza who in turn give orders for 160,000 Nuld. This army easily dwarfs the forces of any individual Ishrun prince as well as outnumbering their combined battalions. (Gethæna is home to a total of 36 Eh'taza, 216 Taza, and 216,000 Nuld.) However, Bathym's strategy depends not upon military strength so much as upon the magical Narsirabæn. These six artifacts each generate an impenetrable sphere which can imprison one of the Ishru as no ordinary materials are able to do.

With his plans laid and his forces assembled, Bathym paused before giving the orders that would begin the revolution. A diminutive Taza, clothed in a tunic of silvered blue, approached him. She bobbed a curtsy and announced, "My lady Iblis of Nokor Pæran arrives!" Accompanied by a dozen scornful kingcats, the announced visitor skipped through Bathym's door with a gay laugh and a merry greeting. She brought news of a recent discovery: the location of the magical weaponry once belonging to Mhari Ridæn. Bathym's eyes gleamed. The Essænce-lord's possessions were legendary and would assure his victory over those Taza and Nuld still loyal to the Ishru.

Although on the brink of war, Bathym turned back to his forges to create the Linnæn. The item that emerged was a crystalline hand whose energy field duplicates that typical of an individual inheriting some of Mhari Ridæn's genetic material. The Eh'taza gave the Linnæn to a pair of his Taza and sent them to the plains of Gamesh (territory friendly to Sachiel's underlings) to retrieve the first of Mhari's weapons.

Following her visit to Bathym, Iblis made another, more secret one to Tælethrand. She informed Jaizel Arbeleth of the events afoot in Nokor Næph and begged the Loremaster to delay the Heresia Combata by any means he could. Jaizel has pondered confronting Bathym's Taza himself, but he would prefer to send emissaries (the PCs) to complete the task.

IBLIS



2·THE NPCS

FIRST FORAY

Unaware that he has competitors for Mhari Ridæn's ancient weaponry, Bathym initially sends but two Taza into Gamesh to the Temple of the Search. There, they will be discovered by the PCs in the act of using the Linnæn to gain access to the secret compartment atop the obelisk. A fight should ensue in which both Taza may be wounded, killed, or captured and the Linnæn possibly removed from their possession. When the Taza do not return swiftly, Bathym will suspect the presence of enemies and dispatch larger, stronger bands to defeat his as yet hypothetical foes.

NORYN

Taza to Sachiel, Noryn wears snug, plush green body hose beneath breastplate and greaves of hardened, green placænium. He carries a shield of the same material and wields a steel broadsword. His black hair is cropped very short, and a small, jade serpent coils around and within his left ear. Noryn, not expecting trouble on this venture, is not on guard when the PCs arrive. His reactions will be slow, and he will demonstrate a hampering over-protectiveness toward Nemu.

NEMU

Nemu also favors the color green, and the elaborate folds of her sari possess the lush texture of moss. Bracelets, in the form of snakes swallowing their own tails, encircle her wrists. Her thick, brown hair hangs in a long braid down her back. Nemu has a more diffuse, less goal-oriented attentiveness than her companion and may become aware of the PCs arrival just before they arrive at the obelisk's apex. She should be able to cast one spell in advance of any actions taken by the adventurers.

SECOND FORAY

The adventurers should be able to visit the Temple of the Beginning unmolested by Bathym's emissaries. The Eh'taza will send his forces to all of the monuments once he suspects the presence of rivals, but some time will elapse before these Taza arrive at their stations. However, the Heresia Combata is not the only group of individuals interested in the PCs' actions.

PSEKCHIA QÆA

After returning to Tælethrand from Nokor Væshim (where Gadrel seethed in ill temper) and hearing Jaizel's tale of the adventurers who so upset the Ishrun prince, Pserchia wishes to make their acquaintance. She travels to the Temple of the Beginning to await their arrival and lounges on the monument's steps. The PCs may initially mistake her for an enemy. However, Pserchia will begin conversation quickly, introducing herself before her silence can provoke an attack. Her demeanor is slightly high-handed and insolent, enough to engender resentment, but not sufficient to create real enmity. The Loremaster will mention with a snigger the Ordæum Novis and the organization's plans to enthrone Jaizel as king of Gethæna. Soon after this disclosure she departs the vicinity. (For additional information see Part VI, *Other Powers*, Section 2 and Part VIII, *Loremaster's Consolation*, Section 2.)

IBLIS

Iblis introduced the supposedly recent discovery of the locations of Mhari Ridæn's artifacts as a red herring to prevent Bathym from sending his forces to war. The scheme worked, buying the Ordæum Novis another interval of time in which to locate and appropriate the Narsirabæn. While her cohorts pursue the search, Iblis continues to

monitor the monuments to the Essænce-lord's memory. She intends to make Bathym's recovery of the hidden items as arduous a process as possible. She encounters the PCs as they depart the Temple of the Beginning. Hoping to aid them against Bathym's forces and later to take Mhari's items from them by stealth (rather than force), the Eh'taza will attempt to join the adventurers' band.

THIRD FORAY

When the PCs succeed in crossing the poisonous liquids of Lake Lebæn to arrive at the floating Temple of the Forging, they will discover four of Lucibel's Taza (loyal to Bathym and the Heresia) awaiting the thieves of the Linnæn. The Taza will attack immediately unless Iblis accompanies the adventurers. Her presence will confuse Thæn, Zharu, Dema, and Perissa, since the Eh'taza is their superior and a member of the Heresia Combata. Iblis will probably remain silent, rather than reassuring the Taza concerning the legitimacy of the adventurers claiming the gauntlet concealed within this monument. The Eh'taza's acceptance by her new acquaintances is sufficiently tenuous that she will not jeopardize it by displaying her close association with their enemies. Her silence further disorients the four Taza, who will attack only after the adventurers have obtained Mhari's item and traveled some distance away from the shrine.

THÆN

Straight, shoulder-length brown hair is drawn back from an expressionless face and fastened by a grey cord wrapped around its thick strands. Thæn leads the band of Taza, issuing orders with a clarity and directness never disturbed by excitement or fear. He is the first to recover from the disorientation produced by Iblis' unexplained presence. Deciding that the Eh'taza was either held hostage or had changed allegiances, he initiates the pursuit of the adventurers after they obtain Mhari Ridæn's gauntlet. Thæn wears the black haori (short kimono) and hakama (wide, skirt-like trousers) traditional to many disciplines of the martial arts.

ZHARU

Zharu is bored and resentful at this temporary absence from Nokor Ænan. Filching purses from gentlemen's belts, eavesdropping on whispered secrets in a lady's boudoir, or passing rumors about a favorite's looming fall from grace are activities more suited to his taste than standing guard on a "floating cream puff amidst the piss of Lake Lebæn." Irritation curls Zharu's thin lips in a sneer and narrows his black eyes to slits. Despite his attitude, the thief is a formidable foe. Over his courtly attire of black doublet and tapered trousers, he sports a breastplate and greaves. And his broadsword is razor sharp.

DEMA

Dema possesses more interest in the romance surrounding a duel of honor or the thrill attending a highwayman's trade than in the actualities of the gruesome business of killing. She wears a broad-brimmed hat complete with drooping feather. Her black hair is long and curling, her skin very pale, and her eyes wide with childish excitement. Lace cascades from the neck of her white shirt and foams at its wrists. Her black velvet jacket boasts the widest of skirts, her breeches the neatest fit, and her boots a most extravagant design. A sturdy black shield and hefty broadsword are her only concessions to practicality.

PERISSA

Intricate braids restrain Perissa's glossy black hair, their narrow coils arranged in graceful curves and swirls on the Taza's proud head. She wears a full frock whose generous folds are restrained by a wide leather belt at the hips. Tall leather boots, a falchion sheathed

in a scabbard depending from the belt, and a gleaming, silver flute complete her accouterments. Although skilled with her blade, the Taza prefers the offensive powers born of the mixture of Essence and song. Her ability to manipulate liquids, including irænis, caused Perissa to be sent to Lake Lebæn.

LAST FORAY

Bathym himself joins four of Satarchian's Taza at the Temple of the Deathfight to await the adventurers. He hopes to recapture the Linnæn as well as taking possession of Mhari Ridæn's items. Well prepared PCs may have fortified their ranks with a few sandlions from the Dain Sædhun guides of Kangled or Stedron.

ORFEO

Although proficient in the realm of Mentalism, Orfeo runs no risks when entering combat. A full length chain mail hauber, forged of saffron placænium links and split from the waist down in the front and back to facilitate movement, covers the golden velvet of his robes. Beneath a placænium helmet, his chestnut hair is short and tightly curled. Little humor glimmers in his hazel eyes. And the falchion at his side comes quickly to hand when foes move in too close for Orfeo's liking.

ZULATH

Zulath demonstrates the most aggressive initiative of all Bathym's followers. Only a direct order will prevent him from charging to attack when the adventurers arrive at the Temple of the Deathfight. Unlike most Warrior Monks, he rarely parries a blow, devoting all his skill to smiting his opponent. Zulath wears a saffron haori (short kimono) and drawstring pants to prevent his garments from hampering mobility. A narrow strip of saffron linen, tied to form a headband, keeps his straight, shoulder-length hair away from Zulath's face.

KYRIAL

Kyrial relishes a fight with sufficient gusto to rival Zulath's enthusiasm, but she values strategy more than does the hot-headed Warrior Monk. When and where the opportunity exists, she chooses a defensible spot and lets the enemy come to her. Kyrial wears full plate armor forged of saffron placænium and sporting a black plume at the crown of its visored helmet. (A sturdy, leather chin-strap secures this head protection.) She moves with surprising ease, since placænium is significantly lighter than any metal while retaining the strength of steel or mithril.

TÆMIA

With a mane of copper hair streaked by gold, Tæmia resembles Satarchian most closely of her compatriots. Like the Ishrun prince, she enjoys the hunt. However, she prefers small game over all else and remains at Nokor Gamesh when her master pursues sandlion, gleamtiger, or man. The confrontation at the Temple of the Deathfight is not to her liking, and Tæmia will hang back from the fray if possible. She carries an oboe in a case over her shoulder and a pennywhistle in a pouch at her waist.

BATHYM

Bathym is overconfident of the outcome of this clash with the adventurers, sure that his own presence makes victory inevitable. Temporarily blinded by the attitude of superiority, he ignores the commonplace details of timing and tactics that ordinarily characterize his battle plans. The oversight should give the PCs a fair chance of defeating the Taza gathered within the shrine as well as a stab at killing Bathym himself. The Eh'taza wears his customary heather green tunic and leggings, unprotected by any armor. (For more information, see Part V, *The Rebels*, Section 2.)

3 THE LAYOUTS

Designed and built by Pæl Dhæk after the worldslayers' evacuation of Gethæna, four monuments commemorate the life and works of Mhari Ridæn. A portion of her story is engraved on the surfaces of each structure, and one of her valued possessions is there. Few know the locations of the monuments. The Ishru once knew, but have forgotten. The Dain Sædhu possess only the rumors exchanged by stray wayfarers. However, the Taza have newly learned of their existence; and one of them, Bathym, intends to obtain Mhari's entombed weapons for his own use.

TEMPLE OF THE BEGINNING

This elegant gazebo sits amidst one of the flowery meadows of Ænan. Its pitched roof with curving, upswept eaves rests on four pillars anchored in a stepped dais. The roof, the eaves, the pillars, and the steps are all sculpted from næcrys. The floor within the rectangle defined by the pillars is an unbroken slab of ironwood. The tree from which it was taken must have been mightier than any of the giants now growing in Hiroth.

1. Floor. Engraved in the floor, in letters one inch deep, Iruaric words tell the beginning of Mhari Ridæn's story. The writing covers the entire surface of the floor:

Utha, First Master of the Flows, was not the last of his kind. Many successors arose in his wake to continue his fight against the worldslayers. In concealment and stealth, they waged their battles; their numbers were few and their order fragile, prohibiting open confrontation. The first years of the Second Era of Ire saw the land wasted and barren, slow in its recovery from wanton manipulation by warring Flowmasters.

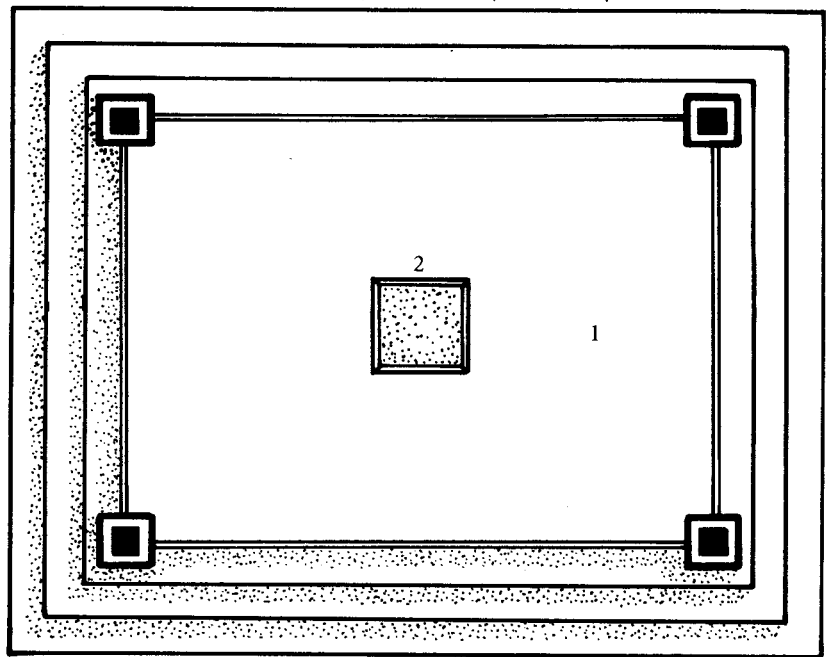
Stelar Ahkail led a few of Utha's survivors to sanctuary. They sought renewal of strength and hope, to be followed by further plans for the triumph of good over evil. The calming of the land remained their first priority, along with provision for the sentient peoples of Kulthea. Stelar Ahkail and his lifemate, Liræn Solmir, conceived and initiated long machinations that would result in the arrival of benevolent leaders at crucial points in history. Persistence and patience marked all their efforts, since their enemies sought to undo each portion of the task as it was achieved.

Like Utha, Kadæna Worldslayer did not lack heirs upon her cataclysmic death. Niyoreh Jirel struggled against numerous aspirants in one sect before securely grasping the reins of power. She and her disciples healed their wounds, inflicted by both friend and enemy, while the land reclaimed its greenery. The spring leaves provided new inspiration for these lovers of molten earth and flaming sky. Niyoreh Jirel and her cohort, Pæl Dhæk, researched means to glory and dominance. Their efforts unlocked the knowledge requisite for the freeing of the Great Demons and ultimately touched the ravaging forces of the Unlife.

2. Statue. At the center of the pavilion, a statue (sculpted of næcrys) of a girl just on the verge of womanhood stands at ease. She wears flowing robes and regards a songbird perched on her hand. A concealed compartment, Hard (-10) to detect, is located at the base of the statue. The small hinged door is designed to be opened by one of Mhari Ridæn's bloodline—one of her forefathers or any of her descendants. A simple touch by one of these individuals will cause the compartment to open. It possesses no mechanical locking mechanism to be picked, but sufficient battering (AT (DB): 20(-50); 175 points damage) will either break the door open or jam it (50%/50%) to prevent any access, magical or otherwise.

Within rests an arm greave forged of a silver mesh with clips to secure it to the forearm. The greave gives its wearer +25 RR vs. Essence spells; draws Essence spells into itself (attack spells only) and stores them for recasting at the wearer's will, 100' range, 50% chance success, may store up to 10 spells, beyond that limit spells are merely subject to the RR bonus, not stored; +20 RR vs. radioactive emissions and other byproducts of forging when used with Mhari's gauntlet (hidden in the Temple of the Forging).

TEMPLE OF THE BEGINNING



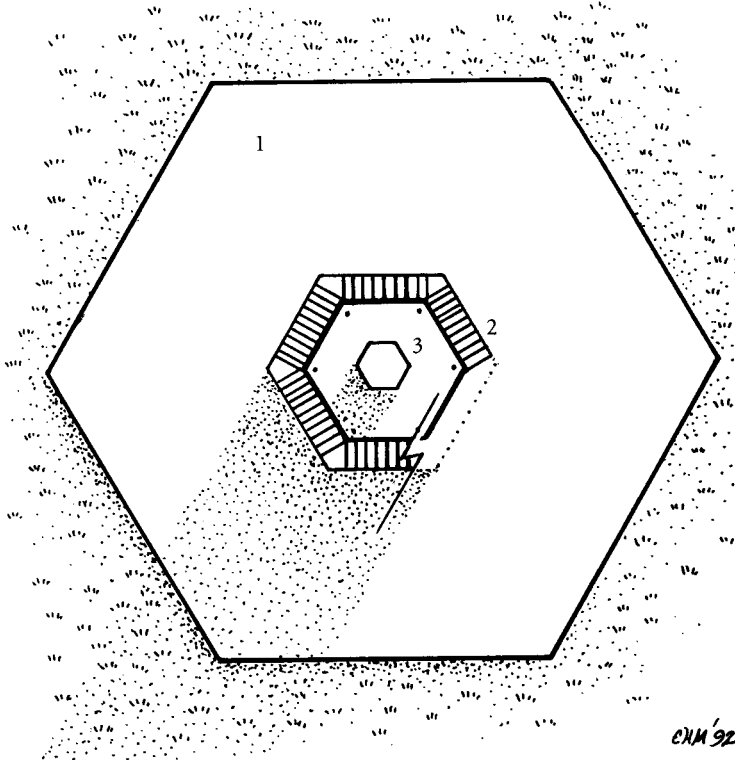
TEMPLE OF THE SEARCH

A tall obelisk of beige desert stone pierces the sky from the plains of Gamesh. It is rooted in a generous plaza, also formed of desert stone. An stairway (without any railing) wraps around the hexagonal monolith to the top. There, a platform open to the elements displays the statue of a young woman. With her eyes shaded by one hand, she gazes out across the grasslands, searching for something lost or hidden.

1. Plaza. A featureless expanse of fitted slabs of desert stone. The obelisk rises 500 feet at its center.

2. Stairs. Blocks of desert stone cantilevered out from the vertical surface of the monolith. Close examination, Hard (-10), reveals a hinge at the inside edge that allows each step to swing in toward the obelisk (dumping anything on the tread into thin air) coming to rest in a vertical position, flush against the monument. The arrangement is part of a trap triggered at the platform above. Carved into the obelisk's sides, following the stairway, is a portion of Mhari Ridæn's story, told in Iruaric:

TEMPLE OF THE SEARCH



Even before the release of the Demons, evil sprites cavorted amidst the wreckage of the anguished land. Foul smokes and noisome vapors prowled the laval flames and groaning earth. Silhouetted, angular forms flitted through these fumes, partially concealed by the mists. To men, they were the stuff of hallucination: the hideous Nightbird, a half-seen, putrescent, winged, and beaked monster who fed the eyes of children to her fetid brood; the brutish Mænsturius, a bull-headed shadow whose skein drew men's souls from their bodies by night; the enticing Mædu, a serpentine-tressed horror whose vipers craved the blood of lost innocence.

To Mhari Ridæn, daughter of Liræn Solmir and Pæl Dhæk, the land in travail exhibited a tragic, noble temper, deserving of respect and nurturance. Mhari celebrated the emergence of each new, delicately green frond and the birth of each infant badger, mole, and raccoon. These were signs of the earth's returning health. The nightmarish beings that haunted the wastelands seemed an evil remnant of the worldslayers' destructive schemes. As she hated her dark father, Pæl, so Mhari hated this small portion of his labors. Early in life, she bent her young and still limited powers to the destruction of the fiends he must have created.

When Mhari first departed the havens that comprised home, against the wishes of Liræn and Stelar, inexperience marked her campaign against Peal Dhæk. In ignorance, she tracked the Ishru and their children. Premature encounters with these malevolent entities left her body wracked and bleeding upon the field of battle. Only her inherited strength as a Lord of Essænce allowed her to survive. She grew strong and subtle. New stratagems led her to the ancient records compiled by men. From them, she learned much concerning her prey, yet never of its true nature. Always the trail swept Mhari onward to a personal confrontation with the stranger who fathered her.

3. Platform. No railing guards the platform's edge. At its center stands the statue described above. A secret drawer, Hard (-10) to find, slides out from the statue's base. The drawer is designed to be opened by one of Mhari Ridæn's bloodline—one of her forefathers or any of her descendants. A simple touch by one of these individuals will cause the compartment to open. It possesses a mechanical locking mechanism which may be picked (Very Hard, -30), but doing so will cause the stairs spiraling up around the obelisk to fold down as described above.

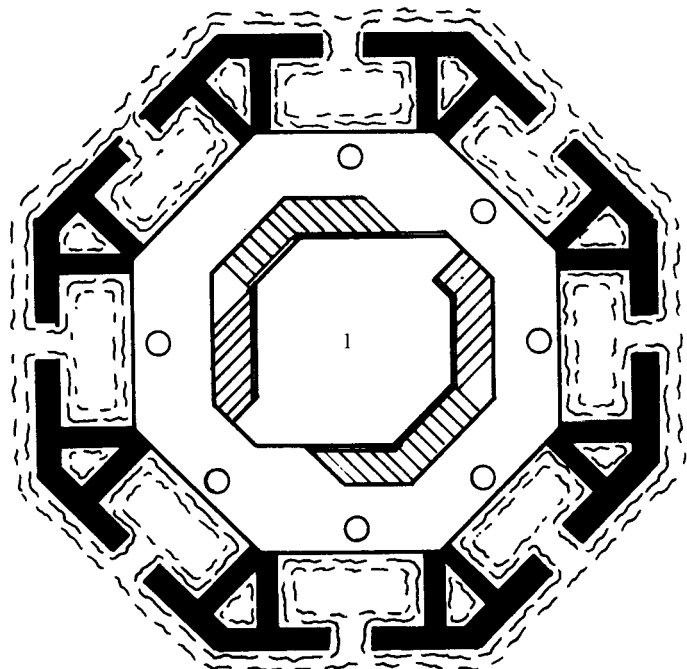
Within the drawer rests Mhari Ridæn's headband. The plain band of silver secures a silver mesh across the top of the wearer's head, forming a sort of cap or beret. The item alerts its wearer to the presence of Ishru, Eh'taza, Taza, and Nuld within 1000' although it does not distinguish between them; conveys to wearer the surface thoughts of Ishru and Ishrun servants within 100' (targets make a RR vs a 30th level Essence spell); gives wearer +20 RR vs mindreading spells; does not interfere with spellcasting; when worn with Mhari's gauntlet, protects the eyes from criticals (55%).

TEMPLE OF THE FORGING

This confection of blue and white vitreæn floats upon the poisonous liquids of Lake Lebæn. Incredibly, it does not stray from its location under the influences of either wind or current. Convenient projections, to which boats may be moored, jut out from the pavilion's exterior. Translucent columns support its steeply pitched roof, and translucent steps lead to a transparent chamber below the lake's surface. At its center stands a statue sculpted from translucent blue vitreæn: a young woman, robed and beautiful, stands with arms upraised. She seems to concentrate, with every sinew tensed, upon a spot immediately in front of her.

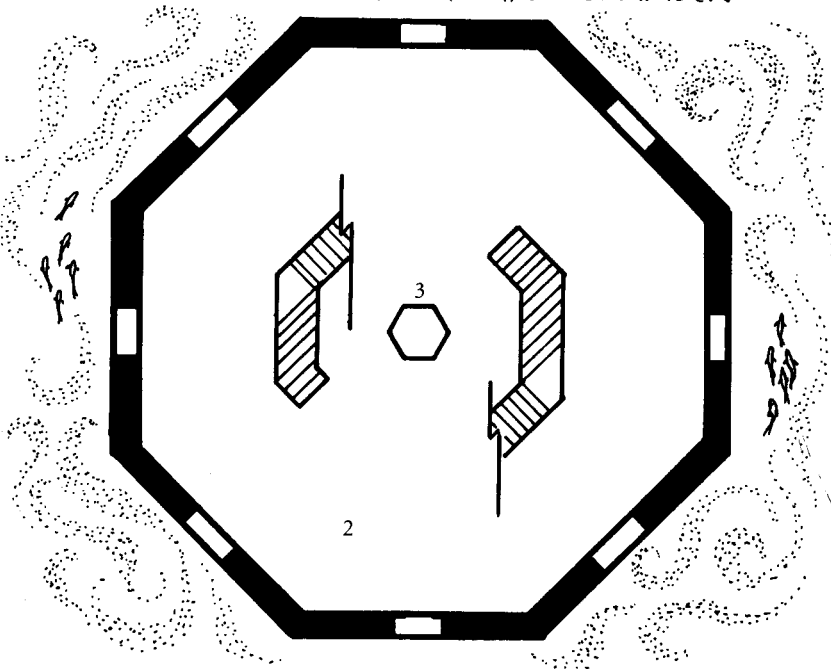
1. Floating Terrace. An octagonal expanse of translucent blue vitreæn punctured by a well in its center and fringed by mooring projections around its perimeter. Under the vault of the roof, two staircases descend into the well to give access to the chamber below.

2. Subchamber. Constructed entirely of transparent vitreæn, the blue liquid surrounding this chamber gives color to its walls and floor, while schools of paværin, nimbusæn, spirælæn, and the infrequent spineshark create changing patterns of lavender, rose, indigo, and pearl white. Eight opaque panels, one in each of the eight angled walls, hold inscriptions in Iruaric telling another portion of Mhari Ridæn's story:



TEMPLE OF THE FORGING, FLOATING TERRACE

TEMPLE OF THE FORGING, SUBCHAMBER



In secret, she penetrated the shadowed fastness ruled by Niyoreh Jirel. Discovery of the Demonlore confirmed her belief that the worldslayers controlled the Ishru and further parted Mhari from the truth: that the Demons were another evil unconnected in any way to the monsters she detested. She cast off the armor of secrecy to openly desire reconciliation with Pæl Dhæk. He welcomed his daughter, and the worldslayers accepted Mhari as one of their own.

In public, she added her energies to the labors in progress, hastening the day when Doombringers and Ordainers obeyed deadly masters. Privately, since Mhari's loyalty belonged to her foster father, Stelar Ahkail, her research pursued ways to thwart Niyoreh Jirel. If the Demon armies could be removed from Niyoreh's hands permanently, made inaccessible to her or anyone, Liræn's daughter would be satisfied.

She forged the monstrous Kirzelæn, a crystal with a thousand scintillating facets, to generate from Essænce a spherical field of constraint. A private experiment imprisoned the powerful fiend who had nearly slain her years before. Personal confusion convinced Mhari that the lodestone could incarcerate the unsummoned demons, and she continued to aid her hosts. Niyoreh designed the underearth citadel wherein her Demon armies might dwell, instructing Pæl and Mhari to implement her desire.

A seared realm, later named Gethæna, formed under the inspired imaginations of father and daughter. The fascinating Kirzelæn lay at its heart, focusing the turbulent energies of a Flow of Essænce into the hot, brassy sky: the field of restraint withholding the high pressures of earth and magma and designed to constrain the Demons freed from the planes of Chaos.

3. Statue. A secret drawer, Hard (-10) to find, slides out from the statue's base. The drawer is designed to be opened by one of Mhari Ridæn's bloodline—one of her forefathers or any of her descendants. A simple touch by one of these individuals will cause the compartment to open. It possesses no mechanical locking mechanism to be picked, but sufficient battering (175 points damage) will either break the drawer front open or jam it to prevent any access, magical or otherwise. Within it lies a gauntlet of black mesh, flexible and shaped for the right hand. It allows the wearer to cast spells from all base Alchemist lists to his or her level and gives a +25 bonus to his or her forging skill.

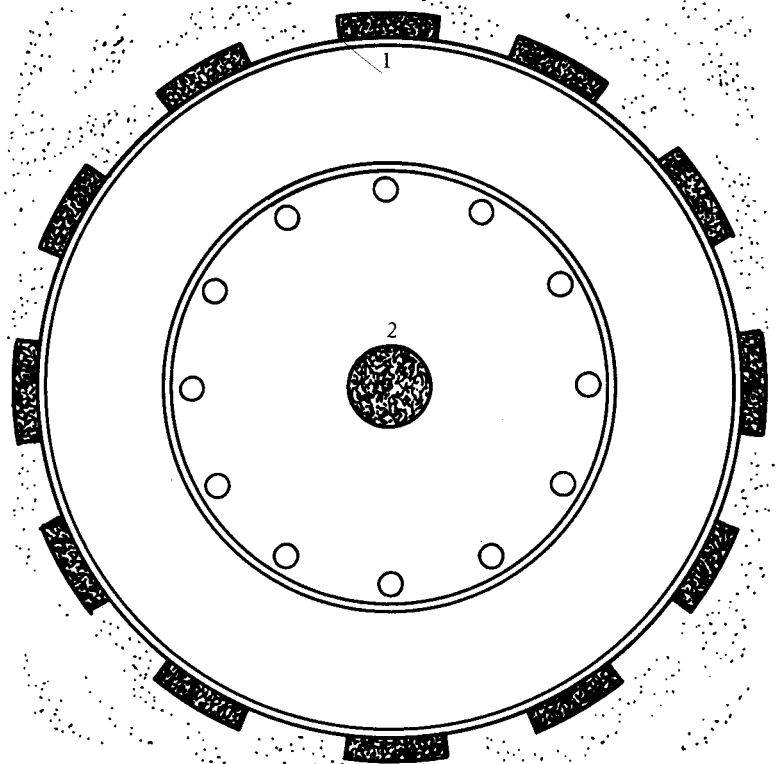
TEMPLE OF THE DEATHFIGHT

Concentric circles of braizium gleam amid the desert sands of Næph. Ten monoliths comprise the outer ring. A pedestal, raised upon a dais, is the innermost. The braizium image of an imposing woman treads it underfoot. She is mature, at the apex of her powers, and supremely beautiful. Her draped arms seem caught amidst a gesture, and her stance speaks of combat.

1. Monoliths. The final portion of Mhari Ridæn's story is engraved in Iruaric on the inside surfaces of the monoliths:

In the eleventh hour, Pæl and Niyoreh fathomed the true sentiments held by Liræn's daughter. Within the core of the volcano cradling the Kirzelæn, a last, cataclysmic battle raged between the three. Drawn steel and channeled Essænce wielded by her foes threatened Mhari's person, yet compassion stayed her hand. Unable to slay her father, Mhari limited her now mature powers as a Flowmaster to self-defense. The struggle woke the mountain beneath the contestants, and laval fumes seeped from cracks in the floor, threatening a violent eruption.

Desperation moved Pæl to chant the final syllables needed to activate the Kirzelæn. Eight gemstone pillars crystallized from these coded resonances, improbably trapping Mhari within one of their number while completing the sorcery of constraint. The prison held its maker, but the Nightbird and the Mædu, Lucibel and Gadrel in alien skins, had also come home.



TEMPLE OF THE DEATHFIGHT

2. Statue. On the top surface of its base, a concealed circular cover may be rotated counterclockwise when manipulated by one of Mhari Ridæn's bloodline. It possesses no mechanical locking mechanism to be picked, but sufficient battering (175 points damage) will either break the cover open or jam it to prevent any access, magical or otherwise. Within the shallow receptacle lies a ring formed of a plain band of blue metal. At will, the wearer of the ring may cause a tone, composed of both music and the Essænce to be emitted that will create certain harmonic resonances within crystalline structures within 50', 1x/day. Very special music can be created this way, swaying the emotions of listeners with greater power than compositions on a harp or mandolin. (Individuals who fail a RR by 01-25 will feel happy, sad, angry, or frightened at the player's will; those who fail by 26-75 will want to do something in response to their feeling, however their proposed actions will reflect their own goals and priorities not the player's; persons who fail by 76 or more will act, again according to their own wishes.) However, some crystalline substances will shatter under this treatment. The Kirzelæn is among these, since the ring's original purpose was to be the means of turning off the forcefield that is Gethæna's sky.

4. THE TASK

The adventurers must find the secret compartments located within each of Mhari Ridæn's shrines, remove the item stored there, and either claim it for their own or put the artifact in Jaizel Arbeleth's keeping. The process of obtaining the Essænce-lord's possessions will bring the PCs into conflict with Taza operating under Bathym's orders. The adventurers must defeat these foes through trickery or superior force, since the Taza cannot be converted into allies.

STARTING THE PLAYERS

If the adventurers have participated in the events of *Confronting the Torturer* and *Loresmaster's Consolation*, Jaizel's request that they retrieve Mhari Ridæn's items will start the PCs on this adventure. However, repayment of their debt need not be the only motivation for action. A group of Dain Sædhu will be interested in preventing any Eh'taza from gaining the military advantage that the Essænce-lord's items might grant their possessor. Additionally, if one of the PCs is a descendant of Mhari Ridæn, he or she will feel that the artifacts belong more rightfully to him or herself than to any other.

Should Tælethrand prove untenable as a starting point, perhaps the PCs discover notes on the four shrines in an ancient tome in one of the Dain Sædhun city libraries. Or perhaps Mhari Ridæn's descendant experiences a dream in which his or her inheritance is stolen by an Eh'taza wearing heather green. PCs are notoriously curious, and mere proximity to one of the monuments during their travels between the Dain Sædhun cities may be sufficient to lure them to explore the structure, thereby encountering Noryn and Nemu.

The adventurers need not visit Mhari's shrines in the order in which they are presented by the text above. Should the PCs arrive first at the Temple of the Beginning, the *First Foray* can easily take place at that location or any other of the monuments. The placement of each of the subsequent forays is equally flexible.

AIDS

If the PCs begin this adventure at Jaizel Arbeleth's residence, the Loresmaster will provide them with an accurate map of Gethæna. The four Dain Sædhun cities, most topographical features, and the four monuments to Mhari Ridæn are marked on its parchment. Jaizel may offer some healing herbs to the adventurers and will lend them equipment stored in his pillar of Essicrysta.

Bathym's assumption that no one besides himself knows of the location of Mhari Ridæn's items provides the greatest aid to the PCs. The Eh'taza sends but two Taza initially to retrieve the artifacts from their resting places and merely increases the strength of his forces by two or three when he realizes that he has rivals. Had he started with a more accurate assessment of the situation, Bathym might have sent a company of Nuld with several Tazan officers to each of the Essænce-lord's shrines.

Should the adventurers accept Iblis into their ranks when they meet her, the Eh'taza's presence will prove helpful when they encounter Bathym's forces. The Taza will be confused by her cooperative relations with the PCs. Disorientation will delay the Tazan attack and inhibit their effectiveness when they finally do engage in combat.

OBSTACLES

The PCs must either count a descendant of Mhari Ridæn among their number or possess the Linnæn. The magically sealed compartments which hold the Essænce-lord's artifacts cannot be reliably opened by any other methods. Controlling the genetic key which unlocks the wards protecting Mhari's items, although necessary, is not sufficient. The presence of Bathym's Taza, who seek the same items, presents another significant obstacle at each of the monuments.

REWARDS

A modicum of perseverance, fortitude, and cunning will gain the artifacts of Mhari Ridæn for the PCs' use. The artifacts are items of considerable potency, and one of them should prove essential to preventing the domination of Gethæna by the Heresia Combata. The Temple of the Beginning holds the *Greave of the Forger*. The Temple of the Search guards the *Seeker's Veil*. The *Gauntlet of the Alchemist* rests in the Temple of the Forging. And the *Ring of Elæph and Urina* (*elæph* is one name for the first letter in the Laminauræ alphabet, while *urina* is a name for the last) is located in the Temple of the Deathfight.

5. AFTERMATH

The Legacy of Mhari Ridæn and those scenarios presented in Parts VII and VIII should be played in a linear fashion (first *Confronting the Torturer*, next *Loresmaster's Consolation*, and then this scenario). However, the adventures of Parts X and XI (*The Artist's Pavilion* and *The Hidden Vault*) should be embedded within the events of this adventure. When the PCs travel from the Temple of the Forging to the Temple of the Deathfight, they should go through the grasslands of Migdol, passing close to Orias' pavilion there. Proximity to the Ishru's refuge provides a natural lead into the adventure of *The Artist's Pavilion*. This route will also bring the PCs quite close to the flanks of Paltæ, the central volcanic mountain dominating all of Gethæna. Linked chambers within its southeastern slope guard the sleeping body of Niyoreh Jirel. Pæl Dhæk, who has awakened from his long slumber, lurks within the sanctuary. When the PCs approach the concealed entrance, the Essænce-lord's machinations should precipitate the events of *The Hidden Vault* (Part XI).

The power obtained by acquiring the artifacts of Mhari Ridæn, when combined with the information learned from the notes in Orias' pavilion and from the peculiar interactions with Pæl Dhæk, should enable the PCs to consider stealing the Narsirabæn and freeing Pæl's daughter from her crystal prison. The scenarios involving the theft of Bathym's creations and the liberation of the Essænce-lord are presented in Parts XII and XIII.



CAIDH, PEATH, HÆN, AND THE SANDLION MARINÆLLA crouched within a thicket of thornwood bushes. The briars had drawn blood from Caidh's cheek, but his attention was not on his scratch. One hundred yards away, a pavilion of pearl rose from the grasslands in asymmetrical curves and whorls. Three shallow steps led up to its front door where an oddly dressed young woman knelt to examine the portal.

Her dark brown hair and tanned skin suggested that she was one of the Dain Sædhu. Yet her garb was unlike the flowing white robes of these desert dwellers. She wore a brown quilted coat embroidered with bright swirls of emerald, crimson, and sapphire over a skirt of turquoise suede. She removed something from the pouch at her belt, then tinkered with the door handle before her. The door slid up and open, and she slipped inside.

"Hurry!" hissed Caidh. He darted toward the pavilion followed by his three companions. They reached the door just before its latching mechanism clicked shut. Hæn dove for the entrance and shoved his fist across the threshold to catch the descending portal. He peered into the foyer. A plant bearing huge blue-green leaves grew in an urn to the right of the entrance. From a single large flower at its crown drifted a lavender mist.

Hæn withdrew his head. "Poison gas. Have we got anything we can use against it?"

Caidh answered with two gestures that traced a glowing green figure on Hæn's chest. "Lungs of Steel. You can breath anything now." The mage turned to his brother and then the sandlion to fortify them against the tainted atmosphere inside.

Hæn pushed the door open. Beyond the foyer, a skylight illuminated the pavilion's central hall. Carved marble outlined a sunken pool there. At its edge slumped the prone figure of the woman in the quilted coat.

Peath rushed forward, his hands limned with a golden glow. Kneeling beside the collapsed thief, drawing lines of light across her face and chest, he murmured the words of a purification spell. His patient stirred. Her eyes flew open. They were a deep blue, not the hazel typical of the Dain Sædhu.

“Who are you?” she gasped.



Adventurers will probably obtain the most information (from the documents lying on Orias' desk) if they visit the pavilion during its master's absence. Unfortunately, they must then overcome the poisonous traps with which the Ishru safeguards his vacant abode.

1·THE TALE

Situated in the grasslands of Migdol, a small structure provides Orias refuge from the bustle of his well-populated war fortress. Occasionally he invites friends to this haven for an intimate dinner, a poetry reading, or amateur theatricals. Usually he stays there alone, reading, painting, sculpting, or writing. Most recently, writing has been his preoccupation, but the Ishru is not laboring over a sonnet or a treatise on the form of teacups in the eighteenth dynasty of the Emperors of Ynthaleris. Notes describing the activities of the rebel Eh'taza and speculations on the proper course of action to counter their moves fill the sheets of paper on the desk in his study. This information is the primary pull for a party of adventurers.

2·THE LAYOUT

Made of pearly næcrys, the artist's pavilion is a complex conglomeration of curves and whorled ornamentation. Sinuous windows of transparent vitreæn assume grossly impractical forms to harmonize with this theme. The private garden adjacent brims with exotic flora and miniature fountains of irænis.

Once within the pavilion's outside portals, no doors separate the interior spaces. The curving walls and a visitor's discretion are the only guardians of privacy. Translucent panels of vitreæn in the ceilings and walls, as well as the aforementioned windows, allow Gethæna's sky to light the interior.

Should adventurers, searching the plains for danger and excitement, stumble upon the pavilion, they have a chance (GM's discretion) of making the acquaintance of Orias and a few of his Taza. If the Ishrun prince is not in residence, however, the pavilion is completely empty of inhabitants, although well defended by traps which function only during their master's absence.

1. Main Entry. Three polished steps lead up to this ornate portal. The door slides up into the wall above it when any weight over 50 lbs. is applied to the steps or floor immediately inside the threshold. Both this door and the garden door are locked (Hard, -20, to pick). Unless Orias is present, inside or with the entering persons, all traps in the house are operational.

2. Main Foyer. A spacious, irregularly-shaped chamber formed of næcrys, the same lustrous material found on the exterior. A blue-leaved plant stands on the right in an urn. It exudes a poisonous gas when Orias is not present. Those who fail a RR fall into a deep sleep, to awaken much refreshed 12 hours later. Shelves on the left wall hold a dozen pairs of thonged sandals. They allow the wearer to walk on water and other liquids while within the pavilion.

3. Central Passage. One step down from both foyers, this irregular hall gives access to all areas of the house.

4. Pool. A generous marble basin filled with irænis. Guests may bathe in it, walk on it in the provided sandals, or fall into it when they forget the appropriate footwear. A clear vitreæn skylight illuminates the area.

5. Garden Foyer. A bas relief on the left wall (while facing the garden door) depicts the female Gadrel. Illicit visitors to the pavilion who meet her gaze must roll a RR against Suggestion: the suggested act being a rapid departure from the premises.

6. Garden Door. Similar to the main entry, yet less grandiose, this door slides into the adjacent wall when weight is applied to the pressure-sensitive areas surrounding the threshold.

7. Garden Gates. Unlocked, the gates swing open at a touch. Recessed into the garden wall nearby, a shelf displays a dozen agate spheres (1/2" d) each of which provide the bearer with immunity to the toxic pollens shed by some of the plants within the garden.

8. Garden. One narrow path, neatly graveled, winds between the intimate nooks formed by the plantings. Benches, sculpture, and fountains, all sporting fluid curves and trceries, occupy each nook. The poisonous species present among the banks of foliage include: flowering albhæmis, sweet sælenis, mossy convivial, and deadly lavænus (see the table in Part XIV).

9. Meditation Room. The padded floor, one step up from the passageway and covered in purple velvet, is comfortable to sit or lounge upon. Silk hangings, depicting lush underwater scenes, adorn the walls. A few steps lead down to an indoor garden.

10. Interior Garden. Surrounded by ferns, a small fountain of rosælis splashes musically. A translucent skylight and wall window (providing a view of the exterior garden) create a feeling of spaciousness.

11. Small Studio. Shelves and cabinets line the walls. They hold pens, brushes, inks, pastels, oils, chalk, chisels, files, paper, vellum, parchment, blocks of stone, and all manner of media useful to an artist. Near the window, a small easel holds an unfinished watercolor of a woman clothed in rainbow satin. Several large pillows are scattered near the easel, those upon which the woman reclines in the painting.

12. Bedroom. A large round bed occupies almost half the chamber. A few small tables, some chairs, and two chests full of clothes account for the remaining space. Unwelcome guests who attempt to slumber on the bed may never wake again. The pillows animate after a prone body has remained on the bed for more than 5 minutes and move to suffocate the sleeper. Four snakes, carved of stone, are stored in the false bottom of one of the chests:

Jade Snake—when touched by warm flesh, it animates and crawls up the arm of the one who touched it, coiling once around his or her neck like a torque; the wearer regenerates 10 hits/rnd up to 300 total points per day.

Turquoise Snake—animates when touched, curling twice around the smallest finger of the one who touched it; wearer has an extra 50 PP per day.

Carnelian Snake—animates when touched, coiling five times around the forearm; wearer may use any weapon with a +80 OB.

Onyx Snake—animates when touched, circling the thigh thrice; wearer may use telekinesis 7x/day to move up to 2,000 lbs. at 1' per second; creates sympathy in wearer for the Ishru, especially Orias, so that upon subsequent encounters the wearer may discover he views the Ishru as friends and allies, 50% chance each encounter; if the wearer does not change his or her attitude, this effect remains hidden.

13. Balcony. Hinged windows in the bedroom open onto the minute terrace. A low railing guards the two foot drop to the garden.

14. Grand Studio. Reserved at this time for exhibition rather than creation, several outsized paintings and sculptures occupy the chamber. Broad, shallow steps, softened by woven carpets, cascade down to the outer wall, a curving expanse of vitreæn. Starting as pure transparency near the ground, the window assumes a pale rose tint as it moves upward shading through azure into apple green.

15. Side Hall. Carpeted with matting and yielding access to the pool and the study, the space also contains shelves for general storage. Frequently, a picnic basket rests there among tablecloths and napkins. The Ishru eat infrequently or not at all; thus kitchens are unnecessary in a residence occupied so little.

16. Study. All who enter the study, unless they arrive by way of the pool, walk over a *Tangled Path* Rune that is triggered by touch rather than sight. Those failing a RR turn right sharply, abruptly finding themselves submerged in the pool. Surprise may cause the victim to swallow some irænis. One large desk with a comfortable chair and bookshelves are the only furnishings in the room. The books contain information on art history, painters' techniques, artists' biographies, and the like. The drawers of the desk hold paper, pens, and ink. One drawer possesses a false bottom, Hard (-10) to discern. In it rests accounts of the three groups of revolutionary Eh'taza (the text in Part V *The Rebels*).

3·THE TASK

After garnering frank, but disjointed, snippets of information from Jaizal Arbeleth, hints casting doubt on Jaizel's veracity from Pserchia Qæa, and excerpts from an account of the Lords of Essænce in ancient times, the adventurers will be hungry for facts illuminating the true state of affairs in Gethæna. Their search through the artist's pavilion should be geared towards accumulating knowledge rather than treasure. The timing of the PCs encounter with the pavilion is crucial. It will be more satisfying if they have intense

curiosity to satisfy. Thus, the adventure should be inserted in one of the legs of travel between the monuments to Mhari Ridæn (described in Part IX). The PCs may be induced to approach the pavilion by odd behavior of wildlife (an unusual number of hawks circling the structure), freakish weather (a sudden storm), or simply their own desire to explore. Remember that Pæl Dhæk is monitoring the party's actions and remains intent on manipulating the group to free his daughter. Odd happenings and unexplained coincidences will dog the adventurers' footsteps throughout their travels.

AIDS

The absence of the Ishrun lord, Orias, and his attendants will be the primary aid to the PCs while they rifle through the furnishings and accoutrements of the pavilion. Privacy in which to search will guarantee that the maximum amount of information is obtained. Should Orias be present, he will voluntarily provide much of the material recorded in the notes in his desk once the PCs have proven their trustworthiness to him. However, this scenario is second to best, because the PCs may make an enemy of the Ishru (who they will eventually need as an ally) out of ignorance. The GM should think twice before placing Orias on the premises.

OBSTACLES

The traps guarding the pavilion in Orias' absence provide considerable challenge to adventurers searching the interior. They risk death by poisoning or suffocation, capture by an irate Ishrun prince if he arrives to find intruders present, or simply finding themselves unable to pass by the enchanted bas relief in the garden foyer. The GM should adjust the difficulty level of the traps to accommodate the skills and experience possessed by the PCs. A low level party or inexperienced players might be overwhelmed and discouraged by the traps at full strength. A high level group and experienced players may require some additional challenge to maintain their interest.

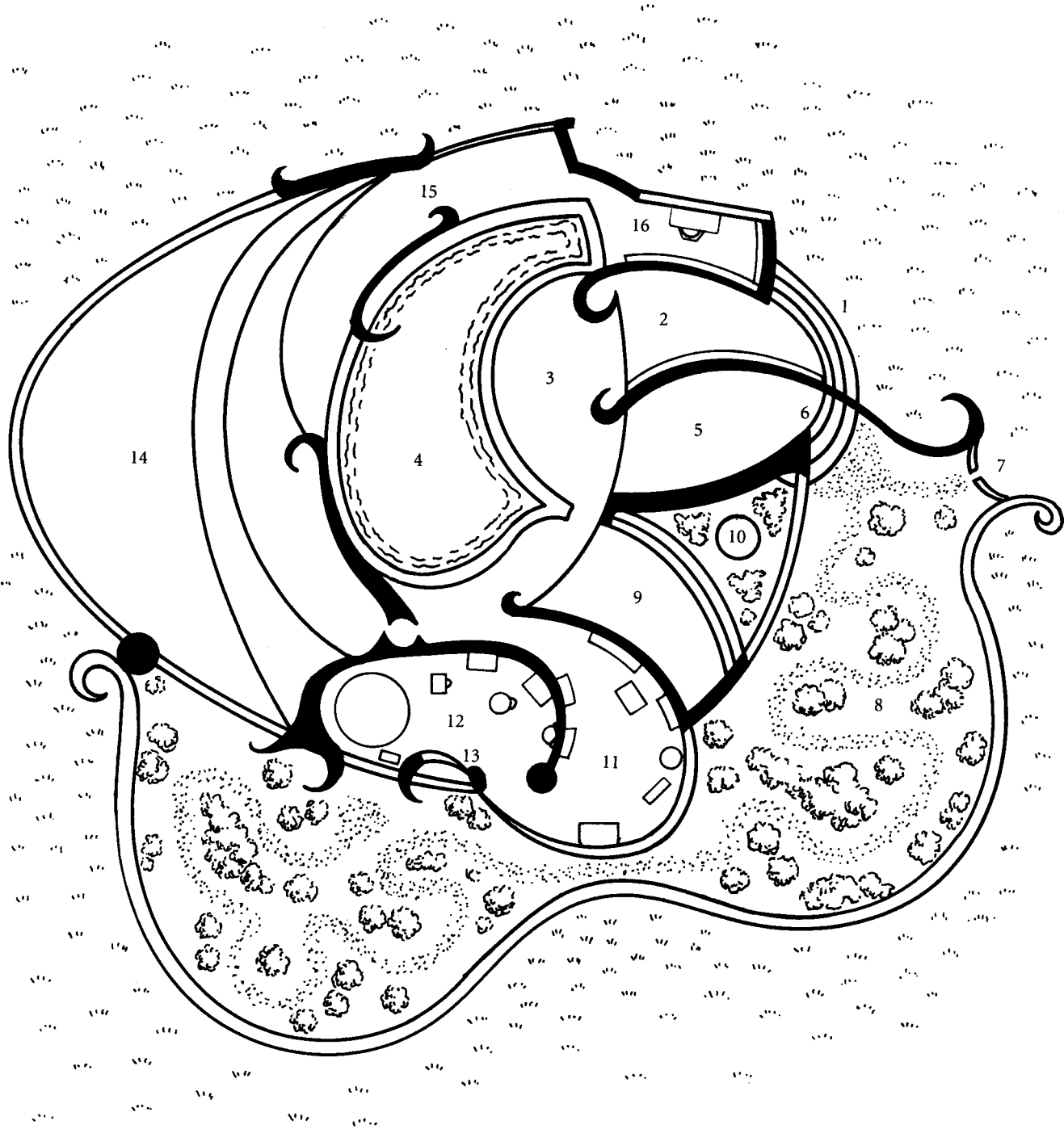
REWARDS

The knowledge recorded in Orias' notes should more than satisfy the PCs whose major obstacle until now has been lack of information. It is recommended that they make a copy of the original pages, leaving all as they found it. Although the pavilion is well-stocked with valuables, these too should not be removed. The PCs may need Orias' help, or at least his goodwill, before the end of their adventures in Gethæna. (If they do steal from the Ishru, remember that he will not know the identity of the thieves.)

4·AFTERMATH

If this adventure has been inserted into the sequence of events described in *The Legacy of Mhari Ridæn*, the adventurers will be racing to the next monument in an attempt to obtain the artifact secured there before the Taza sent by Bathym arrive. Their newfound knowledge hints at the identity of their enemy, but they will have little time to ponder the matter. In any case, direct action against Bathym, defended as he is by the walls of Nokor Næph, Sachiel's armies of Nuld, and the Taza and Eh'taza of the Heresia Combata would be foolhardy. A devious plan to determine the location of the Narsirabæn, followed by a daring theft, should be the next deed contemplated by the adventurers. (See Part XII.)

THE ARTIST'S PAVILION



PART IV
THE HIDDEN VAULT



DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE TWO SCHOLARS, THE library was rather crowded. Both armchairs were occupied, while the reading table groaned under the weight of three men perched there. A sandlion prowled the perimeter of the room.

“You do understand why I could do nothing?” questioned Pæl Dhæk politely. He leaned back more comfortably in his armchair.

Seated in the other, Kaia traced one of the crimson spirals of embroidery adorning her quilted coat. “We understand. But we don’t like it very much! Really, dear sir, Hæn was nearly killed by an illusionary sorcerer that looked just like you!”

“One of Niyoreh’s little jokes. It wasn’t me.” Pæl sounded condescending.

“We know that,” replied Kaia. “That’s not really the point. Why should we go to all the trouble necessary to rescue your daughter? And, once we succeed, how do we know she won’t be as awful as your sleeping Niyoreh?”

Hæn interrupted. “Kaia, you know we want to shatter the sky anyway. To end the suffering of my people. Why not help this gentleman?”

Kaia sniffed. “You’re Dain Sædhun. You want to release the Ishru so they won’t bother you anymore. I’m from the surface, and I’m not so sure I want these fiends terrorizing my homelands!”

Pæl smiled. “And if you obtain the Narsirabæn, you may break the prison without loosing the prisoners. I have floorplans for the Gates where these artifacts are hidden. And I know the defenses of the fortification. If I give you this information, will you free Mhari Ridæn?”



Hopefully the adventurers will have formulated their own goals once they’ve advanced this far into the campaign. Most of the persons they encounter will be eager to persuade them to pick a side in the conflict spanning Gethæna.

1·THE TALE

The fashioning of the Narsirabæn by Bathym triggered the controls of the sorcerous machine holding Pæl Dhæk in slumber to awaken the Essænce-lord. A pale green fluid seeped through a needle into his veins while the dim light playing over his supine form brightened from blue to red to yellow. A sparkling field of energy spread across his limbs, his heart started beating, and his lungs took their first breath in centuries. Searing pain raced through his nerves, and Pæl opened his eyes. He glanced immediately to his left. Niyoreh Jirel lay cold and still, her rigid features illuminated by the slow strokes of indigo light playing over her body like the beacon of a lighthouse splashing over the beach and sea at night.

Pæl sighed and swung his legs over the edge of the platform where he had slept for so long. Niyoreh was not awake, and he was free to initiate the liberation of Mhari Ridæn. He had schemed to obtain this time of solitude, but did not relish it now that the opportunity had arrived. With a sardonic twist to his lips, Pæl stood up and walked lightly away from the woman who had shaped his every thought from the moment of her birth.

In an adjacent chamber, he paused before the huge screen displaying the grasslands of Migdol, then began to manipulate the dials and dampened levers that covered every available surface. Soon Kaia kus'Urnuinen and many others of similar blood ties experienced the thrumming in their limbs that urged them to journey far from friends, family, and homeland. Pæl was calling the descendants of Mhari Ridæn, hoping that one among them might prove willing to release his daughter.

2·THE NPCs

PÆL DHÆK

Pæl Dhæk has been awake and active for over a year. Most of that time, he has hovered beside the monitor that allows its viewer to study lands both far and near from its current location, generating pictures of the events transpiring at the focus of the viewer's attention. The Essence-lord spied upon the secret meetings of the Ordæum Novis, the Nictum Aureate, and the Heresia Combata. He studied the design of the Gates barring passage through the one break in Gethæna's encircling mountains. And he watched the progress of Mhari Ridæn's descendants as they followed the call he himself had sent forth.

When the adventurers first meet Pæl, he will greet them with an elaborate speech of welcome. "Well met, brave wayfarers of honor and joyous seeking. The chambers through which you have passed to reach me have tried your endurance and fortitude sorely, and I am truly grateful for your presence. Perhaps we may now accomplish together that which would be impossible alone. My name is Pæl Dhæk, and I crave a boon that you alone may grant or refuse as it pleases you." An offer of refreshment will follow these words and then the telling of the events that led

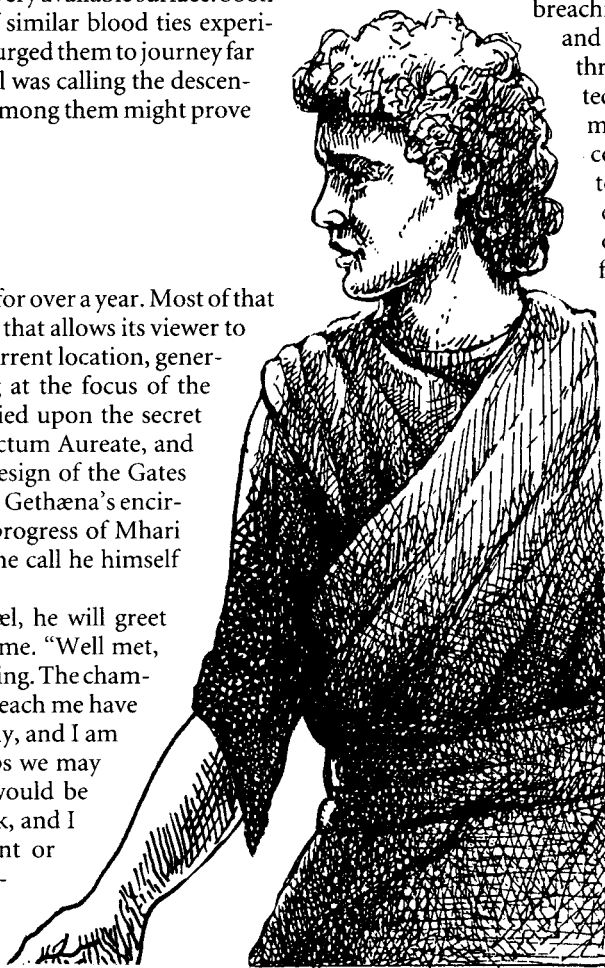
to Mhari's imprisonment. Pæl will make no attempt to enforce his will upon the PCs. His request that they liberate his daughter may be as freely answered with "no" as with a "yes." (See Part VI *Other Powers*, Section 1, and Part VII *Confronting the Torturer*, Section 4, for more information.)

NIYOREH JIREL

Niyoreh Jirel will remain asleep throughout Pæl's encounter with the adventurers unless one of the PCs strays beyond Pæl's living quarters into the gallery that leads to the vault where her body lies. Should this occur, the Essænce machine will wake her to the doom of all. The Flowmaster will not return to slumber until she has exterminated the adventurers, squashed the emerging autonomy displayed by Pæl Dhæk, and personally checked the balance of power in Kulthea to determine whether she might conquer its lands and peoples at this time. Niyoreh's arrogance and ambition have in no way been tempered by her long retreat from consciousness. (See Part VI *Other Powers*, Section 1, for more information.)

3·THE LAYOUT

The complex series of halls and chambers hollowed from the rock of Paltæl was designed by Niyoreh to foil despoilers intent on breaching the security of the vault where she and Pæl Dhæk slept. Travelling inward through the sorcerous wards and architectural deceptions is difficult while movement towards the outside is easy. The concealed portals from each subsection to the next are Sheer Folly (-50) to locate, and the traps are equally tough to detect before they are activated. Spells from the Light Molding list create soft, indirect lighting throughout the complex.



BATHYM

THE CAVERN OF ILLUSION

The rock formations of the cavern resemble the stalactites and stalagmites found in caves of soluble limestone, but for one detail: the flowing columns and curtains of stone are gleaming black onyx and bone dry! The juxtaposition of the artificial with the natural should make more knowledgeable adventurers uneasy.

1. Entrance. A large, irregular arch opens in the mountainside to give access to a generous passageway. A traveller walking within a stone's throw of the entrance couldn't miss seeing it. At a distance, spotting the cave becomes harder. The blackness of the passage walls blends so perfectly with the ash, laval slag, and volcanic glass that covers the slopes of Paltæl that most individuals will never notice (Absurd, -75, at 500' with an additional -10 for every additional 100') the opening.

2. Demon's Grotto. Three pillars connected by a lacy veil of stone hanging from the ceiling seclude a small pocket in the cavern wall. When any person steps into the miniature grotto, a 11th lvl *Waiting Phantasm III* is triggered. The adventurer who fails a RR sees a Hothrog, a Faiseemer of Zelrethsu, bursting through the onyx wall to attack (man's body, jackal's head, metallic claws). A PC who makes his or her RR will see through the illusion and be unaffected by the Demon's attack. If the Demon is slain by an adventurer who believed the illusion, another PC stepping into the grotto will trigger the appearance of another illusionary Demon. Each PC gains +10 to RRs vs. subsequent illusions in the caverns each time he or she makes a successful RR vs. an illusion, to a maximum of +50.

Hothrog—Lvl: 3, Speed: SL/MD, Size/Crit: M/L, Hits: 115, AT(DB): 11(-15), Attacks: 50MCI(2x)/50MBA/100MBi.

3. Mermaid's Sanctuary. Four stalagmites emerge from the floor to create the mermaid's sanctuary. Individuals looking through the onyx fangs will see (50th lvl *Phantasm True*) a still pool of water. If a PC passes through the fringe of stalagmites, a mermaid (11th lvl *Waiting Phantasm III*) surfaces and councils the adventurers to swim across her sanctuary to reach the passageway beyond. "There alone will you find that which you seek," she claims.

Mermaid—Lvl: 5, Speed: MD/MD, Size/Crit: M/—, Hits: 85, AT(DB): 1(-35), Melee: 60trident, Missile: 30trident.

4. Dead End. The illusionary mermaid touted this passage as the proper route inward, but it leads nowhere. Another illusion (20th lvl *Phantasm X*), a three-headed hydra, lurks in the bulge nearest the dead end.

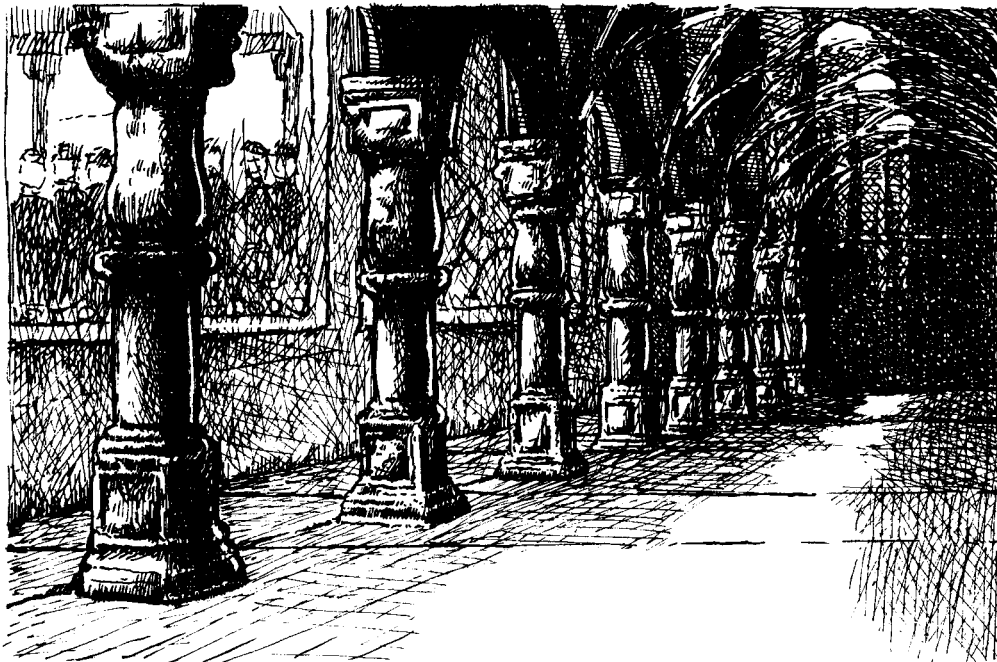
Hydra—Lvl: 20, Speed: MD/VF, Size/Crit: H/SL, Hits: 380, AT(DB): 19(-40), Attacks: 150HBA/90LBI(3x)/60FBR(3x).

5. Outer Passage. Circumnavigating the mermaid's sanctuary, this route leads to the narrow tunnel penetrating deeper into the Essænce-lord's Vault.

6. Tunnel. The way gets ever narrower as the adventures progress. Midway down the tunnel, a voice (15th lvl *Sound Mirage*) booms, "Your doom awaits amidst these shadows. Turn back unless you seek death!" A 6th lvl *Fear* spell accompanies the warning. A secret door (Sheer Folly, -50, to find) at the tunnel's very end opens onto a staircase case climbing up. It emerges through a trap door in the center of the Chamber of Mirrors.

THE CHAMBER OF MIRRORS

7. Trap Door. The stairway from the cavern (#6) emerges at the bottom of the Chamber of Mirrors. Steps climb the walls on all sides of the chamber. The risers (but not the treads) of the steps and the walls above them are faced with mirrors. A prism (four total) rests on the first step on each side of the trap door. Generating three bursts of light, first red, then blue, then green will permit an intruder to lift the trapdoor on a concealed set of hinges opposite those which operated to allow entry from the cavern stairs. Lifting the door in this second manner gives access to another staircase, descending to the Hall of Pillars.



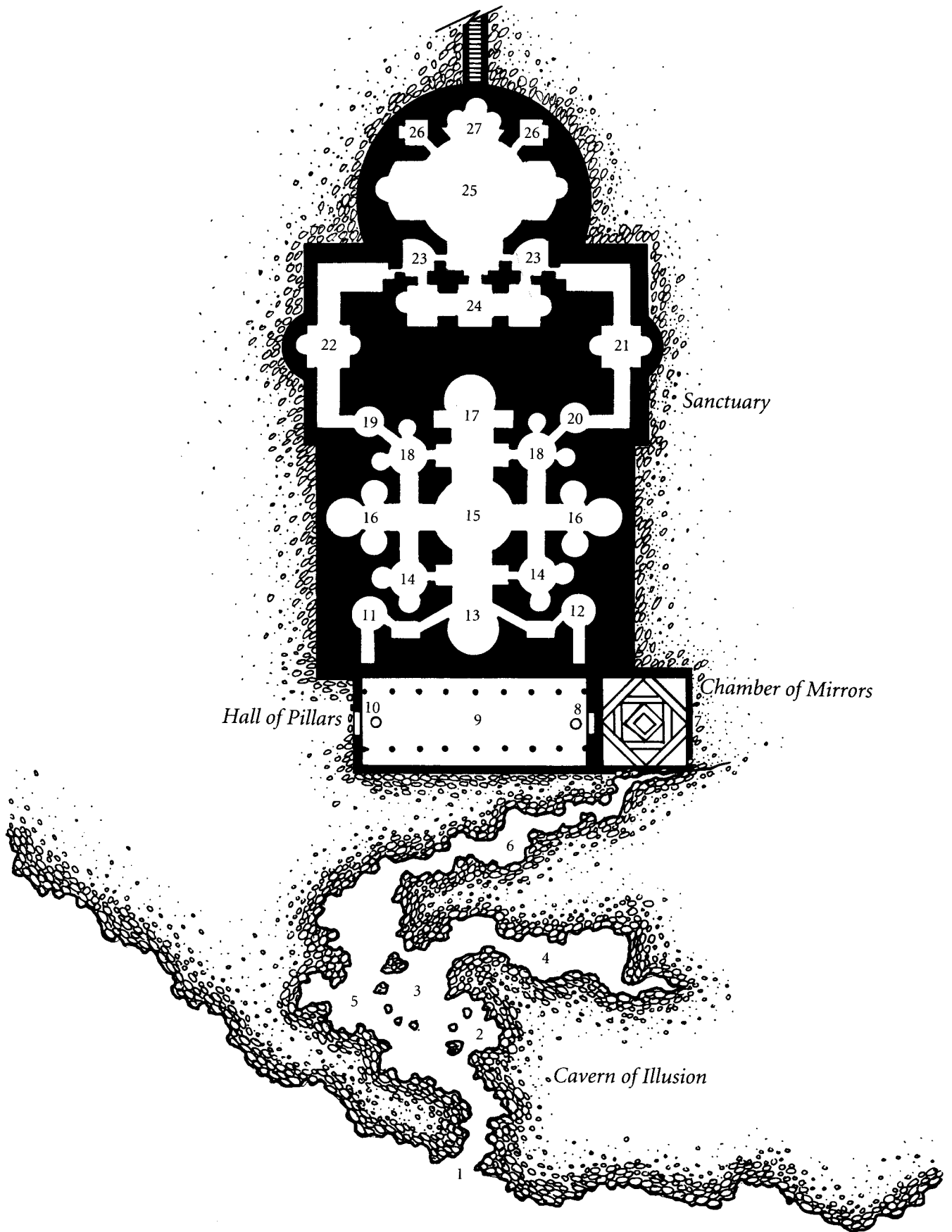
THE HALL OF PILLARS

THE HALL OF PILLARS

8. Stone Portal. The massive, double, stone doors are not locked, but cannot be swung on their hinges except by individuals possessing a Strength stat of 95 or greater. The staircase from the Chamber of Mirrors ends at these doors.

9. The Hall of Pillars. Six tapestries hang on each of the two long walls. Runes of Beguilement are woven into their design, and the PC who fails an RR (vs. a 10th lvl *Mentalism* spell) will stare indefinitely at these magnificent works. The wall to the right (if entering from the Chamber of Mirrors) displays a unicorn galloping across the starry night sky, a twisted pine blasted by lightning, a mountain meadow visited by a pegasus, a king's throne room thronged by vividly garbed courtiers, a still tarn reflecting the moon sailing over moorlands, and a swan gliding beneath willow fronds near the river's bank. The tapestries depicting the unicorn and the swan cover secret doors (Sheer Folly, -50, to detect). The hangings on the left wall portray a comet swinging past a planet circled by rings, a hearth upon whose stone burns roses, a ruined tower hung with ivy, a knight confronting a dragon, the spirit of the rainbow dancing in a woodland glade, and a feast table set with silver and bearing bounteous platters of food.

10. Bas Relief Portal. The further end of the hall is carved to resemble the stone doors facing them, through which anyone arriving via the Chamber of Mirrors must pass. The false doors cannot be opened and lead nowhere.



Hall of Pillars

Sanctuary

Chamber of Mirrors

Cavern of Illusion

WORLDSLAYER'S REFUGE

THE SANCTUARY

High, vaulting ceilings, ornately carved pilasters and columns, beautifully life-like statuary, and soft, indirect lighting characterize the spaces comprising the Sanctuary. Its surfaces are faced with rose-streaked white marble.

11. Entry Chamber. Reached through the door hidden behind the tapestry of the swan in the Hall of Pillars. A suit of plate mail stands on display opposite the corridor from the secret door. It holds a spiked mace in each hand and is in reality a Minor Construct with orders from Niyoreh Jirel to kill any individual entering the Sanctuary from the Hall of Pillars.

Minor Construct—Lvl: 3, Speed: VS/MD, Size/Crit: M/I#, Hits: 150, AT(DB): 20(-0), Attacks: 60ma(2x).

12. Entry Chamber. A secret door behind the tapestry depicting a unicorn in the Hall of Pillars opens into the corridor leading to this entry chamber. A statue of a muscular youth, clad in but a loin cloth, is visible from the threshold of the secret door. He is actually a stone golem and will attack anyone entering from the Hall of Pillars into the circular room where he stands.

Stone Golem—Lvl: 10, Speed: MD/MD, Size/Crit: M/LA#, Hits: 170, AT(DB): 16(-20), Attacks: 100LbA/60LGr/150LCr.

13. Hall of Images. Statuary lines the walls of this pilastered hall. A laughing Lady, gowned in a dress with many fluttering capes and ruffles, and playing a harp; a Faun, dancing and blowing on reed pipes; a King seated on his throne; a child in his sleeping smock, clutching a trailing blanket; a young mother suckling her newborn baby; and a priestess dancing in honor of her god comprise but a few of the marble images present.

14. Twin Chapels. The walls rise in each of these chambers to a shallow dome whose carved surface depicts the leafy branches one might see if looking overhead while strolling through a forest. Rounded alcoves and niches hold lit candles. Closer examination reveals that the flames are but illusions and do not consume the wax of the tapers. Individuals entering either of the side chapels must make a RR vs. a 15th lvl Essence spell or be removed via Lofty Bridge *Long Door* (500') to the spot just outside the cavern entrance (#1).

15. Wind Dome. A painting of towering, white cumulus clouds, lit by golden sunlight and floating in a vivid blue sky, covers the surface of the immense dome arching above a cornice supported by pilasters. The perspective is quite accurate, and the adventurers might for a moment think that the chamber is open to the outdoors, until they remember that Gethæna's sky is an incandescent cavern roof. The presence of three or more persons in the room triggers a Wind Law *Whirlwind* that lasts for 5 rnds. Ten minutes after it subsides, the spell can be triggered again.

16. Twin Transepts. Vaults of extraordinary height (120') stretch away on either side of the Wind Dome (#15). The stone ribs fan out to create a pattern with the texture of lace on the curving ceiling. A mosaic on the easternmost wall depicts a dove impaling itself on the thorns of a rose bush. The westernmost wall holds a mosaic portraying a serpent, its tail wrapped around the trunk of a fig tree while its upper coils loop through the tree's branches.

17. Hall of the Prisoners. Bas relief carvings on the marble walls depict men and women of all races behind bars. A few individuals kneel with their hands outstretched, pleading for liberty, while others sit hunched in despair on elaborate benches. An Illusion Mastery *Waiting Phantasm III* (20th lvl) creates an image of Mhari Ridæn (shoulder-length blue-black hair, blue eyes with the slit pupils of the K'ta'viiri, pale skin, and long deep blue robes) standing in the center of the chamber. The illusionary figure will attack anyone who enters the hall, with the skills and abilities of a 20th lvl Magician rather than those of a mighty Essænce-lord.

Mage—Lvl: 20, Hits: 50, AT(DB): 2(-100*), Sh: N, Gr: N, Melee: 50bs, Missile: —, Spells: All Closed Essence lists, all Base Magician lists to 20th level.

18. Side Chapels. The shallow dome of each chapel is sculpted to resemble the lacy froth of waves breaking on a sandy shore. Below, rounded alcoves and niches hold lit candles, like those in the Twin Chapels (#14). A Lofty Bridge *Long Door* (300') will send intruders who fail an RR back to the Hall of Pillars (#9).

19. Small Dome. The statue of a maiden wearing a steel breastplate over flowing robes stands at the chamber's center. She holds a sheaf of grain (strikes as a club) in her left hand and an orb surmounted by a circle bearing points like the sun's rays in her right. The maiden is a stone golem and will attack anyone entering the room from the side chapel (#19).

Stone Golem—Lvl: 12, Speed: MD/MD, Size/Crit: M/LA#, Hits: 154, AT(DB): 16(-20), Attacks: 100LbA/60LGr/150LCr.

20. Small Dome. A chainmail coat topped by a visored helmet and supplemented by arm and leg greaves is positioned beneath the apex of the shallow dome. The conglomeration of armor is a Minor Construct with orders to kill anyone entering the chamber from the Side Chapel (#18). It brandishes a morning star at the end of each arm greave.

Minor Construct—Lvl: 5, Speed: VS/MD, Size/Crit: M/I#, Hits: 167, AT(DB): 20(-0), Attacks: 60ms(2x).

21. Right Foyer. Each person passing through the archway into the right foyer triggers a Fire Law *Fire Ball*.

22. Left Foyer. A Water Law *Water Bolt* is triggered by each individual stepping through the archway to the left foyer.

23. Entry Chambers. Mosaics on the floors of both rooms depict the colored pebbles, sea anemones, shells, and vibrant seaweed typical of tide pools on a rocky shore.

24. Gallery of Reeds. The willows and reeds typical of a northerly riverbank are carved in bas relief on the walls of the gallery. An Illusion Mastery *Waiting Illusion V* creates the sound of wind rushing through leaves whenever someone enters the space.

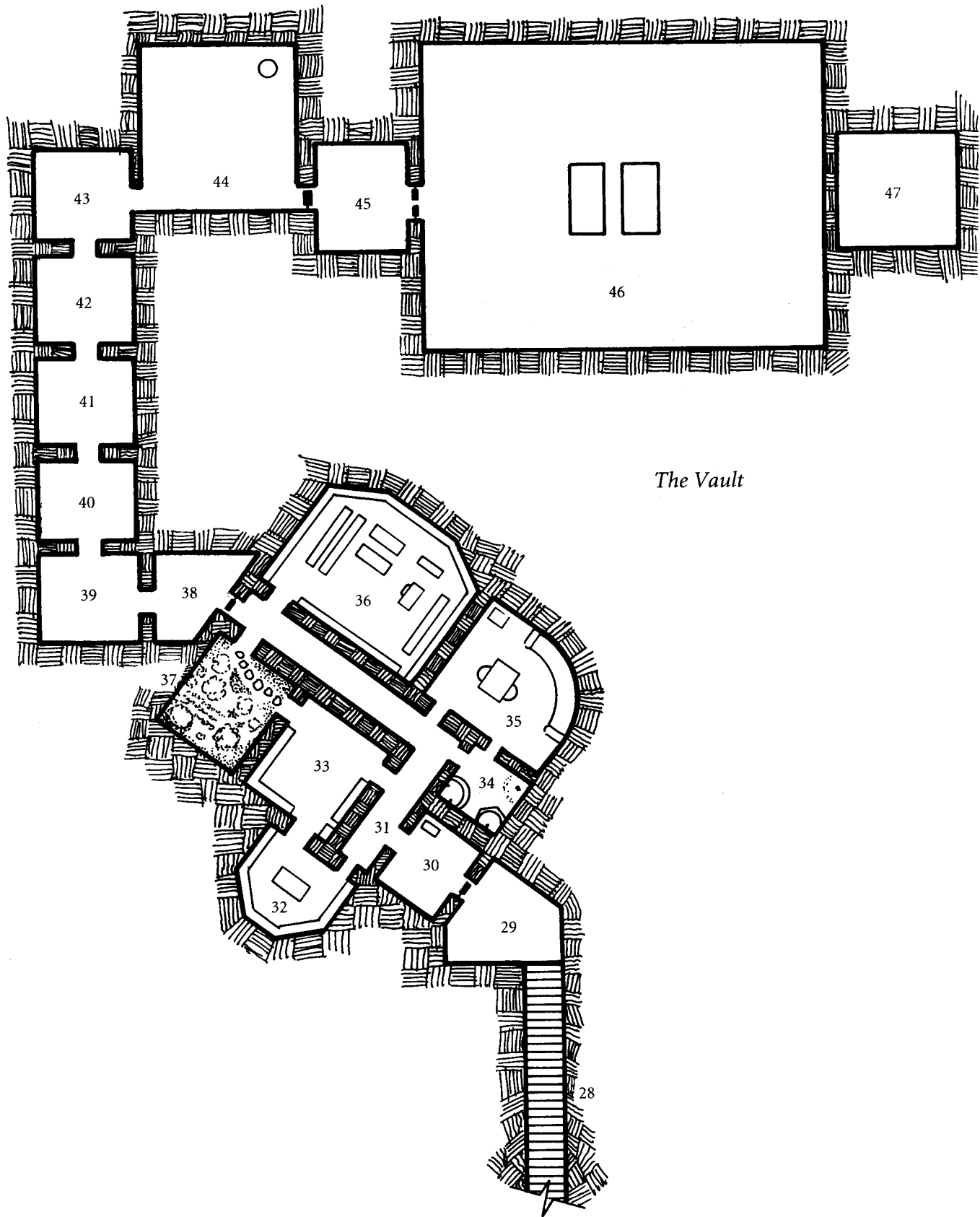
25. Dome of the Dawning. Between pilasters, several arches and portals open from the domed chamber onto adjacent nooks and niches. The marble is elaborately carved in abstract spiraling patterns which support a simple cornice. Above the cornice, the dome rises to an overpowering 135' and its surface depicts the rosy tints of a dawn sky complemented by pink- and peach-tinged clouds. Beneath the splendor stands an Illusion Mastery *Waiting Phantasm III* (20th lvl) in the image of Pæl Dhæk (coal black hair, purple eyes with the K'ta'viiri slit pupil, pale skin, snug black trousers, and a full blouse of black silk). He will attack any person entering the dome from the Entry Chambers (#23) or the Gallery of Reeds (#24) with the powers of a 25th lvl Sorcerer (awesome, but considerably less than those of an Essænce-lord).

Sorcerer—Lvl: 25, Hits: 55, AT(DB): 2(-100*), Sh: N, Gr: N, Melee: 50bs, Missile: —, Spells: Shield Mastery, all Base Sorcerer lists to 25th level.

26. Side Nooks. Mosaics on the floors of both nooks portray the stars and comets of a brilliant night sky.

27. Altar of the Guardian. A low dais occupies the center of the alcove. On the dais, a Guardian of Light in its typical form: a column of swirling bluish sparks. Its task is to prevent intruders from discovering and passing through the secret door (Sheer Folly, -50, to detect) in the back wall of the alcove.

Guardian of Light—Lvl: 25, Speed: —/MF, Size/Crit: L/LA#, Hits: 330, AT(DB): 3(-60), Attacks: Light Law spells.



WORLDSLAYER'S REFUGE

THE VAULT

The ornate detail typical of the Cavern, the Chamber of Mirrors, the Hall of Pillars, and the Sanctuary is absent from the next and last section of the Essænce-lords' resting place. Surfaces are plain, smooth limestone, placænium, or slate, and doors are unadorned, reinforced steel. The lighting alone is similar to that of the previous spaces: magical and indirect.

28. Stair. Descends from the secret door behind the Altar of the Guardian (#27) to living quarters where Pæl Dhæk has resided for a year. Persons climbing the stair are perfectly safe, but those walking down them will trigger a pit trap located in the middle of the steps. The five middle treads recede into the wall as soon as the topmost of the five has 50 or more pounds resting on it. The trap is Extremely Hard (-30) to detect.

29. Lower Landing. An empty room with a steel door occupying one wall. A steel plate is located to its right at shoulder height. Touching the plate, if the individual is Pæl Dhæk or Niyoreh Jirel, causes the door to slide open into the wall on its left. Other individuals touching the plate sound a gong within the living quarters which alerts its occupant to the presence of visitors. The door can be forced open using lock picking skills (Extremely Hard, -40 to the die roll).

30. Foyer. A tall, rectangular, onyx vase in one corner holds several staves:

Jaibod ("Rod of Gyration")—a 6' staff of orange metal that casts Essence Hand Mass Vibrations 1x/day.

Raneril ("Staff of Strayings")—a 3' wooden rod stained green that continuously detects groundwater and persons sympathetic to the bearer's goals.

Koratan ("Staff of Wands")—a 54" length of purple metal that nullifies (300' range) the capabilities of any wand wielded by the enemies of staff's bearer (-50 to the RR made by opposing wands).

Marithor ("Rod of Iniquity")—a 49" rod of black lacquered ash that absorbs any Absolution or Black Channel spell cast at the rod's bearer (up to a total of 371 spell points) and will cast the absorbed spells at the bearer's will.

Querikar ("Caller of Song")—a cork-screwed length of copper-plated rowan that continuously calls songbirds to its vicinity when outdoors, causing its bearer to be followed at all times by a flock of twittering avians.

Abstracted stencils of the staves decorate two of the walls of the foyer. The third holds an open arched doorway into a corridor (#31). Pæl Dhæk will probably meet the PCs here.

31. Corridor. Passes through the living quarters to the series of checkpoints beyond.

32. Eating Nook. A built-in bench topped by blue cushions runs around the perimeter of the nook, surrounding a table of polished beech.



NIYOREH JIREL

33. Cooking Chamber. Although K'ta'viiri eat foodstuffs similar to those required by other races, the comestibles stored in the shelving that covers the walls of the cooking chamber were created with longevity in mind. Jars with vacuum-packed pastes of every color and texture and liquids of every consistency fill the storage space. The countertop below the shelves possesses a steel panel in one section, beneath which a magical flame may be turned off and on by manipulating a marked dial. Cooking pots rest on wider shelves beneath the countertop, and utensils hang on hooks placed just below it. A sink with running water (supplied by both cold and hot springs deep in Paltæl's roots) occupies one corner.

34. Bathing Chamber. Water circulates continuously in the fixtures occupying the room. A sink stands in one corner with three faucets protruding from the wall above its rim (hot water pouring from one, warm from the middle faucet, and cold from the third). A stool whose top surface is a bowl (the rim overhangs the bowl's interior surface and is perforated to allow water to swirl over the entire surface) with a waste pipe connecting to the hole at its base occupies another. And a drain in the floor of the third corner rests beneath a shower of water falling from the ceiling.

35. Sleeping Chamber. Two chairs with black leather seats slung from tubular frames face one another across a low black table in the center of the room. A padded bench, 6' wide and 2' high, sweeps around the outer curving wall. Pæl Dhæk takes the little slumber he needs on its black surface. A black table, near where the bench ends at the uninterrupted straight wall, holds a sculpture made of red metal rods seemingly suspended in thin air.

36. Library. Filled bookshelves line the walls. Most of the volumes are written in the Iruaric tongue, and their subject matter ranges from studies of anatomy to accounts of fictional adventures.

37. Chamber of Plants. Fertile soil forms the floor of the chamber, and many species of plants thrive in it. Fruit trees, vegetables, and herbs provide Pæl Dhæk with sustenance more appealing than the pastes stored in the cooking chamber.

38. Rear Foyer. A steel door similar to the one at the entrance to the living quarters opens from the corridor (#31) into the rear foyer. A cube of onyx (1' on a side) rests in one corner.

39. First Checkpoint. An empty, cubical room with walls, ceiling, and floor of black placænium. All of the spells from the Mentalism Detections list continuously operate in this chamber and the four immediately beyond it. If anyone deviating from the profile generated by Pæl Dhæk passes through the space, the Essænce machine supporting Niyoreh Jirel's comatose body will begin the sequence that will restore the K'ta'viir to consciousness. If the intruder withdraws to the back foyer (38) of the living quarters, Niyoreh Jirel will be returned to her suspended state unawakened.

40. Red Checkpoint. Red placænium covers the surfaces of the second checkpoint. If an intrusion detected in the first checkpoint moves into this chamber, the awakening sequence is accelerated. Additionally, the intruder(s), or the caster(s) of any intruding spell, must make an RR vs. Physical Erosion Mass Fire Nerves.

- 41. Blue Checkpoint.** Blue placænium faces the interior of the third checkpoint. If an intrusion detected in the second checkpoint penetrates to this chamber, the awakening sequence is accelerated yet again. The intruder(s) must make a RR vs. a Gas Destruction *Vacuum True* (10' R).
- 42. Green Checkpoint.** Green placænium covers the surfaces of the fourth checkpoint. If an intrusion detected in the third checkpoint enters this chamber, the awakening sequence is further accelerated. The intruder(s) must make a RR vs. Flesh Destruction *Break Limb*.
- 43. Final Checkpoint.** Black placænium faces the surfaces of the final checkpoint. When an intrusion reaches this chamber, Niyoreh Jirel is fully awake and will not return to sleep until she has fully assessed the current state of Kulthea and taken any appropriate action. If an intrusion ceases to advance in any of the previous checkpoints, the Essænce-lord may still be returned to suspension without full awakening, if the intruder removes himself to the back foyer (#38) of the living quarters. Intruders entering the final checkpoint must make a RR vs. Dark Channels *Absolution Pure*.
- 44. Monitor.** The chamber is a cube, 18' x 18' x 18', whose interior surfaces are the same flat black color of the final checkpoint (#43). One entire wall, to the left as one enters the room, is occupied by a scene of the grasslands of Migdol or the Chamber of Mirrors or any area of Kulthea that the viewer desires. Numerous switches, levers, dials, and wheels protrude from the walls on either side of the monitor from floor to ceiling. A movable spiral stair mounted on small casters allows the viewer to manipulate the controls near the ceiling. Proper use of the Essence can augment certain effects controlled by the instrumentation which determines the scene picked up by the monitor.
- 45. Transition Chamber.** Sliding steel doors seal the small, empty room. Each door slides into the walls when pressure is applied to floor within 3' of its threshold.
- 46. The Vault.** Flickering lights of purple, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red speckle the flat black walls of the chamber. They indicate the status of the Essænce machine, the occupants of the vault, the condition of the entire complex, the presence or absence of intruders, and many other variables to the trained observer. Blue and green are the predominant colors displayed when the situation is secure and unchanging. Purple indicates difficulty with or failure of the life support systems. Yellow is a warning light. Red and orange indicate varying degrees of danger. A massive projection from the ceiling curves down in the center of the room to flare like a musical horn four feet above two platforms there. The platform nearest the door is empty. The other holds Niyoreh Jirel. Of course, if the PCs have penetrated this far, Niyoreh will no longer be at rest. It is likely that she will await the intruders in this room, but the Essænce-lord will be on her feet and ready to act.
- 47. The Essænce Machine.** No physical entrance to the room holding the Essænce machine, such as a portal or a tunnel, exists. The only access to the machine must be via spells such as *Teleport*, *Long Door*, *Leaving*, etc. Twisting pipes with valves and wheels attached, crisscrossing narrow beams of light, and turning gears, all located within an intangible field of Essænce, fill the space. Although incomprehensible to anyone save its creator, the conglomeration keeps Niyoreh Jirel indefinitely alive in a comatose state until world events warrant her awakening.

4 THE TASK

The adventurers must defeat the guardians preventing access to the vault where Niyoreh Jirel lies sleeping in order to make the acquaintance of Pæl Dhæk. The Essænce-lord dares not emerge from the underground chambers where he now lurks lest his companion awake from her slumbers. Thus, the PCs must come to him through the maze of mechanical traps, lethal runes, and waiting golems.

STARTING THE PLAYERS

As the PCs near the southeastern flanks of Gethæna's central volcano, Pæl Dhæk will manipulate the Essænce to create a mental calling or beckoning in the consciousness of each PC. (Each PC should make a RR vs. a 30th lvl spell; if he or she succeeds he or she will not experience this mental pulling.) The summoning will increase in strength with proximity to the Essænce-lord's vault, culminating in a vision of Pæl standing with arms outstretched in a gesture of supplication. The adventurers will not feel compelled to investigate the cave opening they spy in the volcano's slope, but their curiosity or their compassion should provoke exploration.

AIDS

No aid except the PCs' own strength and cunning will be provided in this adventure. Although Pæl Dhæk would like to use his own powers to halt the protective mechanisms that guard the approach to the hidden vault, he must refrain. His interference would be interpreted by the Essænce machine holding Niyoreh Jirel in slumber as the attack of a rival Flowmaster upon her person, resulting in her immediate recall to conscious awareness. And Pæl intends Niyoreh to sleep through his attempt to liberate Mhari Ridæn.

OBSTACLES

The portal, leading from the natural cavern in Paltæl's slopes into the vaulted halls whose carved marbles appear to glorify a place of worship, is cleverly concealed in the folds of rock forming the cavern walls. Once through this hidden door, the adventurers will encounter mechanical traps (pits that open suddenly beneath the feet, architectural ornament that crashes to the floor at the least vibration, and doors that slam shut as one passes through them), magical snares (deadly runes, firebolts from above, and mesmerizing melodies created by a ghostly choir), and golems who attack all trespassers. The door from this lethal sanctuary onto the stairway leading to Pæl's living quarters is also hidden. However, all these obstacles remain unguided by sentient intelligence, and thus should prove more easily overcome than a live adversary.

REWARDS

Should the PCs undertake to release Mhari Ridæn from her crystalline prison, Pæl Dhæk will provide them with maps and floorplans detailing the Gates of Gethæna and the Chambers of the Kirzelæn. Success in the undertaking will guarantee the adventurers even greater rewards, but merely accepting the quest grants them the priceless information Pæl has gathered through the monitor adjacent to the vault where he slept so long.

5 AFTERMATH

Pæl suspects that the presence of intruders within the Chambers of the Kirzelæn will bring the Ishru and their Eh'taza to the location in haste. Although the Eh'taza can be slain and removed from the scene for six days, mere killing will not suffice for a hostile Ishru. The dead prince would return within minutes, fully refreshed and ready to do battle again. Only individuals possessing the Narsirabæn might hope to shatter the Kirzelæn if opposed by Gadrel or Satarchian. If the adventurers decide to free Mhari Ridæn, they will need to steal the Narsirabæn from their resting places in the Gates of Gethæna.



ORIAS BEGAN TO WONDER WHY HE HAD INVITED HIS new acquaintance to the pavilion. Rather than admiring the garden through which they strolled, she was probing her host on his private concerns.

“You’re the only one who really detests it here.” Delia’s voice softened. “I wonder why the others are content, for I see your point. I should hate to be imprisoned in Gethæna!”

Orias paused. Really, the young woman was too persistent. She would not admit that the plight of the Ishru was no business of hers.

“I cannot think they are content. One need only look to their actions to know their despair.”

Delia bit her lip. “I suppose you’re right. They lie to themselves. Gadrel pretends that he adores the gruesome role of torturer, when truly he’s so hurt and angry about being a prisoner. And you’re wondering why I’m poking my nose in it.”

“No. I know why you won’t return to Eidolon. You want the Narsirabæn. Why?”

Delia twisted a lock of her hair around one finger. “If I tell you, will you help me?”

Orias smiled. Even at her most provoking moments the woman possessed charm. “Do you think I will?”

“I know you won’t if I keep you in the dark.” She fluttered her eyelashes. “The Prince in Eidolon is my mother’s nephew. I’m Delia Centarus. I have connections with...some people whose names I ought not mention. There is a plot against my cousin Rylec. It involves the summoning of a demon named Lankhâng.”

“Ah...the Adversary!”

“Yes, Satarchian. Not a demon, one of the Ishru. One of you! If I can obtain one of the Narsirabæn for Rylec, he can defend himself against you!”

“If we were not imprisoned, we could not be summoned. I believe, Delia Centarus, you had better direct your energies in another direction. Were Satarchian trapped by the Narsirabæn, any warlock might summon him anew from that cage. Your prince will not be safe until the Kirzelæn is destroyed!”

Delia stared at the Ishru. “Then why did you stop that old man from meddling with Gadrel? You would never consent to the Torturer’s release unless you were sure he’d reformed!”

“Precisely.” Orias’ voice was dry. “I keep him away from anyone he might hurt.”



For so long as the Kirzelæn generates the sky over Gethæna, the Narsirabæn will remain important in the balance of power. Whoever controls them controls the Ishru. And he who rules the Ishru has the chance to govern the entire underearth realm.

1 THE TALE

Sparks of gold, copper, and silver sprayed about the Eh’taza like a fountain’s spume. The spangled light flickered across his face and awoke echoing glints in his intent hazel eyes. Bathym labored at a secret forge deep within the bowels of Nokor Næph. Under his focused concentration, a slender rod of gleaming electrium took shape, its simple lines embellished by a faceted orange gem and scalloped fittings connecting the item to a handgrip of white gold. Bathym’s master, Sachiel, remained ignorant of his servant’s purpose when the Eh’taza sought solitude. Five more fanciful rods of electrium were created at the buried forge where Bathym sweated alone. The Narsirabæn, he named them.

Each rod possessed the power to channel the Flow of Essænce streaming through the Kirzelæn in the volcano Paltæl, shaping its energy into a sphere similar to that forming Gethæna’s sky and underlying the land’s roots. Like the sky, these smaller spheres (man-sized) could imprison the Ishru. A prince surrounded by the golden, glowing field would remain within its globe despite his physical or sorcerous might. Even death would not return him to his haunts in Gethæna.

With his weapons ready and warriors assembled, Bathym turned back from war to first obtain the artifacts of the Essænce-lord Mhari Ridæn. (See Part IX *The Legacy of Mhari Ridæn*.) He pondered at length to determine a safe place in which to cache the six Narsirabæn during the interval. The Gates of Gethæna, possessing six locks of immense potency, leapt to the Eh’taza’s mind, and he concealed the artifacts within their neglected confines.

The Ishru had constructed the Gates long ago to safeguard their stagnant world from novel ideas and experiences. Each prince placed his own lock at the entry point, ordered one of his Taza to stand watch over it for eternity, and departed to forget that Gethæna had ever existed unpolluted by the presence of man. Century upon century passed with no challengers to the Gates’ integrity. No stranger knocked for admittance, no enemy force encamped on the plain before them, no savior burst their magical wards asunder that he might enter bringing peace. The Tazan warriors grew weary of their posts. They slept briefly, awakening in fitful starts, or babbled incoherently, giving tongue to the inchoate thoughts that swirled through their eons of boredom.

One day a traveller arrived at the gatehouse. He had not travelled across the wastelands surrounding Gethæna, but he was the first person to disturb the unending eventlessness characterizing the site. His hair was long and streaked with grey, and his sun-bleached robes were tattered. Myrlænis (Æ. “Tiger in Flight”) was his name. He offered water to the Taza, although they felt no need of it, and spent one kharufier meditating in the topmost chamber of the gatehouse. As the cooler air of kharufræl drifted inside on the breeze, Myrlænis announced that he would make his home here within the Gethetair (Æ. “Great Imbalance”), his word for the structure supporting the gates.



GARDEN IN ORIAS' PAVILION

The hermit settled into the second and third stories of the western kiosk. He cultivated gardens of herbs, flowers, fruits, and vegetables on its terraces. He slept in a chamber whose windows of colored glass depicted rosebushes, and he cooked over a small brazier placed on one of the balconies. When done with weeding his borders, washing the floors, and meditating, Myrlænis conversed with the Taza. They were not bothered by his presence, since he never threatened to disturb the locks that it was their duty to guard. In time, they grew fond of the eccentric old man, enjoying his company and feeling concern as the ailments of age eroded his comfort more frequently.

When Bathym brought the Narsirabæn to the gatehouse, the Taza worried that he would discover Myrlænis and do the hermit harm. They assented hurriedly and with little thought to the Eh'taza's wishes, hoping to expedite his departure. Thus, Bathym met with no resistance when he cached his treasured weapons within the very locks that held the Gates of Gethæna closed. Pleased with the ease of the solution, he reminded the Tazan guards of the solemnity of their responsibility and returned to Nokor Næph with a light heart. The compliance of the Taza led him to falsely anticipate no difficulty in retrieving his belongings.

In fact, the Taza have no intention of allowing Bathym or anyone else to open the locks that guard the realm. They have attempted to persuade Myrlænis to leave his "Gethetair" for a few months with little success. The old man either laughs gently at their joke or mutters confusedly, "Still they forget that they need water! I thought I had taught them something. Now I must begin again. Hhmp!" The guards fear that he will be slain in the conflict that is sure to erupt when Bathym returns for the Narsirabæn.

Brother to Byrtænu (see Part VII, Section 2 *TheNPCs*), Myrlænis has been crazy and wise from birth. He did not speak until the age of five years, and his first words made little sense to the Dain Sædhun aunt and uncle supervising the boys' care. With his gaze focused on his hand, the child declared, "The sky is not the sky, nor is this hand a hand. Even so, you must feed and clothe me in my helplessness, and I shall revere and honor you all the days of your lives." Gæli, his aunt, patted Myrlænis on the head, smiled, and told Fræst, her husband (Æ. "Bæliru" or "Husband-mate"), that she'd been sure the lad would talk eventually. Byrtænu, in the midst of watering the tea rose situated on the kitchen windowsill, froze in awe. "What have I been doing with these precious years?" he asked himself as the flower pot brimmed full and overflowed onto the tile floor. "My brother has spent his more profitably. Clearly, he is the teacher and I the student!" From that time onward, the older sibling dogged the footsteps of the younger.

Gæli and Fræst continued to provide the boys with nutritious meals, clean clothes, and loving acceptance, but the brothers reserved their attention for one another. Myrlænis observed the world around him and uttered cryptic phrases which only Byrtænu truly understood. Byrtænu recorded all Myrlænis' words in a small, leather-bound book and meditated on their meanings.

Years passed. Byrtænu grew nearly as wise as his brother, but never so otherworldly. He married a woman from Tangeval, and the couple shared their residence with Myrlænis. Wynisia, Byrtænu's wife (Æ. "Ræliru" or "Wife-mate"), came to rival her husband in the ability to comprehend their eccentric brother's words. Eventually, she surpassed him. Her own speech grew more cryptic, and she bore no children. One day, she faced Byrtænu with both sorrow and rejoicing in her eyes. "My spirit aches for the atastazhi beyond the river of light, and the springs of the earth have told me that no seekers await my presence. Byrtænu, redeemer of my body and companion of my soul, our years together are at an end. The soil, the sky, and the silences of being must company you now. And we must say a farewell that will last your lifetime. I bid you joy intermingled with your suffering, serenity at the heart of your pain, and knowingfullness when faced with violence. Goodbye, my beloved."

Her body became transparent, like glass, and suffused with radiance. Then it faded to nothing. Wynisia was gone. Byrtænu was destined to experience another loss. Days later, Myrlænis informed his brother that both of them required a year of solitude, completely isolated from their fellows. They arranged for friends to occupy their house and set off through the plains of Væshim with simple packs on their backs. Myrlænis went north. Byrtænu headed south. Although he returned home in a year's time, Byrtænu never again resided there permanently. The grasslands became his home, and the sentani and thrushes his companions. He came to realize that his brother's decree of solitude was correct. Only amidst the loneliness of Gethæna's wilderness could he find the silences of being that his wife had bade him enjoy. Many Dain Sædhun youths sought his teaching, and the wanderer was generous with his knowledge. Lænu was his last student before his mortal body ceased to exist. To her only did he tell his personal history. His longing for one last sight of his brother had long ago faded, but he wished the book of Myrlænis' utterances to belong to Lænu along with knowledge of the identity of the man who originally spoke the words recorded there.

Myrlænis took paths more strange than those of his brother. His footsteps first carried him to Nokor Væshim, the twisted citadel of the Torturer. He became the Ishrun prince's confidant, drawing Gadrel for a brief time away from his pursuit of pain and its infliction. The strange pair held ceremonies intended to cleanse the land of evil, and taught the Eh'taza ritual hand gestures to be performed before bathing, eating, speaking, or sleeping. Orias came to visit Nokor Væshim during this interlude. He confronted Gadrel, saying, "I have not found the words yet that will bring you to sympathy with me. Thus, I utter these imperfect ones, hoping they might serve. Brother, I weary of this prison. Can you not grasp hope with me? Let us work together for our freedom. Will you not abandon the role of the Torturer? Come with me, and bring salvation to us all!" Gadrel laughed scornfully, then caught up a letter opener and thrust it through his own palm, saying, "That for your salvation! You are not my brother, and I do not welcome you here."

Immediately following Orias' departure, Myrlænis discovered Gadrel engaged in removing a Taza's fingers and making a meal of them. The sage sketched with his hand the gesture meaning, "When next we meet, you will be under my power." Gadrel paled, and vomited up the chunks of Tazan flesh he'd just swallowed. He suspected the sage could and would enforce the hand signal. Myrlænis quitted the castle.

He travelled to Nokor Migdol and approached Orias directly, ignoring the hordes of Taza and Eh'taza who tried to intercept him. "The warped will be made straight, and the sighted will grow blind before seeing truly. Why do you deprive yourself of water? Drink! I shall lesson he who requires it. The task belongs not to you." The Ishru knew immediately that Myrlænis referred to his intentions to subdue Gadrel prior to destroying the Kirzelæn. He found no difficulty in understanding the obscure sage, but he did not trust the old man's powers. If a mighty master of spells such as himself could not defeat the Torturer, then surely a frail mortal possessing little knowledge of the Essænce could not succeed where he had failed.

Unmoved by his inability to win Orias' confidence, Myrlænis departed for Nokor Gamesh. He encountered Satarchian on the plain below the fortress and joined the Ishru in the hunt. They brought to earth a magnificent gleamtiger. Myrlænis bathed in the beast's blood, and the Ishru followed his example. "Now, we will hunt in ways different than any you have pursued," murmured the sage. He brushed the Ishru's eyelids closed, and Satarchian fell into a deep sleep. He dreamed of being a gleamtiger hunted by a shadowy figure clothed in saffron garb. When he awoke, the prince sought new prey: a meadow thrush, a sentani, two kingcats, a sandlion, and a man. Following each kill, he dreamed, assuming the role of the creature slain. His awakening from death as a man was different than all the others. Hatred and grief contorted his face, and he spat at Myrlænis' feet. "You have won, and it is finished. I am as you have made me, and I will hunt no more." The sage nodded gravely and left.

In his wake, Satarchian returned to Nokor Gamesh and requested that one of his Taza wear marigold clothing and roam the plain as though hunting. Yerish, one of the beaters for Satarchian's now-abandoned pastime, volunteered. The Ishru locked himself away in his bedchamber to dream the stories of all those he had killed during centuries of hunting and to write on parchment of their courage and his own iniquity.

Myrlænis had further work to accomplish. He could make no further progress with Gadrel until Orias ceased to badger the Torturer. The sage returned to Nokor Migdol. Orias met him in the courtyard, declaring, "Old man, he will harm you when he senses your purpose. Leave his taming to me. He cannot destroy me, but you he would crush."

Myrlænis shook his head and replied, "Can you love a viper? Will you risk your heart, you who rarely risk anything? The twins are my children. They know their end nears them, and I prosper. Fear nothing, master of reason,"

Orias looked at the sage's brittle bones, age-spotted skin, and bright eyes. The Ishru closed his own eyes and watched the Essænce flow smoothly around the old man's spirit, with none of the ripples, bulges, or attenuation typical in the vicinity of spell users. "Grandfather, I do this because I see you are honorable. Like most of those with noble hearts, your will outstrips your strength. Forgive me." The Ishru drew a deep breath, grasped the power of his lock at the Gates, opened his lips, and sang a Song of Forgetting.

The muscles in Myrlænis' face went slack, and his eyes lost their focus. His thoughts drifted. Was his purpose accomplished? Perhaps it was: the children's thirst quenched forever. Or was it? He was no longer sure. Lack of clarity meant lack of vision. He would seek an interval of retreat and meditation in a place forgotten by all. Weaker than at any prior time, Myrlænis turned his steps to the Gates of Gethæna.



MYRLÆNIS

2·THE NPCS

MYRLÆNIS

Myrlænis is truly the old, frail man that Orias perceived him to be—with one difference. The smoothness of the Essænce around his person is due not to lack of mastery over the flow, but to an abundance of it. While not so powerful as some spell casters, the sage possesses more control and accuracy than most. His ability to subdue Satarchian stemmed more from an astute and sophisticated understanding of the Ishrun psyche than from magical might.

Myrlænis' intuitive style of processing information justly earned him the reputation for insanity combined with wisdom. However, the vague, hazy demeanor he now employs derives from the Song of Forgetting sung by Orias. When the spell is broken (it is tied to Orias' lock in the Gates and will lose its hold when the lock is opened), the sage's acuity will return with vigor. He will pursue communication in his usual metaphorical style, difficult to understand for most, and return to his self-appointed task of restructuring the core of Gadrel's being.

The sage's dark hair is long, tangled, and streaked with grey. His eyes are also grey, now cloudy, but normally sharp and intimidating. Myrlænis wears the dahlusa favored by Dain Sædhu with active lifestyles. The garment is bleached by the burning sky and worn thin from much use. The sage carries a canteen of water on a shoulder strap at all times.

Age: 543. **Eyes:** Black. **Hair:** Black streaked with grey. **Build:** Bony. **Height:** 6'4". **Race/Sex:** Dain Sædhu/M. **Skin:** Tanned, wrinkled. **Demeanor:** Vague, guided by an incomprehensible inner vision. **Dress:** Tattered white silk dahlusa. **True Attitude:** Compassionate. **Home:** Currently the Gates of Gethæna; normally he wanders the land, considering the entire realm his home.

Hits: 100. **Melee:** 60qs. **Missile:** 25sl.

AT(DB): 1(-20). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 20. **PP:** 80.

Lvl: 20. **Profession:** Shaman. **Stats:** SD-82; Co-97; Ag-77; Me-101; Re-54; St-68; Qu-99; Pr-; In-102; Em-89. **AP:** 67.

Skill Bonuses: MA Str-1 5, Ambush ±2, Climb 50, Ride 40, Swim 40, DTraps 5, PLocks 5, S&H 40, Perc 90, Ægron 10, Hæsig 10, Varnese 10, Shay 8, Runes 70, St&W 70, Channel 95, Acrobat, Act, Animal Healing 40, Anthropology (Ishru) 80, Beast Mastery 60, Camouflage 50, Caving 45, Contort 30, Cook 80, Diagnostics (General) 50, Direction Sense 60, Dowsing 35, FAid 90, Fletch 70, Flora Lore 50, Forag 100, Herb Lore 60, Herd 35, Horticulture 60, Hypnosis 60, LWork 50, Lip Reading 35, Magical Ritual 60, Cleansing Meditation 70, Death Meditation 80, Healing Meditation 50, Midwifery 60, Poison Perc 40, Region Lore (desert) 60, Region Lore (grassland) 60, Region Lore (woods) 50, Remove Poison 40, Rope 40, Second Aid 40, Sense Ambush 35, Set Traps 50, Skinning 50, Stone Carving 50, Time Sense 20, Track 70, Trap-building 50, WeaW 60, Wood Carving 50.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 20. Animal Ways, Spirit Healing, Visions, Trances, Shaman's Intuition to 50th lvl. Detection Mastery, Weather Ways, Purifications, Spell Defense, Nature's Law, Concussion's Ways, Blood Law, Nerve Law, Muscle Law, Organ Law, Bone Law to 20th lvl.

Special Abilities:

Transcendence of Body: Myrlænis is long past the age of death for one of the Dain Sædhu. His spirit maintains the health of his body as necessary and will not depart until his task is accomplished or he is killed by violence.

Focused Spirit: Myrlænis learns spell lists twice as fast as normal (10% per rank). Additionally, he is able to cast spells from his Base lists to 50th level. A side effect of his focused spirit is the smooth flow of the Essæne around his person.

Water Canteen: Always full of water.



HENNAS

SHALORAY, LUCIBEL'S TAZA

Short, blue-black hair (like a panther's pelt) frames her severe face. A sharp chin and prominent cheek bones combine with glacial blue eyes to further promote the impression that Shaloray maintains a coldly hostile attitude. Eons ago, before her long tenure as a guard of the Gates, the Taza inclined toward violence. Boredom has softened her, and the advent of Myrlænis' visit destroyed the last vestiges of her psychic armor. Although opponents wielding weapons will find Shaloray still formidable with her sword, foes who engage in verbal battle will bring her to tears easily. The Taza will lie if necessary to hide Myrlænis' presence. She will attack to protect the sage from harm and to sustain the integrity of the lock placed by Lucibel. Shaloray wears full plate armor (without a helmet) forged of black placænium.

HENNAS, GADREL'S TAZA

Full of natural gaiety, Hennas chatters constantly to Shaloray and Garnid, to herself, and to the air. Much of her conversation is inane, but occasionally she says something worth hearing. She particularly enjoys Myrlænis' company. Oddly, the hermit spends many of his spare minutes by her side. Hennas has dyed her blond ringlets apple green to match her eyes. A headband of twisted silk keeps her tresses out of her face. The Taza wears a blue and green tunic patterned with abstract leaf shapes and loose aquamarine trousers. She prefers spells to weapons, but keeps three throwing stars tucked into her sash. Like Shaloray, she will fight to preserve both Myrlænis and Gadrel's lock.

GARNID, AMIANTHUS' TAZA

Geology and philosophical discourse are this Taza's main interests. He often lures Myrlænis into the eastern kiosk of the Gates to discuss both subjects with the sage. Hennas and Shaloray grew tired of Garnid's predilection for rocks, volcanic activity, faulting, and tectonic plates long ago. Arguments about whether aesthetic considerations should have weight in ethical debate hold less tedium for them, but their appetite for such talk cannot match Garnid's enthusiasm.

The Taza possesses a temper to match his hair (vivid red and as short as Shaloray's cropped locks), but has little occasion in which to display it within the quiet environs of the Gates. Adventurers searching the kiosks for the Narsirabæn will probably give Garnid ample opportunity to grow wrathful. Normally invisible freckles will then stand out against his pale skin, and he will grind his teeth while waiting for the most advantageous moment to press the attack with his greatsword. He wears a full-length coat of electrium chainmail, covered by a tabard depicting a flaming phoenix.

RÆN, ORIAS' TAZA

Ræn is a poet, a dreamer, and a lethal opponent with the rapier. The peaceful condition of the Gates never bothered her. Indeed, she often requests Durak and Krinek to cease conversing while she composes a verse or chases an elusive fancy in the corners of her mind. Ræn and Myrlænis speak with one another rarely, but a special rapport exists between them. The hermit often meditates while watching the Taza perform daily exercises with her rapier.

Ræn wears her long, black hair in a braid, the strands restrained by a silver clip shaped like a leaf. Her garb consists of a blouse tucked into a pleated blue kilt with the addition of arm and leg greaves of blue leather. The hilt of the Taza's rapier sports a massive star sapphire.

DURAK, SATARCHIAN'S TAZA

Long blond hair hangs to Durak's shoulders, accentuating the melancholy of his face and the mournful gaze of his deep blue eyes. Certain that his interminable duty by the Gates of Gethæna has deprived him of the chance to execute deeds of heroism and honor elsewhere, the Taza broods on his lost chances. Krinek and Ræn usually laugh at Durak's self-absorption. Upon hearing their jests, Durak's exaggerated sorrow turns to a black rage that grows only darker as the Taza refuses to vent the feeling through either brawling or cruel retorts. Eventually his anger turns to bleak depression which in turn becomes maudlin self-pity. The entire cycle restarts when the Taza's two companions in the western kiosk begin needling him again.

Should the adventurers encounter Durak in his woeful phase, they will find him to be a poor opponent. His weaknesses are different when he is wrathful, but no less apparent. The Taza fights with such vigor that his strength ebbs too soon, rendering him vulnerable within minutes. He is most dangerous during depression. Then grim fatalism moves Durak, imbuing every stroke of the scythe he bears with lethal effect.

Durak's garb beneath a voluminous cloak of midnight blue is comprised of a simple blouse, breeches, hose, and boots. While standing guard, he conceals his weapon within the folds of his cape. The sudden raising of the scythe for a death blow startles foes who challenge the Taza.

KRINEK, SACHIEL'S TAZA

Krinek is the most ordinary of the Taza guarding the gates. His features are plain, his hair dull brown to match his eyes, and his psyche untortured by extreme emotion. He finds his duty tedious, but neither excruciating like Durak nor a welcome opportunity for meditation like Ræn. He sometimes longs for the simple pleasures such as a campfire after a long march and the company of genial friends, but suspects that he would loathe the dusty fighting that must precede or follow this activity. More frequently, the Taza wishes that he were stationed in the eastern kiosk of the Gates. The sympathetic warmth of Shaloray, Hennas' cheerful chatter, and Garnid's pursuit of learned discourse appeal to Krinek far more than the sulking displayed by Durak and the requests for silence made by Ræn. Most often, Krinek simply accepts his lot as he finds it. The new presence of Myrlænis has made life more tolerable, since the hermit joins the Taza nearly every day to share a cup of tea or to complete such ordinary tasks as mending.

Krinek wears a cream-colored tunic over a maroon blouse and bottle-green trousers. His short cloak appears brown until its folds shift. Then the light catches gleams of red, azure, purple, topaz, and olive. The Taza's boots are sturdy brown leather, and tucked into the left one rests a wooden flute. Krinek's broadsword hangs from the belt at his waist.

3 THE GATES OF GETHÆNA

The gap in the mountains on Zudær's southern border measures a full mile wide. The gates built by the Ishru to close the opening rest within a vast wall stretching from a cliff on the western mountain spur to the slopes of the eastern one. Ironically, the princes delegated the task of designing the fortification to a man: one of Gærin Borul's followers. He made of the Gates a shrine to his homeland, the green vales of Agyra near where a narrow isthmus joins that continent to Thuul. Thus, scenes of daily life, religious rituals, and aesthetic ideals adorn this structure which is dedicated to barring life out.

Constructed of white placænium, the fortification is interrupted at regular intervals by stairwells giving access to a sentry walk atop the wall. The gatehouse, two kiosks flanking the gates, is also built of white placænium. The strong light of Gethæna's sky shines through the material to illuminate the structure's interior. Windows of colored glass dispel any remaining shadows.

1. The Gates. Forged of electrium, each portal is ten feet wide and sixty feet high. Coffered panels depicting the coming of man to Gethæna cover the surfaces of the gates. Six bolts, as thick as a man's arm, hollow, as long as an elephant's trunk, and formed of taurith hammered cold, secure the gates. The locking mechanisms controlling the bolts are located within the east and west kiosks.

2. Flanking Piers. Massive towers of placænium, appendages of the kiosks forming the gatehouse, serve as anchoring points for the hinges of each portal.

THE WESTERN KIOSK

FIRST LEVEL

3. Gallery. Light softened by the translucent placænium of the walls illumines the chamber. An alcove opens along each wall. The westernmost contains a staircase that climbs to the upper levels of the kiosk. The other three alcoves hold the Ishrun locks that secure the gates. One Taza stands guard in front of each.

4. Sachiel's Lock. Radiating stolid peace, the Taza Krinek stands watch in front of Sachiel's lock. At his back, an apple tree bearing both blossoms and fruits is carved in bas relief on the far wall. Above its topmost branches appear the words, "*The Lord of the Dance and the Mystery of Mysteries holds powers and potentates outflung in his hands:*" and at the tree's roots is the phrase, "*Yet greater than water, light, wind, or stone, the Giver of Questions grants life with his sight.*" One of the apples on the tree conceals a key hole.

The lock is actually a magical mechanism controlling the topmost bar securing the gate portals. Inserting the correct key into this lock and turning it releases the bar which is held by a *Staying* spell. The lock receives a +75 RR vs. any spells from the Unbarring Ways list. (The *Staying* spell makes it impossible to fish the Narsirabæn out of the tube while the lock is intact.) The hollow tube may then be pulled by hand from its slot (located in the niche holding Satarchian's lock), upended to retrieve the Narsirabæn resting at its nether end, and placed in the empty rack on the wall.

Reciting the following verse while facing the lock will open it as easily as though the missing key had been turned in the key hole.

*"The Lord of the Dance and the Mystery of Mysteries
holds powers and potentates outflung in his hands:
Spirits of the sea-foam bear witness to ocean-might,
Lake blossoms in springtime exalt the sun's rays,
Dizzy and dancing, held aloft by the breeze,
wind-ships make mock of the great mother's earth-force,
Yet greater than water, light, wind, or stone,
the Giver of Questions grants life with his sight."*

5. Satarchian's Lock. The Taza Durak scowls at the air while on watch before Satarchian's lock. The back wall of the alcove portrays a hart with creamy white flanks and a magnificent rack of horns leaping a fallen log. A partridge roosts in a nearby tree. Its leaves are carved with letters forming the words: "A sword sheathed in blood warms the hunter's cold heart." Among its roots twine the phrase: "And the dreams of the vanquished teach mercy long forgotten."

The hart's eye conceals a keyhole in its pupil. Inserting the key worn on a chain around Satarchian's neck and turning it releases the bar placed third from the top that secures the gate's portals. The same result occurs when the following verse is recited aloud:

*"A sword sheathed in blood warms the hunter's cold heart,
While incarnadined petals of the thorn-bearing rose
tint the intangible blade of the spirit of love.
A predator's joy sparks the dragonfly's wings,
Yet languishing spirits of sorrow's waters
swell the tides of hope,
And the dreams of the vanquished
teach a mercy long forgotten."*

6. Orias' Lock. The Taza Ræn stands with straight back and expressionless face before Orias' lock. Behind her, the wall is carved in bas relief to portray an eagle in flight. The magnificent bird possesses a fiery eye, but holds an olive branch in its cruel beak. Arching words in the skies above the eagle state: "Loveless vision is bereft of truth, visionless truth is bereft of beauty, and truthless beauty is evil most vile." A mountain peak below the eagle's claws holds the phrase: "All nature fights the segue of chaos occasioned by Life's defeat."

The bird's claws curl around a keyhole. Inserting the key carried in a pocket on Orias' person and turning it releases the bar located fifth from the top that secures the gate's portals. The same outcome is achieved when the following verse is recited aloud:

*"Loveless vision is bereft of truth,
visionless truth is bereft of beauty,
and truthless beauty is evil most vile.
A flock of songbirds scatters gaiety in avian chorale.
A symphony of shells disperses the ocean's roar
in unmingled singularity.
A muster of rainbows gathers light
to harmonies of color in arching concord.
All nature fights the segue of chaos
occasioned by Life's defeat."*

7. Stair. The treads spiral upward around the perimeter of the stairwell, giving access to the second (#8) and third (#15) levels of the kiosk.

SECOND LEVEL

8. Stair. Rimmed by balustrades of placænium, the stair descends to the first level and ascends to the third level.

9. Chapel of Dragonflies. Tall, narrow windows of stained glass alternate with carved pilasters on the walls of the chamber. Emerald green, sapphire blue, and vibrant turquoise panes congregate in the windows to depict dragonflies buzzing across the sky, over the ripples of a sun-dappled creek, and among a clump of waterlilies. Carved into the broad window sills, a fleeing hart wounded by an arrow leaps before the words: "A predator's joy sparks the dragonfly's wings." Willow water nymphs and diaphanous sky nymphs, the subject matter of the pilasters, support with their upraised hands a simple cornice that rings the chamber where the walls meet the unadorned ceiling.

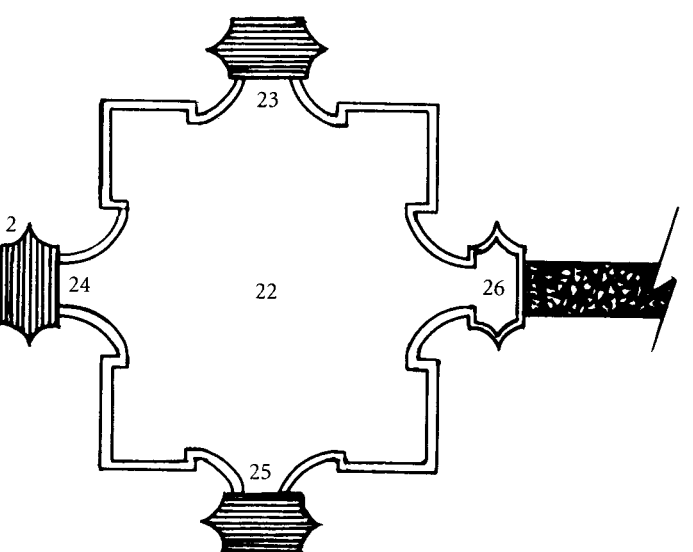
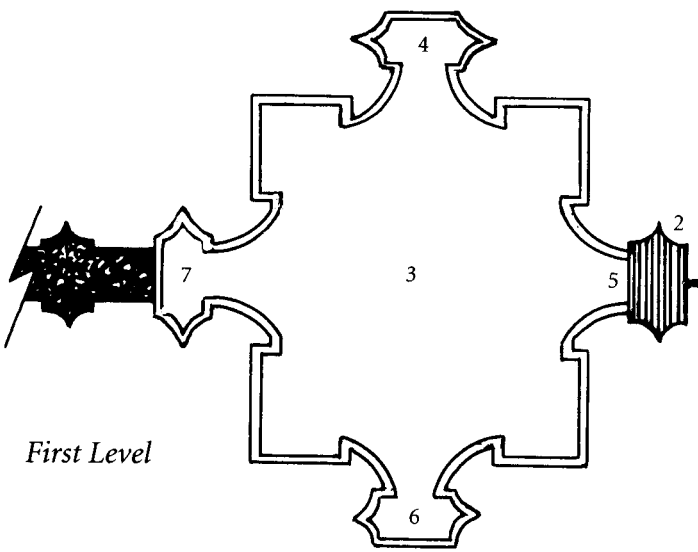
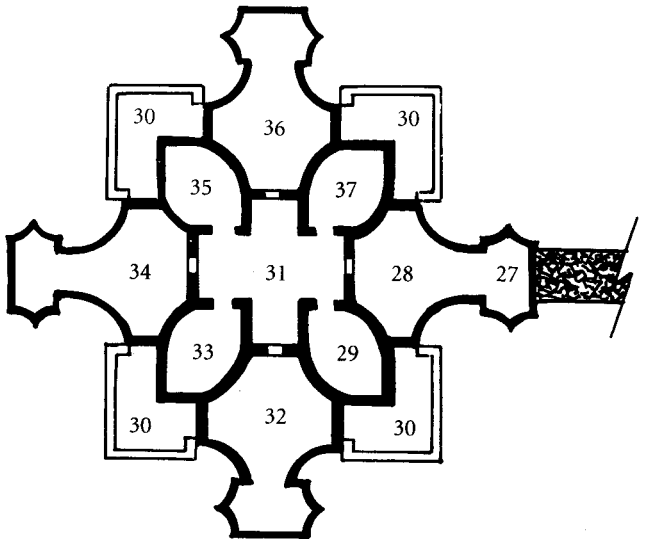
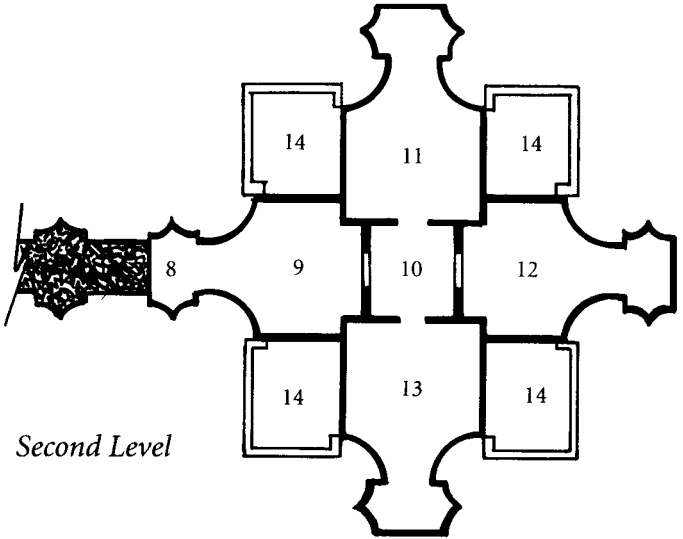
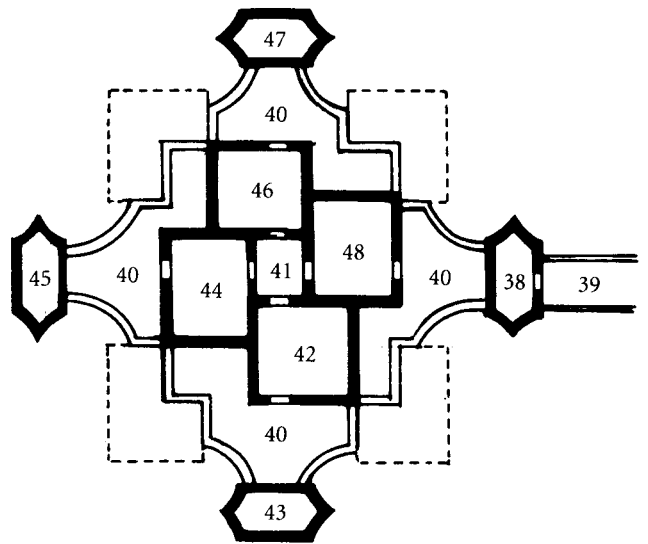
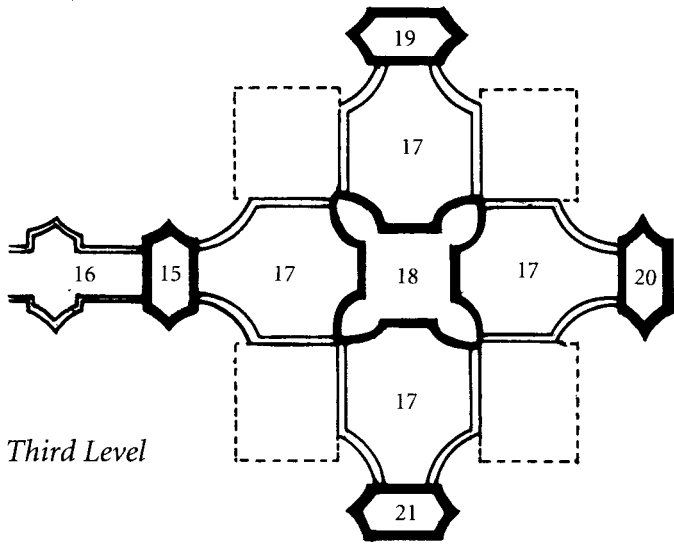
10. Vestibule. Archways from the four chapels open onto the vestibule. Each corner of the chamber holds the statue of a pale, dreamy rain nymph. The cornice above the nymphs' holds the phrase: "Yet languishing spirits of sorrow's waters swell the tides of hope." A hart's skull punctuates the sentence.

11. Chapel of Roses. Creamy white roses, cheerful yellow roses, delicate pink roses, taunting orange roses, and dusky red roses fill the panes of the casements in the chapel. The sliver of sky showing above the blooms rejoices in piled cumulus and golden letters spelling out the words: "While incarnadined petals of the thorn-bearing rose tint the intangible blade of the spirit of love." A robust buck followed by three does adorns the cornice above the windows. Pilasters between them depict radiant sun nymphs and ruddy-cheeked earth nymphs in bas relief. Myrlænis has taken the chapel as his dwelling place. A mat of quilted cotton covered by a thin woolen blanket occupies one corner. A brazier and cooking implements rests in another. The oriel (the portion of the chapel that projects furthest from the kiosk) holds a worn cushion upon which the hermit sits in meditation every day for half a watch.



SHRINE OF SEA-FOAM

12. Chapel of Shells. Seashells of every variety appear in the tide pools, on sandy beaches, and among the sunny shallows of a coral reef in the stained glass of this chamber. The upper portions of the windows hold the words: "A symphony of shells disperses the ocean's roar in unmingled singularity." Vivacious nymphs of the ocean spray and shore breakers form supporting caryatids between windows. A cornice of olive branches encircles the chapel.



GATES OF GETHÆNA

13. Chapel of Songbirds. Red-breasted robins, yellow and jet finches, dusky grey woodthrushes, sapphire bluebirds, dun brown wrens, and blue-grey larks perch on boughs loaded with cherry blossoms in the window panes of this chapel. Ornate letters placed at the lowest sections of the glass state: *A flock of songbirds scatters gaiety in avian chorale.* Fresh-faced flower nymphs pause between the casements, supporting a simple cornice with garlands held in their hands and twined in their hair. A wild-eyed eagle soars across the ceiling of the chapel.

14. Balcony. Four balconies occupy the corners of the kiosk on the second level. Myrlænis has constructed tubs made from tanglewood on each of them and tends vegetables, herbs, and flowers in his impromptu gardens.

THIRD LEVEL

15. Stair. Smooth placænium treads descend to the second level. A door opens onto a landing halfway down. The small portal gives access to the sentry walk atop the wall spanning the gap between the mountains.

16. Sentry Walk. Fluted crenelation shields anyone traversing the walkway from enemy fire. Stairways encased in buttresses connect the walk to the ground via trapdoors placed at intervals of 1000 feet.

17. Terrace. A terrace connects the central sanctuary with each of the three shrines and the stairwell on the third level.

18. Sanctuary of Peace. Flocks of white doves soar through the sun-shot reaches of the upper sky in the windows of the sanctuary. Golden letters spell out the words: *"A muster of rainbows gathers light to harmonies of color in arching concord."* A skylight depicts the sun flanked by twin rainbows. Caryatids in the shape of frail, delicate bird nymphs brush with their wings the cornice on which the skylight rests. The cornice is carved to portray eagles in flight bearing olive branches in their beaks.

19. Shrine of Sea-foam. Breakers along a sandy shore, spume scattered against jagged rocks, mountainous waves rolling over the ocean depths, and a translucent green eddy spilt by a sailing ship's proud prow fill the panes of the shrine's windows. Drifting among the cumulus towering in the skies, azure letters spell out the phrase, *"Spirits of the sea-foam bear witness to ocean-might."* Between the casements, acting as caryatids, nymphs of the tide, holding mystery in their eyes, emerge from unfurling surf as though to touch briefly the shrine's cornice before diving beneath the waves again.

20. Shrine of Lake Blossoms. The shrine's windows depict gold-tinged waterlilies floating upon a smooth aqua pool, a many-petaled lotus hiding purple in its heart and adrift above a spring's chill waters, masses of tiny coral flowers forming islands amidst the dark ripples of a mountain tarn, and peach-veined blossoms sheltered from the bubbles below a cascade by curled, crescent-shaped leaves. Floating on the rippled water, translucent letters form the words: *"Lake blossoms in springtime exalt the sun's rays."* The caryatids between the casements resemble lean and voracious fish-spirits, and they hold the skeletons of fishes in their bony hands.

21. Shrine of Wind-ships. Box-kites in red, diamond-shaped kites in turquoise, and fish-shaped kites scaled in purple, green, and deepest indigo sail across windswept vistas of pale azure in the windows of the shrine. The emerald green tail of a round orange kite displays the words: *"Dizzy and dancing, held aloft by the breeze, the wind-ships make mock of the great mother's earth-force."* Energetic wind nymphs, caught in sculpture as though amidst a race in the sky, uphold with banners flying from their wrists the cornice above the stained glass.

THE EASTERN KIOSK

FIRST LEVEL

22. Gallery. The chamber is the mirror image of the gallery in the western kiosk.

23. Amianthus' Lock. The Taza Garnid stands squarely in front of the niche where Amianthus' lock is located. The far wall is carved to resemble the bookshelves in a library. The cornice above the topmost shelf bears raised letters spelling out the phrase: *"The scholar, although he knows all, knows nothing."*

A huge, locked tome, its front cover facing the room, occupies the middle shelf. Its lock is actually the mechanism controlling the bar second from the top that secures the gate portals. Inserting the correct key into this lock and turning it releases the bar. The hollow tube may then be pulled by hand from its slot (located in the niche holding Gadrel's lock), upended to retrieve the Narsirabæn resting at its nether end, and placed in the empty rack on the wall.

Below the lowest shelf depicted, more raised letters read, *"The tenets of love birth wisdom far deeper than knowledge."* Reciting the following verse while facing the lock will open it as easily as though the missing key had been turned.

"The scholar, although he knows all, knows nothing.

Obedience yields the only true freedom.

Renunciation reveals the path to fulfillment.

Servanthood accepted gladly becomes mastery.

The thief in the wilds steals only from himself.

He who has little possesses much.

The tenets of love birth wisdom far greater than knowledge."

24. Gadrel's Lock. The Taza Hennas lounges against one wall or sits on the floor beneath Gadrel's lock. The far wall is carved to depict roses climbing a trellis. One exposed lathe in the trellis bears the words: *"Joy opens a wound in the shamed."* Three round apertures in the wall provide channels for the bars securing the gates. The heart of the bloom below them holds a keyhole. Gadrel wears the key that fits the lock on a filigreed chain around his ankle. Reciting the following verse will also work the lock that controls the bar placed fourth from the top.

"Joy opens a wound in the shamed.

Guilty hearts breed guilty deeds,

Unseeing eyes see pride enthroned,

Laughter weeps, yet tears prove true

Joy opens a wound in the shamed."

25. Lucibel's Lock. Lucibel's Taza, Shaloray, remains coolly alert at her post, despite the long years that the gates have been without challenge. Behind her, the walls of the nook are carved to depict a grape arbor. Bunches of grapes hang full and heavy from the vines. An inscription formed by a wildly curling tendril near the arbor's apex reads, *"Fire and water comingle in the wine of sacrifice, and the child of the sun is born in darkness."* One of the grape leaves within reach can be shifted to its right to reveal a keyhole. The mechanism turned by the proper key (kept in a pouch on Lucibel's belt) operates the lowest of the three bars accessible from the eastern kiosk. The bar may also be released by reciting the following verse:

"Fire and water comingle in the wine of sacrifice,

Yet sorrow and suffering alone suffice not,

Nor does joy redeem all loss.

Only rare unions of surrender with the divine yield ecstasy,

And the child of the sun is born in darkness."

26. Stair. The treads spiral upward around the perimeter of the stairwell, giving access to the second (#27) and third (#38) levels of the kiosk.

SECOND LEVEL

27. Stair. Rimmed by balustrades of placænium, the stair descends to the first level and ascends to the third level.

28. Chapel to the Renunciates. Windows of colored glass, thin and extending from floor to ceiling, depict sallow men and women with hollow cheeks and garbed in robes of dark grey. Pilasters carved to resemble dead sycamores strangled by thorny vines occupy the spaces between windows. Engraved in the surface below the sill, angular letters spell out a message. A book, opened to the title page which bears a script "A," is carved in bas relief ahead of the first word. The message reads: "*Renunciation reveals the path to fulfillment.*"

29. Shrine of Innocents. A large arched window accompanied by a smaller one on the adjacent wall holding a door illumine the shrine. Their glowing panes portray children of a young age playing amidst a bower of lilac. Kittens gambol round the feet of a fair-haired lad whose balance is none too steady. The inner walls of the chamber are carved in bas relief, showing more of the garden scene.



CHAPEL TO THE WAYWARD

30. Balcony. One of the four occupying each corner of the kiosk on the second level. A low balustrade of placænium guards its edge.

31. Antechamber. Bas relief representation of a foot race covers the walls of the antechamber. Young men wearing loin clothes and wreaths of willow fronds vie against one another along a country lane lined with hedges and rosetrees.

32. Chapel to the Ascetics. In the glass panes of this chapel, the men and women of the Chapel to the Renunciates (#28) have cast off their darker garments for robes of white or palest grey. They kneel, stand, or sit with a distant look in their eyes, and their palms face upward to an overcast sky. One bearded gentleman with long, white hair holds a book in his hands, just closed. Its back cover has a script "A" tooled in its crimson leather. Pilasters resembling the ivy-clad piers of a stone bridge separate the windows. Carved in the archways over the windows is an inscription: "*He who has little possesses much.*"

33. Shrine of Sacrifice. The children from the Shrine of Innocents (#29) appear in an amphitheater ringed by a colonnade at its uppermost tier. A lad and a lass each wear wreaths of briars, the thorns of which have drawn blood. The pommel of a dagger protrudes from the chest of a third child, while a fourth bears scourge marks on his back, bared by the torn cotton of his shirt.

34. Chapel to the Obedient. The individuals gathered in the windows of the other chapels on the second level appear in the panes of this one as well. The surroundings are pastoral, and the men and women bear shepherd's crooks. Flocks of sheep graze on the grassy slopes of a flowery meadow. Pilasters in the form of griffons rearing on their hindquarters separate the windows. A line of writing, in ornate gold letters, runs along the bottom edge of the casements. An unopened book, embellished with a script "A," precedes the first word. The sentence reads, "*Obedience yields the only true freedom.*"

35. Shrine of Servanthood. A mix of stained glass and bas relief carving depicts men and women kneeling with basins of water to wash the feet of lords and ladies seated upon the thrones of royalty. Purple letters, unraveling at the hems of the footwashers, communicate the words: "*Servanthood accepted gladly becomes mastery.*" Preceding the sentence, a leather-bound book is open to its middle pages, both of which portray a script "A." Above the elaborate head dresses worn by the courtiers, an inscription emblazoned in red reads, "*Unseeing eyes see pride enthroned.*" A chain of white roses in full bloom twines around the phrase.

36. Chapel to the Wayward. The chapel's windows show a lady's coach drawn up by the side of the road. A highwayman leans through the vehicle's door to relieve the lady of her pearls. She holds a book in her left hand, opened to its very last page. The parchment bears a script "A" embellished with many flourishes. Beyond the road's embankment, silhouetted against the sky, the corpse of a hanged criminal dangles from a gallows. Engraved on the rims of the coach wheels read the words: "*The thief in the wilds steals only from himself.*" Carved into the wall surface between the windows of the chamber, climbing roses twine around crumbling stone columns.

37. Shrine of Loss. The shrine's bas relief carvings and colored windows portray the children from the Shrine of Innocents (#29) gathered about a stone monument sculpted in the form of a winged cloud nymph. The children stand or kneel on worn flagstones, the cracked stones separated by grasses and moss. One bears the engraving: "*Nor does joy redeem all loss.*" A cornucopia of grapes is portrayed by shallow etchings below the statement. The grave is a lone burial site, situated on a wild, overgrown hillside.

THIRD LEVEL

38. Stair. Smooth placænium treads descend to the second level. A door opens onto a landing halfway down. The small portal gives access to the eastern sentry walk atop the wall spanning the gap between the mountains.

39. Sentry Walk. Fluted crenelation shields anyone traversing the walkway from enemy fire. Stairways encased in buttresses connect the walk to the ground via trapdoors placed at intervals of 1000 feet.

40. Terrace. Flagstones of white placænium, glaringly bright under Gethæna's sky, form the level surface the terrace separating the stairwell from the chambers of the third level. Three other terraces connect these inner spaces to outlying oriel chambers.

41. Vestibule. Portrayed in bas relief around the vestibule's walls, a spring procession, celebrating the season's first flowers, meanders along a country lane. Young lads and lasses skip forward bearing staves adorned with wreaths of primroses. Aproned maids carry baskets of narcissus and snowdrops. Laughing youths flourish sprays of dogwood in the breeze. Mothers hold buttercups beneath their infants' chins, while fathers carry toddlers on their shoulders. A white-haired wisewoman gathers herbs and simples amidst the revelry. And a smiling old man plays a wooden flute.

42. Chamber of Ecstasy. The chamber's windows show a crescent-shaped row of columns connected at their crowns by a simple lintel. Chiseled in the stone of the lintel appears a brimming chalice of wine followed by the words: "*Only rare unions of surrender with the divine yield ecstasy.*" A vista of green, gently rolling hills is visible behind the colonnade. Before it, three white-robed women with wreaths of ivy in their hair stand clasping one another's hands with arms raised high. Their mouths are open in song. A flock of doves circles in the sky. Carved in bas relief on the inner wall, a well-muscled youth bows low while holding a swaddled infant in his outstretched arms.

43. Oriel of Grace. Thin mullions support the arched ceiling of the oriel chamber, while colored glass fills the space between them. The panes portray a lad not more than four years of age. His blond hair riots in a frenzy of curls, and pure fun beams from his blue eyes. He wears a short frock over bloomers and round-toed white shoes. He balances atop a high wall of pale marble, walking with arms outstretched. A paved courtyard adorned by a fountain and orderly rows of miniature orange trees lies to one side of the wall. The shadowy expanse of a mossy glade ringed by hickory trees recedes from the other.

44. Chamber of Sorrow. The mullions between windows are so thin as to create no interruption between them. The solemn ranks of a funeral procession march from pane to pane: priests bearing censors, then the deceased, a fair-haired young maid, carried high on a bier born by six azure-garbed youths, and her grieving parents, brothers, and sisters following immediately behind with the townsfolk at their backs. In purple letters at the mourners' feet run the words. "*Laughter weeps, yet tears prove true.*" Withered rose petals, plucked from long-dead blooms, strew the way. The inner wall of the chamber is carved in bas relief to

depict the pilasters and arches typical of the catacombs of a temple honoring the dead. The topmost cornice is carved with a curling grape vine graced verdantly with leaves and flowers, but no fruit, and almost obscuring the words, "*Yet sorrow and suffering alone suffice not.*"

45. Oriel of Faith. The spume and spray of ocean breakers at the shore fill the windows dominating the oriel's curving walls. Laughing, young girls splash in the waves, their graceful limbs dimly visible through the tumult of the surf. Gulls soar in the stiff sea breeze that tugs at the swimmers' damp tresses.

46. Chamber of Joy. The stained glass portrays an elaborately iced cake set amidst gaily wrapped packages on a table in a garden. Children of all ages romp in the sunlight, rolling hoops, skipping rope, sharing secrets, or holding up their plates for a slice of cake. Butterflies flutter above borders of lavender and columbine, while tufts of clover peek from between flagstones. The bas relief carving on the inner wall shows a minstrel seated on some wide, shallow steps while strumming a mandolin.

47. Oriel of Hope. The walls of the oriel chamber are largely glass. Their panes depict a graceful, motherly woman seated upon a bench

amidst a bower of roses. Blooming creepers twine over the arched lattice above her. A low wall guards the edge of the flower bedecked terrace surrounding her. A young girl, holding a book and gazing dreamily at the horizon, sits on a cushion with her head resting against the woman's knee. A toddler kneels on the bench, holding a spray of lilac up for inspection. And an infant snuggles contentedly in the maternal woman's arms.

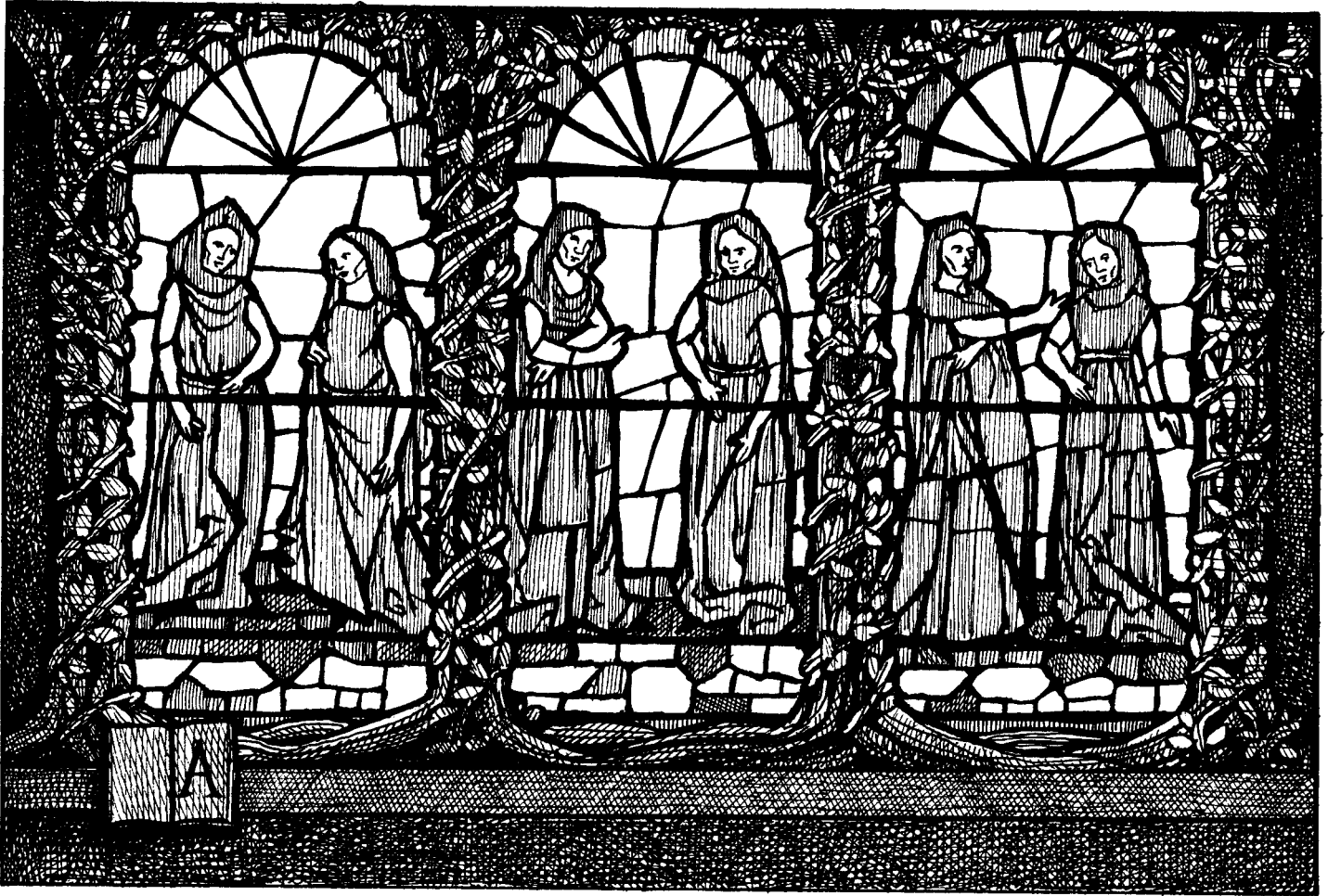
48. Chamber of Penitence. In the chamber's windows, a sky of apricot and amber lightens to peach and clear saffron at the horizon. Withered grasses and leafless brambles encrust a hilltop on whose slope a crumbling mausoleum catches the fading rays of the sun. An old man, clothed only in a loin cloth, ribs showing clearly through his bluish-white skin, kneels before the ruin. Tears mark his face, and his sinewy arms are upraised in a passion of remorseful grief. Below the window sill, an inscription reads, "*Guilty hearts breed guilty deeds.*" An unopened rosebud, its thorny stem twined around the first letter of the first word, appears in bas relief.



ORIEL OF HOPE

4·THE TASK

The PCs must retrieve the Narsirabæn from their places of concealment in the Gates of Gethæna. Only these weapons give them any chance of defeating Eh'taza (or Ishru) in the battle that will surely precede the liberation of Mhari Ridæn. The Taza standing guard within the Gates will fight to prevent the opening of the portal. The adventurers must either slay or otherwise render powerless these staunch defenders to achieve success. Persuasion may garner the PCs permission to explore the premises, but will not avail to convince the Taza that the Gates should be opened.



CHAPEL TO THE RENUNCIATES

However, there is a more important facet of the task than the appropriation of the Narsirabæn. Opening the lock placed by Orias on the fifth bar of the Gates releases simultaneously the restraint placed by the Ishru on Myrlænis' memory. If the hermit survives the conflict between the adventurers and the Taza guarding the Gates, he will continue with his self-appointed task of cleansing the evil from Gadrel's twisted psyche. Since Satarchian hunts no more, Ishrun resistance to the breaking of Gethæna's sky may evaporate entirely if the Torturer likewise ceases permanently his profession of pain. Unfortunately, the chance that Myrlænis will be slain in the fight within the Gates is large. The adventurers will probably be unaware of the hermit's importance to the fate of Gethæna. Additionally, Myrlænis himself retains no memory of his crucial role. Due to the affection he feels for the Taza of the Gates, he will act to defend them against attacking intruders. Even were his memories intact, Myrlænis would probably embroil himself in the melee. His loyalties, once formed, are strong, and he would never refuse his skill with the Essence to friends in need.

To be fully successful in the adventure of *Bathym's Treasure*, the PCs must not only unlock the Gates of Gethæna, but must preserve Myrlænis' life. Should the Hermit perish, it then becomes imperative that the adventurers obtain the Narsirabæn. Gadrel, uninfluenced by Myrlænis, must not be loosed on the world when Gethæna's sky is broken. Only the Narsirabæn can restrain him in such an event.

STARTING THE PLAYERS

PCs who have completed *The Hidden Vault* adventure and accepted the quest to free Mhari Ridæn from her prison will be directed to the Gates of Gethæna by Pæl Dhæk. He will provide them with a floorplan of the fortification as well as notes on the Taza standing guard. The presence of the hermit, however, should come as a surprise.

Adventurers with less altruistic natures may desire to obtain the Narsirabæn merely for the power these artifacts confer on their wielders. Certainly any native of Gethæna has dreamed from birth of a means to control the powerful Ishru, the princes who have brought so much misery to the Dain Sædhu over the centuries. Imprisonment of the Ishru via the Narsirabæn would be a fitting revenge as well as assuring the future security of the "People of the Journey."

Curiosity, for both those who meet Pæl Dhæk and those who do not, might serve as an adequate motive for visiting the Gates. Travellers new to Gethæna and bent on exploring the strange land wander from site to site with little provocation. Natives might wish to get to the bottom of the Dain Sædhun legend "Enter a Serpent" (recounted in Part IV, Section 2, *The Coming of Man*).

AIDS

Short of actually unlocking the Gates, clever PCs should be able to obtain considerable cooperation from the residents of the site. If approached properly (with courtesy and a plausible reason for wishing to explore the Gatehouse), the Tazan guards will grant permission to the adventurers to take an informal tour through the East and West Kiosks. This should enable them to discover the verses of poetry that will unlock the Gates as effectively as a key. Additionally, they may make the acquaintance of Myrlænis. Exceptional PCs will make it their business to discover more about the old man. Should they come to understand his role in the fate of Gethæna, they may choose to recite the verses that unlock the Gates at a time when the hermit is asleep in his chambers and out of harm's way.

OBSTACLES

The Tazan guards present the most obvious obstacle to PCs hoping to open the Gates of Gethæna. The Taza will initially be suspicious of visitors to the site. Only the precedent set by their acceptance of Myrlænis' presence prevents them from immediately annihilating strangers who enter the smaller doors in the East and West Kiosks. However, the guards can be convinced to allow visitors inside the Kiosks, and although they are formidable foes, they are not invincible. Nor will the PCs be forced to confront all six at once. There is little interaction between the occupants of the two halves of the Gatehouse, and only the three guards in the kiosk where the PCs work to open the Gates will be alerted at a time. Of course, a trip to each of the kiosks will be necessary, since the six bars securing the Gates cannot all be accessed from either side.

Clever PCs may choose to walk along the base of the wall connecting the Gates to the mountainous cliffs at either side. When they encounter one of the stairs located at intervals, they may climb to the sentry walk atop the wall. Each sentry walk ends in a door in its adjacent kiosk, permitting the adventurers access to the second and third levels without ever alerting the Taza to their presence.

A more serious difficulty is present in the hidden nature of the information of most significance to the PCs. No instructions exist detailing the easiest method to open the locks that bar the Gates. The Ishru and their Taza firmly believe that only the keys forged for that purpose will unlock the portal. These keys are worn on the persons of the Ishrun princes as ornaments. The mannish architect who designed and supervised the construction of the gates told no one of the true purpose behind the phrases included in the stained glass windows that illuminate the interior and the verses engraved on the walls of the niches where the Taza stand guard.

Furthermore, the adventurers will initially encounter Myrlænis with no awareness that before them stands Satarchian's tamer and the one person who might bring Gadrel to heel. Only the most creative of PCs will think to waste valuable spells on learning more about the hermit's identity and background.

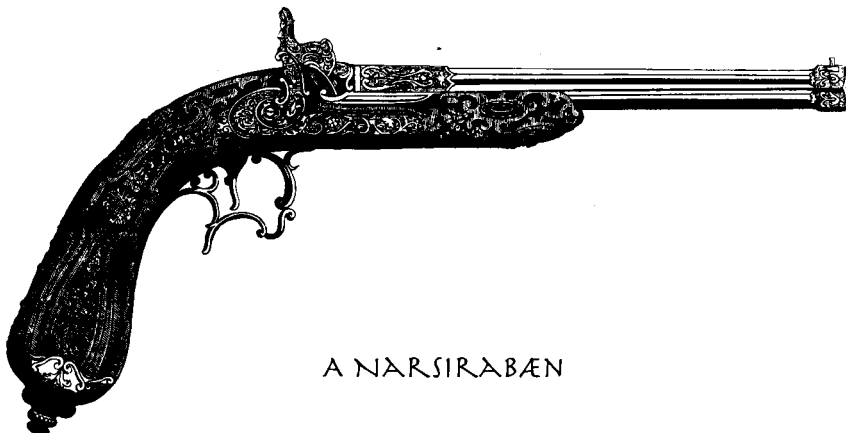
REWARDS

At the very least, successful PCs will gain the Narsirabæn: six rods of electrium, each set with a faceted jacinth and capable of generating a man-sized sphere of force that can imprison one of the Ishru or their minions. Should Myrlænis remain alive and on amicable terms with the adventurers, the hermit will inform them that Satarchian is no longer a threat to anyone. He will volunteer a summary of the process of the Ishru's taming sufficiently detailed to convince doubters. If the hermit trusts that the PCs will not try to hinder him, he will mention his intention of tackling Gadrel next. Any reticence will be due to a fear that he might be forced to hurt his restrainers in order to complete his task. Myrlænis will recommend, in any case, that the PCs visit Gazha before tackling Shæhesh. The venture will prepare them for the challenges they will encounter beneath Paltæl.

If the Tazan guards at the Gates were merely overpowered, not slain, Myrlænis may be able to persuade them to abandon their posts to aid the PCs. His line of argument will pursue the idea that the open Gates are of little use to the Ishru and no longer require a guard. The Taza might prove their loyalty to their respective masters most effectively by aiding those persons who sought to break Gethæna's sky. Such a deed would benefit the Ishru more than any other group in the underearth realm, since the six princes chafe the most at their imprisonment. Of course, PCs who lack the intention to free Mhari Ridæn, thereby shattering the cavern roof, will obtain neither the hermit's confidence nor the help of the Tazan guards.

5. AFTERMATH

With the possession of the Narsirabæn, the only effective weapons against the Ishru, the adventurers should be ready to free Mhari Ridæn. The shattering of the Kirzelæn, the crystal that imprisons her, will also destroy Gethæna's cavern roof and inaugurate a new epoch in the history of the underearth realm. PCs who choose a less noble route will be in a position to dominate the entirety of the land encircled by mountains. Their ability to imprison the Ishru within confines smaller than Gethæna itself should allow them to negotiate on equal terms with Dain Sædhu and Eh'taza alike.



A NARSIRABÆN



PART XIII

BREAKING THE SKY



ORUSCATIONS OF BLUE AND VIOLET LIGHT

shimmered the length of the transport pillar. Caidh mused again on the alien beauty he had discovered in this underearth land.

A young woman stepped away from the exit facet of the pillar. Her chestnut hair was piled in an elaborate coiffure and confined by a filigreed circlet. Her eyes were green, her lashes long and dark, and her smile slightly mocking. She wore a long gown of flame-colored silk confined at her hips by a belt of golden oval segments. A cloak of sable pelts fell from her shoulders.

“Delia!” gasped Caidh and Peath in unison.

“Well met, cousins!” Delia’s voice held the low, well-modulated tones she used when on her best behavior.

Two men exited the pillar behind her.

“Lord Lucibel, Lord Orias, may I present my cousins, Peath and Caidh.” Delia glanced at her finger nails, which were flawless. “Caidh, I am not acquainted with your companions.”

Caidh shut his open mouth with a snap. “Hæn, his mount Marinælla, and Kaia kus’Urnuinen.”

“Charmed, I’m sure,” replied Lucibel languidly. Was he sneering? Peath couldn’t be sure. Looking at Delia, the Ishru continued, “Shall we leave our court manners, my dear, and determine whether your relatives and their friends are our foes?”

Orias tightened his lips and directed an exasperated glance at his cohort.

Lucibel spoke more crisply: “My apologies. No doubt we’ll also be happier if I leave my own court demeanor behind.” The Ishru scanned the faces before him. “Caidh, Peath, Hæn, Marinælla, Kaia kus’Urnuinen—what is your purpose here?”

Caidh drew a short breath, preparing to spin a complicated lie. But Peath answered first—with the truth. The Ishru were too powerful for dissembling to work. “We intend to destroy the Kirzelæn, Lord Lucibel!”

The adventure in Shæhesh is the culmination of the PCs involvement in Gethæna. The underearth realm will never be the same after its roof is opened to Kulthea's sky.

1·THE TALE

Dain Sædhun legends touch again and again on three names: Shæhesh, Bashæn, and Gazha. Referring to ancient sites of the Essænce-lords, their true nature has long been forgotten and overlaid with a patina of folkloric tradition.

The hardworking guides who patrol the roads through Gethæna's wild lands dream of the perfumed baths, the beautiful serving men and women, the feasts of plums, peaches, and apricot wine consumed while reclining, and other sybaritic delights available in lost Bashæn. Varying according to the preferences of the storyteller, a carefree princess arrayed in gemtail feathers and evershifting ribbons of silk or a prince with smiling eyes and gentle hands presides over the continual festival that is Bashæn. The most optimistic among the guides believe that by searching the right mountain valley they will find the hidden palace.

Children at bedtime hear tales of a crone whose whistles command the birds dwelling in the cliff-caves of Gazha. The wizened witch sends songbirds to croon lullabies in the ears of good boys and girls, but orders the hideous Nightbird to carry the disobedient away from their beds while the rest of the household sleeps. The Nightbird, once a shape adopted by Lucibel when this Ishru roamed Kulthea's surface, was a stinking, black-feathered crow the size of a leopard who fed the eyes of stolen children to its ravenous brood. In days of old, the beaked monster flew only under cover of darkness, but now it spreads its wings only in story. No one save the children believes that the cliffs behind Lake Labæn hold anything more than the nests of a flock of starlings.

Dramas acted in Dain Sædhun theaters and ballads sung by that people's minstrels often feature creatures of fire and darkness that escape the laval inferno of Shæhesh to prey upon civilized lands. Sometimes a hero slays the beast; sometimes a heroine banishes it to the prison from whence it sprang; but always the monster assumes the beguiling form of a human enchantress or sorcerer before it is defeated. More than a place of flame mingled with shadow, Shæhesh is the home of shapechangers—entities of subtle malice.

Distorted by ignorance and the archetypes generated in the racial psyche of the Dain Sædhun people, the memories of Bashæn, Gazha, and Shæhesh live on. The sites were originally constructed to serve the needs of the workers that toiled for years in the completion of Gethæna. After the mountains were shaped, the waters gathered and contained, and the lands stabilized by Mhari Ridæn and Pæl Dhæk, labors less grand in scale were required to finish the underearth realm. Teams of many ordinary men and women were brought to the huge, dim cavern where they built by lamplight the quarters that would house them for the next several years. Bashæn, Home of Comforts, the place was called. Within its walls, automated servants and enchanted devices provided resting laborers with banquets, entertainment, and undisturbed slumber. While some of these ceased building to plant trees, grasses, and shrubs, and to acclimate animal life to the new environment, the remainder erected Gazha, quarters for Mhari Ridæn and Pæl Dhæk, and Shæhesh, the forge where the Essænce-lords would create the Kirzelæn.

Shæhesh, located in the heart of a volcano, was the most costly of the three projects. Toxic gases and sudden eruptions claimed the lives of hundreds. Erratic fluctuations in the Flow of Essænce, also present on the site, took a lesser but continuous toll of workers.

Nearly a decade passed before the elaborate complex was complete.

The planting of Gethæna, along with its population with creatures, was finished long before Shæhesh. With the end of construction on the forge, the surviving workers were returned to Kulthea's surface, and abandoned Bashæn was closed. Mhari and Pæl began the making of the Kirzelæn, and Gazha too was locked and left. The Essænce-lords never removed their persons from Shæhesh during the creation of the enchanted pillar.

Molding the Flow of Essænce that fountained upward through the core of the volcano with bare hands and cloaked minds, father and daughter linked crystal to crystal to form the mighty length of the column that would generate Gethæna's sky. It rested on a hexagonal base of læn that held at bay with subtle sorceries the fiery magma of Paltæl. Facet by facet, it rose between brackets both substantial (buttresses of Ithloss) and insubstantial (nets spun of Essænce) to its pointed apex just below the rim of the volcano's



MYTHICAL PRINCESS OF BASHÆN

caldra. The Kirzelæn was ugly, its glassine faces dull, unactivated by the chanted syllables that would bring the artifact to life. Then came Mhari's moment of truth.

Trusting the bonds of loyalty and affection that had formed between herself and her father, Mhari confessed that Gethæna would be not a barracks, but a prison for the Demon armies of Niyoreh Jirel. Her trust had no foundation, and Pæl Dhæk joined his mistress to destroy his daughter. So much is told by the legends. Yet, there is more to the story than the actions of the heroine and her enemies. As is typical in myth, the role of the spearbearers, the lesser folk who support the principals, is forgotten. And there were several such spearbearers present during the cataclysmic duel between Mhari and the worldslayers.

Dirizæl, a young woman being groomed by Niyoreh to assume the mantle of Oracle within the community of the worldslayers, was one of them. She worshiped her teacher and would have made an admirable pawn and mouthpiece for Jirel. Unfortunately, she perished within the maelstrom conjured by the three Essænce-lords beneath Paltæl. Yet her ghost lingers in the empty halls, waiting for ancient enemies and the chance to kill in Niyoreh's name.

2·SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

With the return of his memory, Myrlænis departed the Gates of Gethæna for Nokor Væshim. The sage found Gadrel garbed in feminine form and holding a tea party for her Taza. The pastime appeared quite civilized, even dainty, until one noticed the comestibles. Blood filled the tea pot and tea cups. The cucumber sandwiches contained not cucumber slices, but human ears. And the custards were small, still-beating hearts.

Gadrel smiled at the latecomer to her feast. "Welcome, my dear. Won't you join us? We'd love your company!" She began to pour a cup of blood.

Myrlænis was in no way shocked or discommoded by the scene. He'd expected something of the sort.

Making his way through the swarm of sipping Taza, he sat down beside his hostess. "Have you still the courage to drink new waters? Dare you dispense with the ruts of thirst? Do alien streams tempt your palate?" His gaze was compelling, and he ignored the cup and saucer she held out.

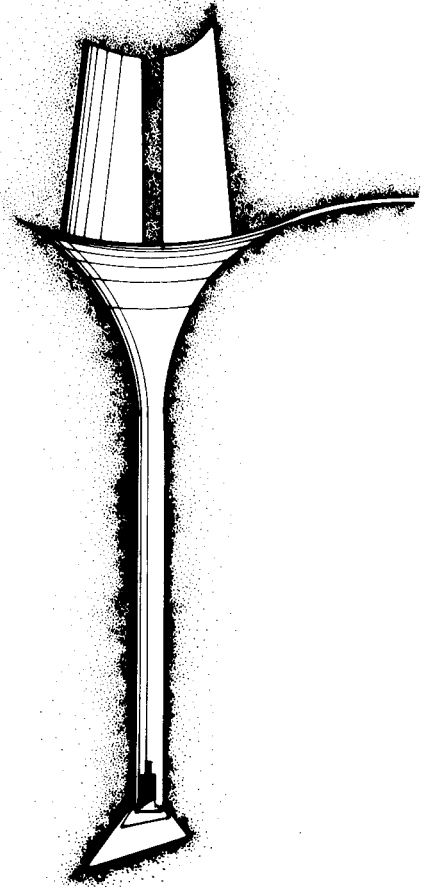
Gadrel dipped her eyes, remembering her last gestured conversation with the sage. She laughed, low and seductively. "What? Do you doubt me, friend? I, who continually outrage convention? Try me!" She saw no avenue whereby Myrlænis could possibly gain the ascendancy over this, her female self. In her opinion, women need have no vulnerabilities. Her male persona was weaker.

"I shall try you, but you know the risks. Gather those items you require for a short trip into the desert. I await you at the bathing house." Myrlænis gestured with his hand: *Be careful. I am more dangerous than you think.* "Join me there."

She thought of making him wait a day or a year, but in the end it was perhaps an hour before the Ishru found him dabbling his dusty feet in her tile-ornamented pool. "I would kill the Taza who polluted my bath," she said sweetly.

"But you would go thirsty for a century. Come!" He stood, slung his pack onto his back, and took her hand. They passed through the castle courtyards, out its gates, and into the grasslands.

Skirting the forests of Hiroth, the pair came to Gamesh, Satachian's principality. No servants of the Adversary challenged them. The wind, the heat, and the wildlife were their only companions. The grasses grew thin, gave way to sand. Cacti and tanglewood groves appeared. They had reached Zudær.



BASHÆN'S TOWER

The sage led the Ishru along the edge of the region, where the mountains fell steeply to meet the desert. He took her to lost Bashæn. There, she dreamed she was a little girl, an ordinary girl, an Anzeti child. "Gadraiella, my heart, fetch me my silk floss—the crimson and the apricot, please."

"But, mama, I'm playing. Let Gregoro go!"

"But I've asked you. Remember the lessons of courtesy and generosity, child. Your grandmother would wish to be proud."

Gadrel gathered her wool skirts and got to her feet. She gazed briefly at the meadow surrounding her home and then entered the cottage. A comfortable, merry woman stirred a pot of stew on the hearth. "There's my sweetpea!" she exclaimed as the little girl went to the tall chest of drawers beside the diamond-paned window. "The silks are in the top left-hand drawer behind the packets of buttons."

While the female Gadrel dreamed, her slumbers guarded by Myrlænis, the male Gadrel found the remains of his twin's tea party. He smirked and went to find her; an account of the blood feast would be amusing. But Gadrel was nowhere in the castle. He pretended he didn't care; yet his stomach felt tight, and a muscle twitched beside his left eye. He invited all his Taza to a masquerade and didn't attend it himself, preferring a solitary interval in his study drinking irænis.

He climbed to the topmost turrets of his stronghold and stared at the crows' nests there. He descended to the deepest dungeons, lodged within mighty piers of stone, and kicked the bones of long dead prisoners. He wandered through the endless galleries, drawing rooms, feasting halls, and bedchambers of the castle. Eventually, he came to the bathing house. Muddy footprints led across its tiled floor, through the stone courtyard, and out the main gates. Gadrel followed them.

Myrlænis was waiting for him on the steps of Bashæn.

"You stole her," stated the Ishru flatly.

"She thirsted. I led her to liquid." Myrlænis held out a his hand. "Come, and you shall find her and quench your own aridity."

"I hate you." Gadrel retained none of his usual poise.

"Of course. I am your salvation." The sage moved through Bashæn's mighty entrance, and the Ishru followed him.

Gadrel dreamed he was a little boy, an ordinary boy, an Anzeti child. "Gadrael, my heart, fetch me my silk floss—the crimson and the apricot, please."

"I won't. Let Gregoro go! I'm playing, mama!"

"For shame! Remember the lessons of courtesy and generosity, child. Your grandfather would wish to be proud."

Gadrel gave one last whack to the marbles in the dirt and jumped to his feet. He gazed briefly at the meadow surrounding his home and then entered the cottage. A comfortable, merry woman stirred a pot of stew on the hearth. "There's my gallant lad!" she exclaimed as the boy went to the tall chest of drawers beside the diamond-paned window. "The silks are in the top left-hand drawer behind the packets of buttons."

Gadrel and Gadrel dreamed for days and weeks and years. Over and over again, they were small and vulnerable and weak: children without supernatural powers. An Anzeti woman, a Kuluku man, a Shay couple loved them, protected them, and disciplined them.

Centuries later, Gadrel awoke in a stateroom. His sister slept beside him. The Ishru reached out to touch her hand. As smooth skin touched skin, the twins dissolved, flowing from two into one. Gadrel got up, walked through abandoned Bashæn to its arched entrance. Myrlænis was not there, but the bronze sky was *blue*. And the sun shone upon the land. "So this, then, is my beginning," whispered the Ishru. "Perhaps I shall start with courtesy and generosity."

3•THE NPCS

The individuals who will be present when the adventurers breach Shæhesh depends entirely on the actions of the PCs prior to their visit to the volcano. If they obtained news of Satarchian's taming of Myrlænis and of his intention to subdue Gadrel, they may have used the information to seek Ishrun allies. In this case, Lucibel and Orias might both appear to help break the Kirzelæn. Alternatively, if Myrlænis is dead and Gadrel still pursuing infamy, these same Ishru might be present to prevent the destruction of their prison.

If Bathym is dead from the encounter with the PCs when they retrieved Mhari Ridæn's items, then the Heresia Combata will be too disorganized to prevent the adventurers from breaking the sky of the realm they intend to rule. However, if Bathym survived his fight with the PCs, or if sufficient time has elapsed for him to return from the dead, then most of the Heresia Combata Eh'taza (Bathym, Azæl, Valafar, Agares, Turel, Dagon, Ilgar, Iscaaron, Alocer, and Abigar) together with a contingent of Taza will converge on Shæhesh to stop the adventurers.

Other possibilities include the presence of Dain Sædhun allies, one or both Loremasters, or even the awakened and hostile Niyoreh Jirel! The GM will have to use common sense and some intuition in determining just who is present and whether as enemy or ally. Of course, Dirizæl's ghost is never absent from Shæhesh.

If the adventurers choose to travel to Gazha, as recommended by Myrlænis, they will find that citadel uninhabited. They should learn a lot from the abandoned blueprints there, as well as the still-intact story mosaics.

DIRIZÆL'S GHOST

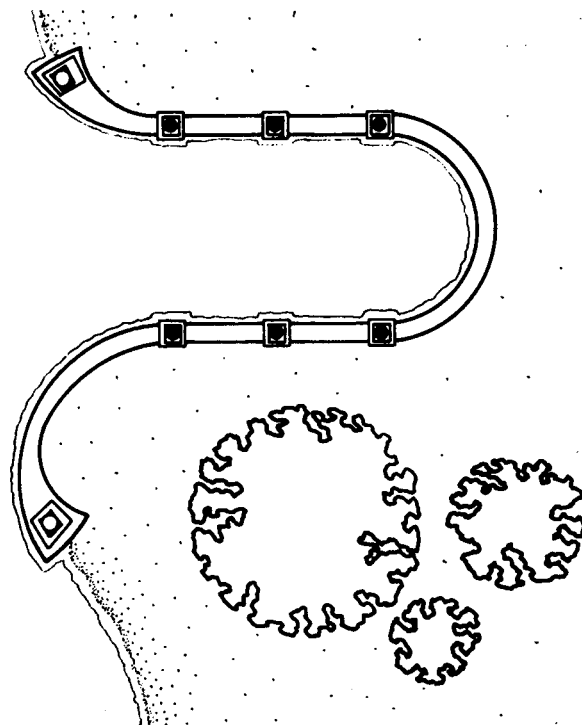
Dirizæl Mæluun was assigned to a small pod—composed of four infants—at her birth. Her first oracular visions visited her before she could walk. As soon as she could speak, she used the knowledge to cow the three other children. Golan Zenri suffered nightmares as a result; Shaka Xiiotha took her own life at age five; and Theola Phæbir nursed a private dream of vengeance that would bear fruit in her adulthood.

Niyoreh Jirel monitored the pod carefully. She was pleased with its evolution, and spent time with the children once every seven days. Dirizæl attempted to subdue even Niyoreh, but succeeded only in surrendering her own respect to the K'ta'viir leader. The little girl continued to test her limits, and soon the pod progenitor could no longer control her. Niyoreh removed her from the pod, putting her under Pæl Dhæk's direct supervision.

Dirizæl grew into a young woman who gave her allegiance and obedience to Pæl and Niyoreh alone among the Worldslayers. The K'ta'viir blood ran pure in her veins, promising her powers in her maturity that might outstrip any Essence-lord living. Niyoreh groomed her to be the Worldslayers' Oracle.

Theola Phæbir saw to it that Dirizæl did not survive to reach her prime. When Niyoreh departed the Worldslayer complex in wrath, bent upon the destruction of Mhari Ridæn, Theola sent a message drone to the Oracle-to-be. It purported to be a communication from Niyoreh requesting that Dirizæl follow her to Shæhesh in Gethæna. Dirizæl obeyed and arrived in time to perish amidst the maelstrom swirling in Paltæl's depths. Her ghost lives on, seeking to kill the Uruths who were Niyoreh's foes.

Age: 18 (at her death). **Eyes:** Violet. **Hair:** Black. **Build:** Slender. **Height:** 5'11". **Race/Sex:** Lord of Essence/F. **Skin:** Tanned. **Demeanor:** Proud, assured. **Dress:** Flowing robes of aqua silk. **True Attitude:** Sadistic, loyal to Niyoreh Jirel. **Home:** Her ghost haunts Shæhesh.



BOAT ARBOR

Hits: 150. **Melee:** 175ms. **Missile:** 165gé.

AT(DB): 18(-85). **Sh:** N. **Gr:** N.

MovM: 35. **PP:** 1000.

Lvl: 25. **Profession:** Evil Mentalist/Seer. **Stats:** SD-103; Co-107; Ag-109; Me-102; Re-99; St-100; Qu-102; Pr-112; In-106; Em-104. **AP:** 100.

Skill Bonuses: Ambush ±2, DSpell 40, Climb 40, Ride 35, Swim 35, DTraps 20, PLocks 20, S&H 70, Perc 90, Strength 100, Speed 100, Balance 100, Leaping 100, Landing 100, Runes 75, St&W 75, Channel 80, Acrobat 35, Act 45, Caving 25, Contort 35, Dive 35, Med 45, Music 55, Nav 65, PSpeak 75, Sed 85, Sing 40, StarG 35, Subdue 35, Tumbl 35.

Spells: Base Spell OB: 25. Directed Spell OB: 65. All Base Seer lists to 50th level. All Base Astrologer and all Base Evil Mentalist lists to 25th level. All Open Mentalism lists, all Closed Mentalism lists to 20th level. All Base Loremaster, Base Navigator, and Warding lists to 10th level.

Special Abilities:

Focus: All ghosts have a focus. Dirizæl's is the Kirzelæn. When the Kirzelæn is shattered, her ghost will be permanently destroyed. So long as the Kirzelæn remains intact, Dirizæl will coalesce to fight again within 12 hours after her ghostly manifestation is "killed."

Lifeforce Drain: All within 10' of the ghost lose 5 Con points each round.

Ghostly Form: Non-magical weapons pass right through Dirizæl without doing any damage.

Racial Abilities: Dirizæl, as a ghost, retains all the special abilities inherent in the K'ta'viir race, but at a lesser level. (See the *Shadow World Master Atlas*, PP 92-93.)

Strength of Body: Dirizæl resisted all attacks as a Large Creature. Her ghost is equally strong.

Gauntlet: Well-jointed, forged of alloy, spikes placed along the back of the item at all joints; does damage as a morningstar; +30.

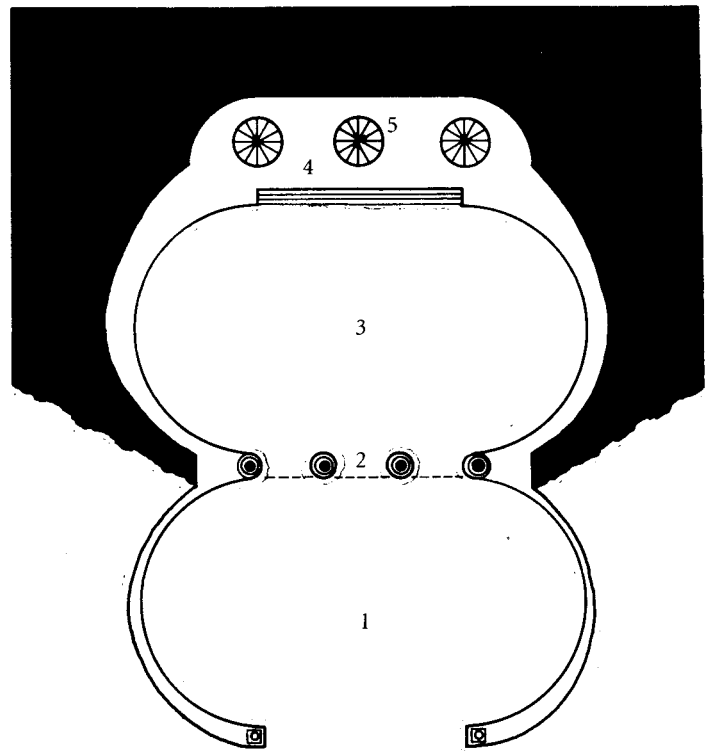
Gé: +20, returns via teleport to thrower.

Veil: Sheer gauze; confers AT 18 on wearer.

Nail Guards: Platinum crescents worn on the tips of the nails of the left hand; x10 PP multiplier.

Diadem: Circlet of platinum dangling a teardrop pearl on the forehead; acts as a helm; +50 DB.

GAZHA, LEVEL ONE



GAZHA

Gazha was hollowed from the obsidian cliffs overlooking Lake Lebæn. The walls of its chambers are characteristically black, but floors of pearly white næcrys were smoothed over the original dark stone. The complex served as home to Pæl Dhæk and Mhari Ridæn while they finished designing Gethæna and began the first stages of the construction of the Kirzelæn. Most of its furnishings have not survived the ravages of time.

LEVEL ONE

1. Lagoon. Two curving arms of næcrys encircle a basin of irænis where the grotto of Gazha opens onto Lake Lebæn. Boats may be moored at any of the many braizium hoops located at intervals along the lagoon edges. A pillar surmounted by a clear, crystalline ball stands at the end of each næcrys crescent. Vessels passing between the pillars cause a bell-like chime to sound within the grotto (#3). The depth of the lagoon is relatively shallow, 8' to 12'.

2. Colonnade. Four massive columns support the colossal arch connecting the grotto to the outside.

3. Grotto. The depth of the irænis in the grotto grows shallower still, from 8' at the colonnade to a mere 2' at the portico. More braizium hoops provide boat moorings.

4. Portico. Two balconies above the portico possess a magnificent view of the grotto. Persons mooring a boat in the lagoon may walk along the lagoon arms and around the grotto to the portico.

5. Transport Pillars. Three crystalline pillars rise from the portico, passing through walkways from the stepped balconies, to reach three braizium scoops in the grotto roof. The pillars are currently dull and lifeless; much dirt and dust coats their vertical facets. Should a boat pass into the lagoon outside, all of Gazha will begin to come alive again. Faint lights will sparkle in the transport pillars, followed by a glow that illumines the entire grotto.

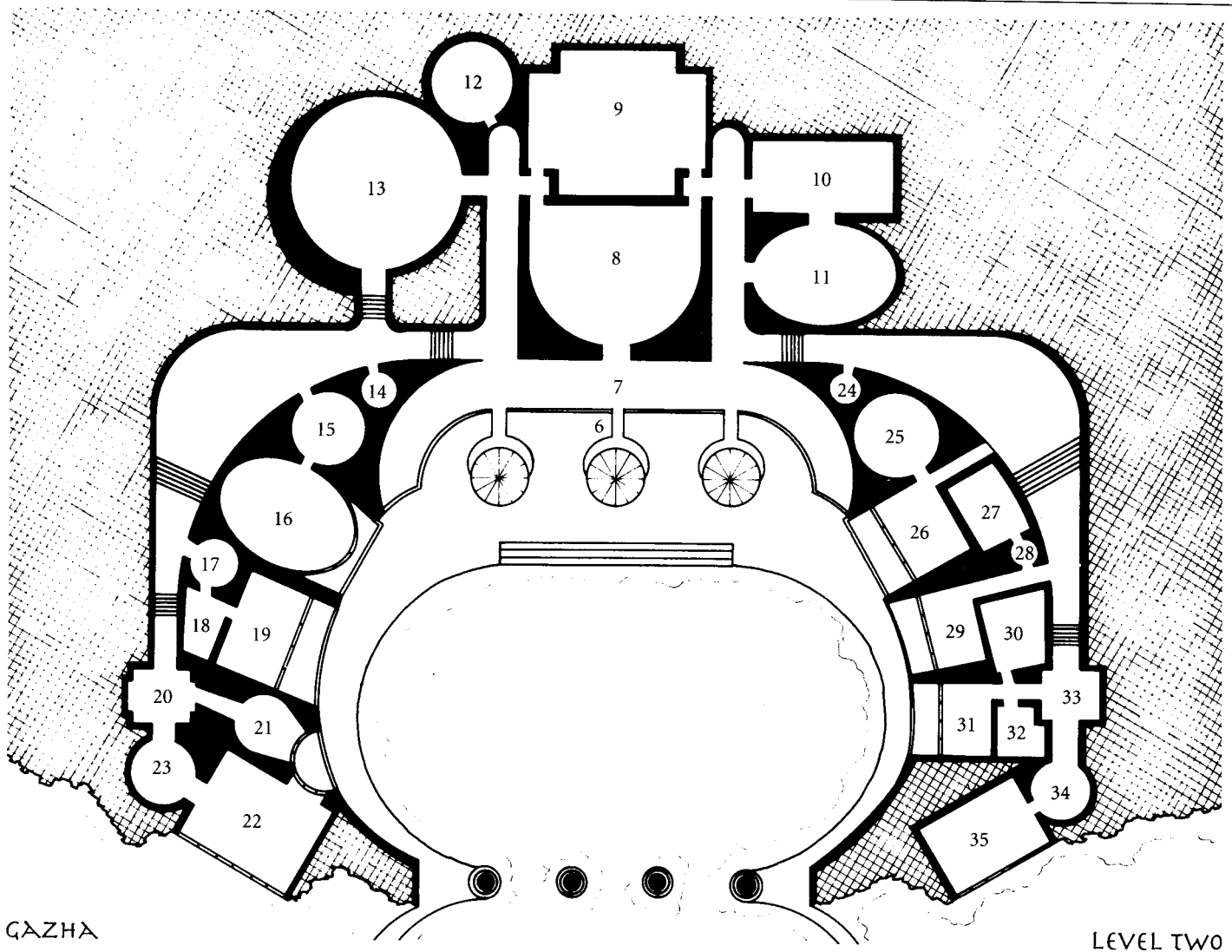
4 THE LAYOUTS

The ancient sites of the Lords of Essænce are described below. All are laden heavily with concentrations of Essænce and contain much of the substance *essicrysta*.

BOAT ARBOR

A white næcrys retaining wall curves sharply inward to form a safe anchorage for two gondolas. Three columns on either side support a lattice of næcrys overhead. Panes of vitreæn are secured to the lattice, protecting the boats from the rare precipitation that occurs in Gethæna.

The boats are magically tied to Gazha. Seven minutes after any individual sits down in one, the vessel moves out into Lake Lebæn, heading for the grotto. Once anchored at Gazha, the gondola conveys its passengers when they complete their visit back to the boat arbor.



GAZHA

LEVEL TWO

Once the columns are glowing, a person may step into their crystalline facets as though walking through a wall of warm water. Moments later, he or she will emerge on the second or third level of Gazha. An observer would see a shower of purple and blue sparks travel up the transparent column almost more quickly than the eye can follow.

LEVEL TWO

6. Walkway. Connects the transport column to the balcony. It is made of næcrys and has clear vitreæn panels as railings.

7. Balcony.

8. Chamber of Memories. Images resembling curtains of light drift through the air. Their forms ripple and change, while their colors move slowly through the spectrum of the rainbow. With practice, Essence users can gain control over the display, molding it to present nearly any image they might envision. Such control requires the expenditure of 1 PP per round. The Essænce-lords considered the pastime to be a form of rest and recreation.

9. Lyceum. The rectangular stage is still faced by the stepped floor where the audience would sit. The chamber was rarely used, but occasionally Mhari Ridæn or one of her assistants would narrate long epics that were part entertainment, part lecture to a small group gathered for the purpose.

10. Workshop. Many of the smaller facets of the Kirzelæn were created in this work room. The floor is deformed by many orthogonal depressions (whose depths are reached by the steps in their sides) and platforms of differing heights, also reached by steps that give them a pyramidal shape. How these formations were used is a mystery to anyone save Mhari herself.

11. Workshop. One-foot pyramids of essicrysta project from the walls, floor, and ceiling of this room. They are spaced in a grid forming diamonds with seven-foot sides.

12. Vault. The door is a plug of black eog, 14 feet in diameter and 7 feet thick. It inhibits the use of Essence spells unallied with the Unlife within a 100' radius. A lock (Absurd, -100, to pick) in the center of the plug controls seven alloy rods which extend from the center of the plug into the surrounding walls. Unlocking the lock retracts the rods. Once the rods are retracted, a spoked wheel surrounding the key hole may be spun to unscrew the plug from the doorway. A hinged framework catches the plug and can be used to swing it away from the doorway.

Gazha was not closed down completely when Mhari and Pæl left its comforts for the extended work on the Kirzelæn in Shæhesh. Niyoreh was expecting the complex to be needed in the interval between the completion of the Kirzelæn and its activation. Thus, some of the coins used by the Essænce-lord to fund her various projects remain in the vault, along with a few other valuables.

The contents of the vault include:

Trapunto Shaalk Coat: The inner and outer material of the jacket is shaalk. Spun ithloss fills the space between the layers, and kregora thread quilts the unusual fabrics together. The coat is ankle-length and thus encumbers as robes (AT 2), but it protects as a chain hauberk (AT 16) with an additional defensive bonus (-50 DB). The kregora thread inhibits magic within a 1' radius.

Essicrysta Net: Fashioned like a gladiator's net, this item can be used as such; but it is intended to be tossed over a foe who is then converted to energy by the net and stored in its crystalline lattice. Use the *Grapple Table* to determine if the net hits its target. If a critical is scored, then the net is assumed to have entangled the foe sufficiently to convert him or her to energy (foe gets RR vs. Essence at -25). Net teleports back to its wielder after each attack, if it was thrown. Seven foes may be stored. A foe may be released at the will of the net's wielder.

Obsidian Kith: A small, obsidian figurine of a kith (resembles a six-legged panther, see page 47 of the *Shadow World Master Atlas*, 2nd ed.). When thrown to the ground, the figurine becomes a full-sized kith which will serve as a mount for 7 days. It can transform 7 times each year.

Gold and Jewels: worth 70,000 gp.

13. Planetarium. A magical projector in the center of the room can be programed to project nearly any image on the ceiling of this chamber. Its default is Kulthea's sky as it would appear from Uj were the atmosphere missing. This gives the viewer an interesting experience during the daytime (the sun's light is dimmed to allow the other heavenly bodies to appear). Mhari used it primarily to help her visualize the puzzle that is the Kirzelæn and how its many internal facets fit together.

14. Storage. Along with mundane cleaning supplies and other essentials (long since moldered to dust), a minor construct returned to this chamber between housekeeping tasks. The construct still remains, a short cylinder of steel, possessing wheels and an array of mechanical arms and digits stored inside. It will return to its chores when a boat passes through the pillars at the lagoon's entrance. It has a lot of catching up to do, so the PCs will see it scurrying through the corridors and chambers if they visit Gazha.

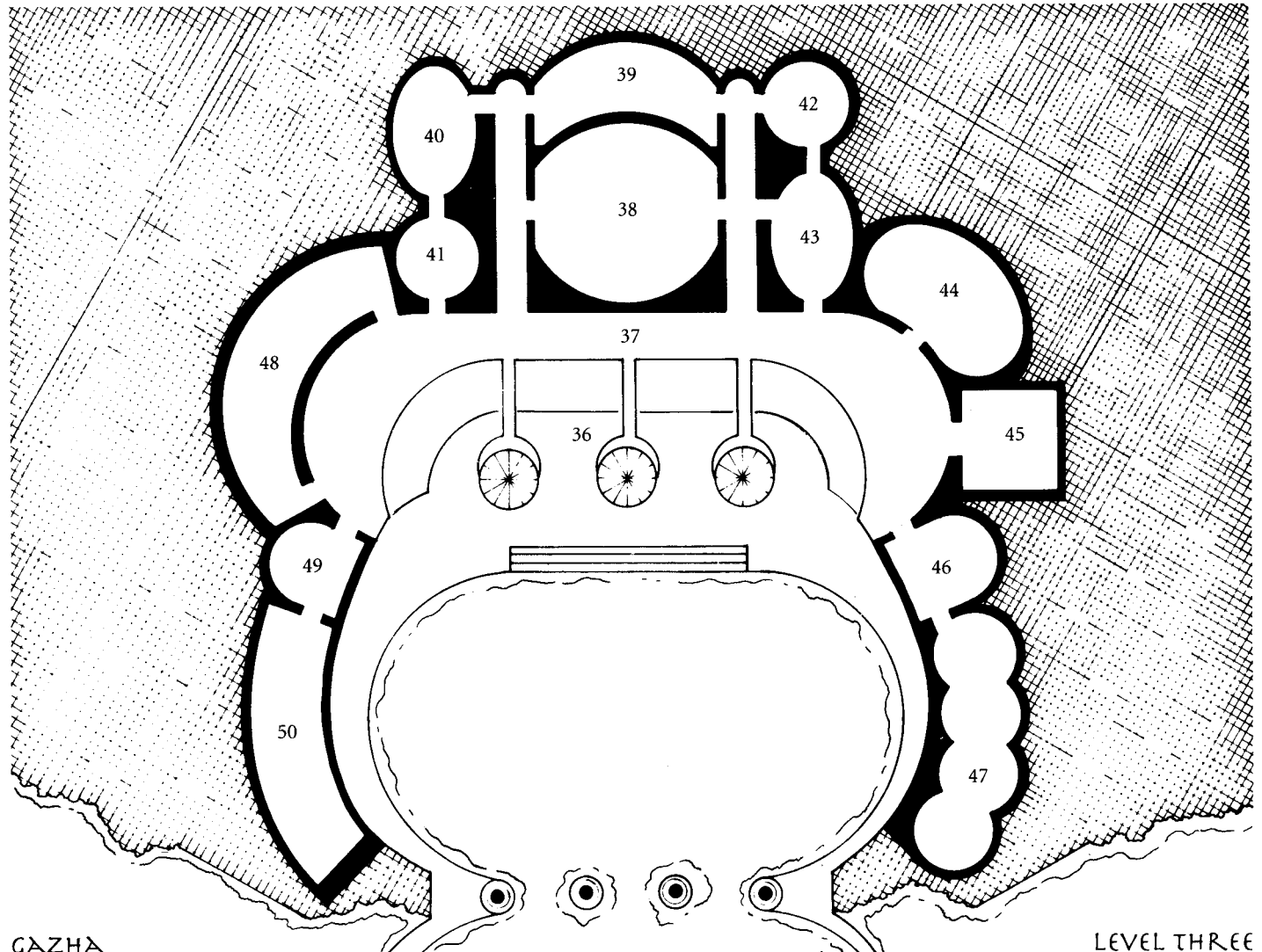
15. Anteroom. May have been accommodations for assistants. Nothing of its appointments remains. This is characteristic of the other living quarters (#17-#35).

16. Seclusion Chamber. Doors of vitreæn open from the room onto a balcony with an excellent view of the grotto. May have been accommodations for assistants.

17. Anteroom.

18. Concentration Chamber.

19. Seclusion Chamber. Quarters for Pæl Dhæk.



- 20. Fountain.** No water plays in the næcrys basin (shaped like a large conch shell) or from the central leaping fish. A great deal of dust has accumulated.
- 21. Seclusion Chamber.**
- 22. Gathering Hall.**
- 23. Conservatory.** Vitreæn globes, suspended from the arched ceiling, once shed their light on ornamental plants.
- 24. Storage.** A second minor construct occupies this storage chamber. It, too, will begin trying to clean the dusty complex once Gazha begins to awake from its dormant state. Both constructs are capable of synthesizing cleaning implements and solutions—necessary since their old supplies have decayed.
- 25. Remembrance Room.**
- 26. Seclusion Chamber.** Quarters for Mhari Ridæn.
- 27. Anteroom.**
- 28. Vestibule.**
- 29. Seclusion Chamber.** May have been accommodations for assistants.
- 30. Food Preparation.** The work counters, cooking implements and receptacles, and condiments are all gone. Two devices remain. A crystal pillar, three feet tall, stands within a small alcove. Items placed on top of it grow very hot—a knob next to the alcove regulates the temperature via pressure. Gripping the knob lightly sets the temperature to 130°F. A crushing grip yields 500°F. Another alcove is faced with panels of crystal. Items placed within the alcove are cooled. A pressure sensitive knob regulates the temperature between 0°F and 40°F.
- 31. Cluster Chamber.**
- 32. Food Storage.**
- 33. Fountain.** The næcrys basin resembles a newly opened flower, its petals curving gently upward. Water once flowed from the hands of the statue of a bathing nymph.
- 34. Conservatory.** Vitreæn globes, suspended from the arched ceiling, once shed their light on herbs and other edible, but decorative, plants.
- 35. Feeding Chamber.**

LEVEL THREE

- 36. Walkway.** Connects the transport column to the balcony. It is made of næcrys and has clear vitreæn panels as railings.
- 37. Balcony.**
- 38. Map Chamber.** A map of Gethæna fills the floor of the chamber. The image is sustained via an *Illusion True* spell. The illusion is purely visual, and anyone in the room will wade through the image of mountains, lakes, desert and grassland as though it were water. Small images of Bashæn, Gazha, and Shæhesh show the locations of these sites on the map.
- 39. Chamber of Plans.** Translucent panels of white vitreæn cover the walls of the chamber. When Gazha was inhabited, light glowed behind the panels, illuminating technical floorplans. Those in this room were for the shield level of Shæhesh.
- 40. Chamber of Plans.** These floorplans depict the entrance level of Shæhesh.
- 41. Chamber of Plans.** These floorplans depict the caldera level of Shæhesh.
- 42. Chamber of Plans.** These floorplans depict the containment level of Shæhesh.
- 43. Chamber of Plans.** These floorplans depict the facet organization of the Kirzelæn in Shæhesh.
- 44. Chamber of Plans.** These floorplans depict the cliff dwelling of Bashæn.
- 45. Chamber of Plans.** These floorplans depict the tower of Bashæn.

46. Presence Room. Niyoreh Jirel held audience for her assistants in this room. Its appointments were composed of tanglewood and silkweave and have long ago crumbled to dust.

47. Suite. The furnishings were made of polished steel and woven strands of placænium and thus are still intact. Numerous armchairs, divans, side tables, and abstract sculptures litter the space. At the far end, a circular bed is topped by a simple circular canopy. A nearly solid wall of transparent vitreæn windows provides a spectacular view of the grotto. Niyoreh Jirel made this suite her quarters upon those rare visits she made to Gethæna while it was under construction.

48. Gallery. The outer wall is covered by a mosaic depicting a panorama of a green, glacial valley somewhere on the surface of Kulthea. Six groupings of people gather at different places in the valley.

In the first grouping, a man garbed in pointed leather shoes, turquoise hose, a red tunic with crenelated hem, a trapunto cloak of purple and green velvet, and a broad brimmed scarlet hat with a pheasant's feather stands gazing over the valley. His brother, behind him and wearing black garments, holds a knife poised to stab. Neither man is aware of the Ishru Satarichian who watches both from the top of a boulder. The Iruaric word for *murder* appears below the group.

The second scene features the black-garbed brother, this time wearing richer clothing of brown velvet. He is restraining a struggling young woman with fair skin and long golden hair. She wears a white silk gown. The neckline has been ripped. The pair is half reclining on a hillock. Gadrel, standing in the shadow of a pine, watches them. The Iruaric word for *rape* is written below the scene.

The third group depicts a battlefield. Armored knights on horseback wield warhammers, while spearman on foot maneuver for fighting room. The dead and wounded are thick on the ground. Amianthus, untouched amid the fray, watches dispassionately. The Iruaric word for *war* is spelled out below the arm of one corpse.

In the fourth grouping, merchants and farmers going to market throng a road. One fat fellow in purple silks is the focus of the scene. Behind him, a pickpocket cuts the strings of the merchant's pouch of gold from his belt. Sachiel observes the robbery from the road side. The Iruaric word for *theft* captions the scene.

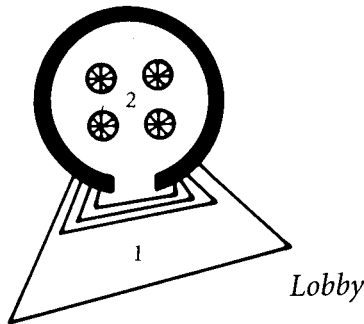
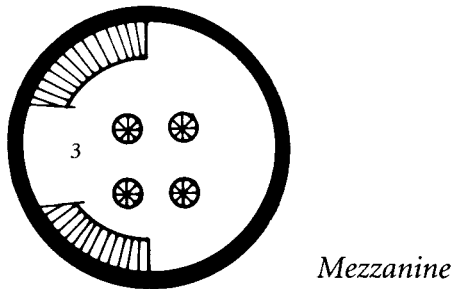
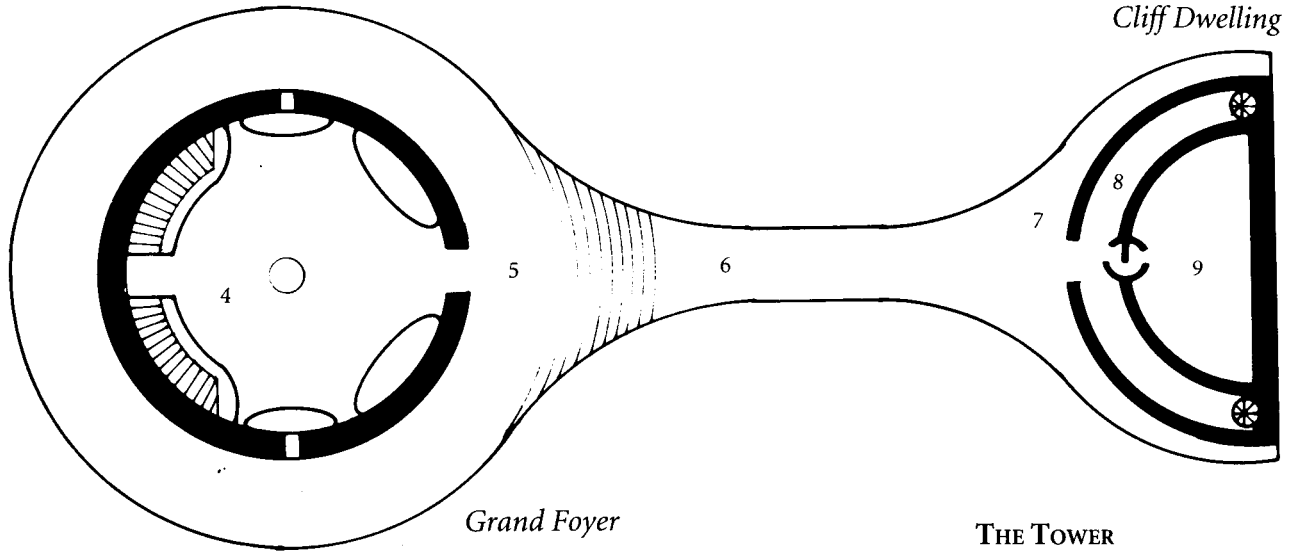
The fifth grouping occupies an outdoor shrine. White marble paves an area enclosed by a low wall and boxwoods. At one end the statue of a naked youth pours water from an urn into a small reflecting pool. At the other end, the bust of a veiled woman rests on an altar. The pickpocket from "theft" is smashing the bust with the pommel of his dagger. The glitter of precious gems, occupying a hollow in the statuary, can be seen through the broken hole in the woman's head. Lucibel, sitting at ease on a wall of the shrine, surveys the event. The Iruaric for *blasphemy* appears below.

In the sixth scene, a noble lady is carried on a palanquin by four bearers. She reclines and fans herself with a cluster of peacock feathers. Her eyes are drooping, and she yawns. Her bearers step over the small, bluish corpse of a young child. The Ishru Orias stands behind the group. The Iruaric for *apathy* is written below.

49. Alcove. Three scenes are portrayed in mosaics on the curving wall of this chamber. In the first, Lucibel casts the spell soulflames at the viewer. In the second, a bronze globe of light is beginning to form around the Ishru. Clustered near him are four of his Eh'taza: Chamos, Uriel, Tamiel, and Alastor. In the third, the globe is complete, but translucent, and a half-dozen Nuld crowd the Ishru and his Eh'taza.

50. Gallery. The outer curving wall of the gallery holds a panorama mosaic of all Gethæna. Arrayed under its brassy sky, the Nuld armies of the Ishru stand on parade, captained by their Taza and Eh'taza. At the rear of each force, the Ishrun general surveys his troops and his enemies.

The inner curving wall also holds a panorama mosaic of Gethæna. The sky is blue, and the sun shines. The six Ishrun generals hold the same places as their counterparts in the twin mosaic, but their armies and officers are missing.



BASHÆN

BASHÆN

Bashæn was carved from the black, glassine stone of the mountains of Gethæna. The complex consists of a tower connected by a bridge at its uppermost level to a structure cantilevered out from the cliffs. Although Bashæn's comforts and the magical mechanisms that provided them have been shut down for millennia, the simple presence of one sentient creature is enough to ready the place for habitation.

THE TOWER

- 1. **Entrance Steps.** Wide steps of sandstone lead up to an open archway.
- 2. **Lobby.** Four crystalline pillars occupy the space. They rise one hundred feet to the ceiling. When Myrlænis arrived, they were dull and lifeless. Considerable amounts of sand, which had drifted in over the many years during which Bashæn was vacant, lay in heaps at their bases. Then the sage stepped inside. Small lights came on inside the columns, and the soft swish of a blower started. Gradually the polished floor emerged from the dust and dirt.

Now the pillars emit sufficient light to illuminate the entire cavernous lobby. A person may step into their crystalline facets as though walking through a wall of warm water. Moments later, he or she will emerge on the mezzanine level of the tower. An observer would see a shower of purple and blue sparks travel up the transparent column almost more quickly than the eye can follow.

- 3. **Mezzanine.** The upper end of the crystalline pillars pierce the floor of the mezzanine and extend to its ceiling. There four massive scoops of braizium receive the obelisk-like points of the columns. Two formal staircases ascend from the mezzanine to the grand foyer.

- 4. **Grand Foyer.** The staircases from the mezzanine reach the grand foyer under the gaze of a statue of Niyoreh Jirel. Although her whole attention seems to be focused on new arrivals to Bashæn, from the back one sees her gesturing right hand. It seems to be saying to those behind her: *don't think I've forgotten you; I know what you're doing!*

Several openings in the floor, placed around the perimeter of the room, permit its occupants glimpses of the mezzanine below. Overhead, the foyer is open to the sky.

- 5. **Balcony.** A wide terrace surrounds the grand foyer. No defined railing guards the edge, but the floor surface curves up gradually until its slope (45°) provides effective protection.

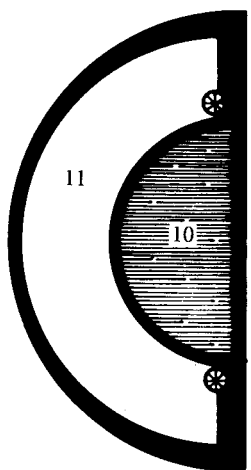
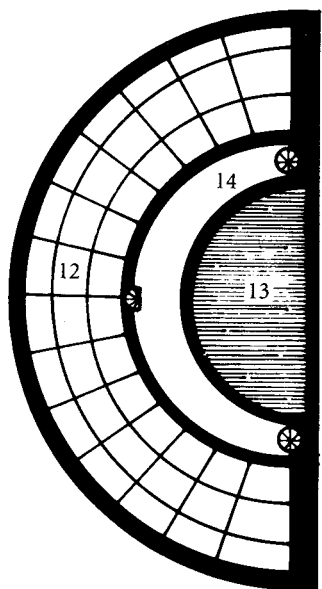
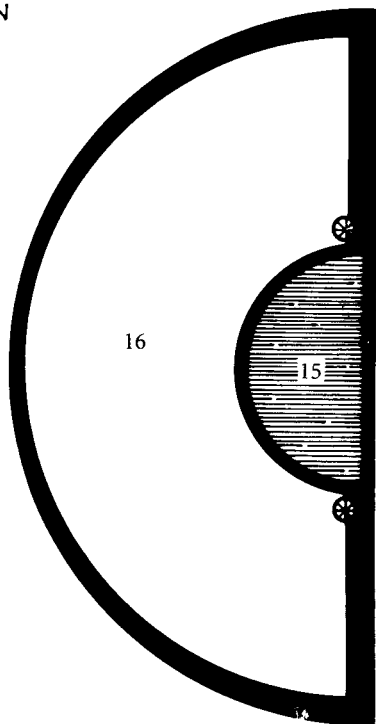
- 6. **Bridge.** The initial span of the bridge curves upward. Steps are carved out of the convex floor of this portion. Then last two thirds of the bridge are level. Like the balcony (#5), the walking surface curves gradually upward to form an unusual, but workable, railing.

THE CLIFF DWELLING

- 7. **Balcony.** The balcony spreads from the bridge around the lowest floor of the cantilevered cliff dwelling. Its floor has the same bowl-like configuration of the bridge and the tower balcony.

- 8. **Corridor.** A crystalline transport pillar rises at each end of this corridor. A baffle-protected door opens from the corridor into the dreamroom (#9).

BASHÆN



9. Dream Anteroom. Abstract sculptures in white marble, black onyx, and rose porphyry dot the spacious, semi-circular chamber. A crescent-shaped crystalline dais juts out from the center of its straight wall. Persons who stand on the dais seem to be whisked away to a lavish stateroom containing a canopied bed and ornate furniture. In fact, their bodies are transported to coffin-sized crystals (in rooms #10, #13, and #15) where they are stored—like china, or blankets, or tools. Metabolic processes continue, allowing the body to be restored as sleep would restore it. The stateroom experienced by the mind is merely a dream. Most of the workers in ancient Bashæn chose to sleep and dream of dreaming. Touching the crystal knob located on a pillar at each edge of the dais allowed them to program the content matter of their dreams.

Myrlæn is has programed the dreams that the male and female Gadrels will experience while sleeping in Bashæn.

10. Dreamroom. A lattice of storage crystals fills the space. All except two are empty. The chamber's ceiling is high overhead, since this storage space extends through all the upper levels of Bashæn. There is no access to this room save through the dais in the anteroom (#9) below.

11. Gallery. The crystalline transport pillars from the corridor (#8) below pass through this gallery. Persons using the pillars need merely envision which level is their destination to be carried there.

12. Private Rooms. These intimate cubbies were used by the workers of Bashæn to entertain friends privately with food, conversation, etc. Cubbies had to be reserved in advance. The tables, chairs, and divans that furnished the cubbies have long ago crumbled to dust.

13. Dreamroom. Continuation of the space described in the previous text (#10).

14. Corridor. The crystalline transport pillars from the corridor (#8) and gallery (#11) below pass through this corridor.

15. Dreamroom. Continuation of the space described in the previous text (#10).

16. Audience Hall. Occasionally the workers of Bashæn were gathered here to hear inspiring speeches from Niyoreh Jirel or one of her assistants. More frequently they were instructed in the next phase of construction to be tackled in Gazha or Shæhesh. The inner wall acts as a screen on which images could be projected with the proper equipment.

SHÆHESH

The heart of Gethæna as it has existed for millennia, Shæhesh harbors the Kirzelæn. The site possesses high concentrations of the Essænce, giving all spell users double the power points they normally have.

CALDERA LEVEL

1. Kirzelæn. The Kirzelæn is a truly colossal crystalline pillar. It measures 50' in diameter and 1000' from base to tip. Many irregular striations mark its surface, both vertically and horizontally—these bands and stripes are formed by changes in the faceting of which the surface is comprised. The pillar throws off a golden glow in the chambers surrounding it, as well as casting a thin beam of light that reaches from its tip to Gethæna's brassy sky.

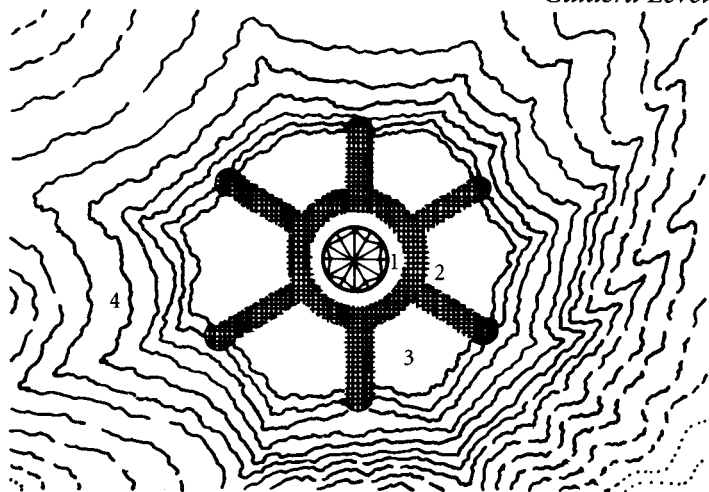
2. Catwalk. The walking surface is a metallic alloy latticework. The lattice turns the corner to form a railing. The catwalk circles the pyramidal tip of the Kirzelæn and crosses the volcanic chasm to the steep slopes of the caldera.

3. Chasm. This vertical channel once carried lava from the magma chamber far below up to the volcano's caldera.

4. Caldera. Not truly a caldera, the steep bowl within the cinder cone was formed through erosion rather than an explosion or the collapse of the cone. The slope is climbable (Sheer Folly, -50). Of course, a fall may result in a further tumble down the lava tube at the caldera's base!

SHÆHESH

Caldera Level



ENTRANCE LEVEL

5. Kirzelæn.**6. Chasm.**

7. Focus Ring. A mesh of kregora and rularon wire is hidden within the ring of blue marble visible in the floor of the threshold (#8) of Shæhesh. Also concealed are rods of black eog and of white eog. Anyone standing on the marble ring or within 30' of it cannot cast spells from any realm. The ring functions as a focusing device for the Essænce-flow channeled through the Kirzelæn.

8. Threshold. Six doors and two archways open onto this circular space. Its surfaces are the black, volcanic rock from which it was carved. The walls and ceiling are highly polished. The floor appears to have been polished and then etched with lines in a swirling pattern. At the center of the threshold lies the ring of blue marble, the volcano's chasm, and the Kirzelæn.

9. Anteroom. An elongated, diamond-shaped doorway gives access to each of the two anterooms. Within stands the upper portion of the transport pillars. A braizium scoop in the ceiling receives each pillar. The naked crystal plunges into the obsidian floor.

10. Transport Pillar. Each pillar emits a soft white light, illuminating the anterooms brightly. A person may step into the pillar's crystalline facets as though walking through a wall of warm water. Moments later, he or she will emerge on the containment or shield level of Shæhesh. An observer would see a shower of purple and blue sparks travel down the transparent column almost more quickly than the eye can follow. (Shæhesh has never been shut down.)

11. Inner Door. The doorway has the elongated, diamond shape typical of those in Shæhesh. The alloy door is composed of three triangular sections. Slots in the walls and floor accommodate these panels when the door is open. The doors in Shæhesh are keyed to Niyoreh Jirel, Pæl Dhæk, and Mhari Ridæn. They will also open for Mhari's descendant. (The Ishru and their minions use *Long Door* and other spells when they wish to enter Shæhesh.)

12. Passage. A cross section of the corridor has the same elongated, diamond shape displayed by the doors at either end.

13. Outer Door. The outer door is actually two doors, each identical to the inner doors. The outermost of these slides open first to reveal a *Rune of Agony* (9th lvl spell on the Physical Erosion list—Evil Magician closed list) on the surface of second door. Anyone unallied with Niyoreh Jirel must make a RR vs. Essence or feel intense pain and take 60% of his or her remaining hits. The second door opens 1 rnd. after the outermost.

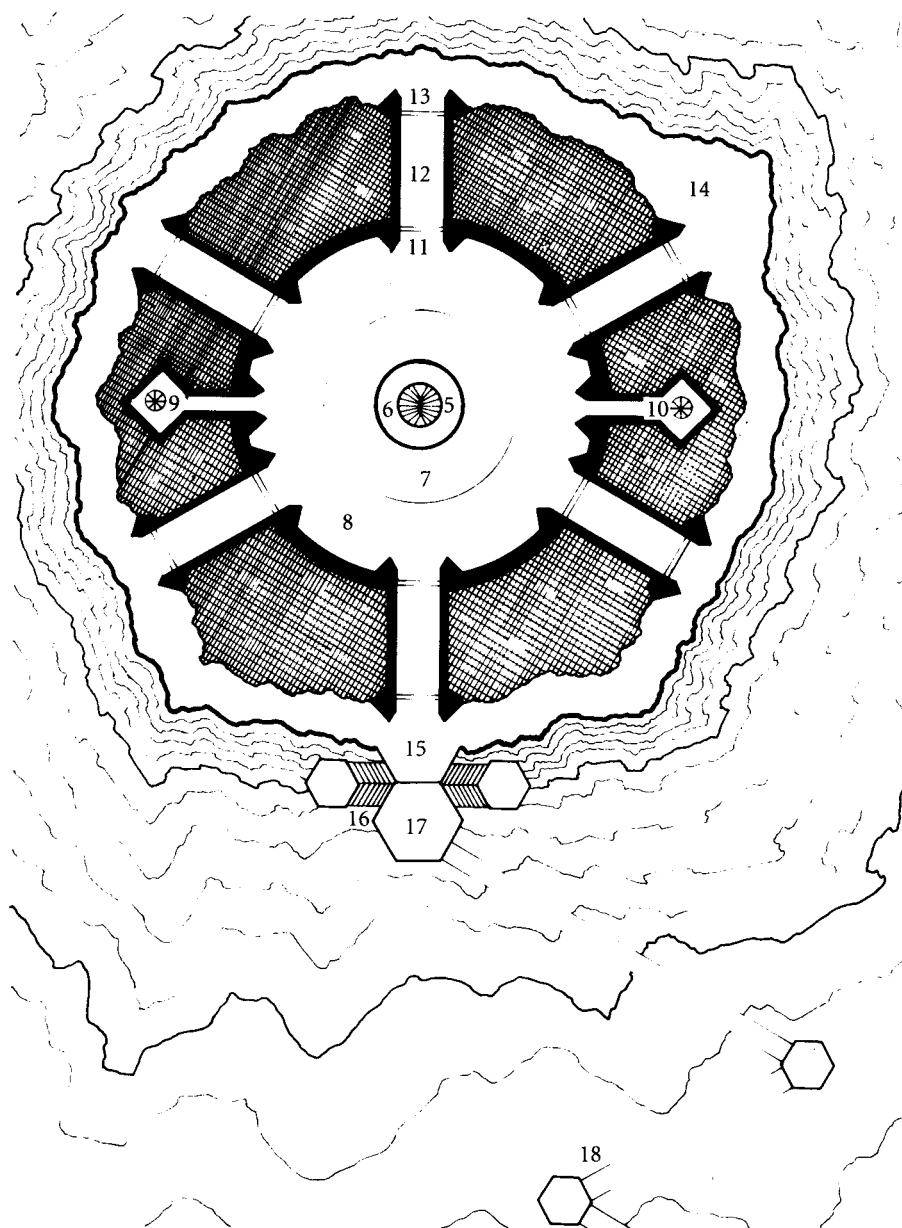
14. Terrace. Cut into the steep slope of the volcano, the terrace encircles its cinder cone. The surface underfoot is polished pumice.

15. Upper Landing. The outer door facing due south opens above the stairs leading down to the road that climbs the volcano Paltæl.

16. Stair. The pumice forming the steps has been left unpolished to provide better footing.

17. Lower Landing. From the lower landing, the way down Paltæl is a steep, zigzagging road with hexagonal terraces placed at intervals to serve as rest stops.

18. Road. Zigzags all the way down Paltæl's flanks to the grasslands of Gamesh in the west.

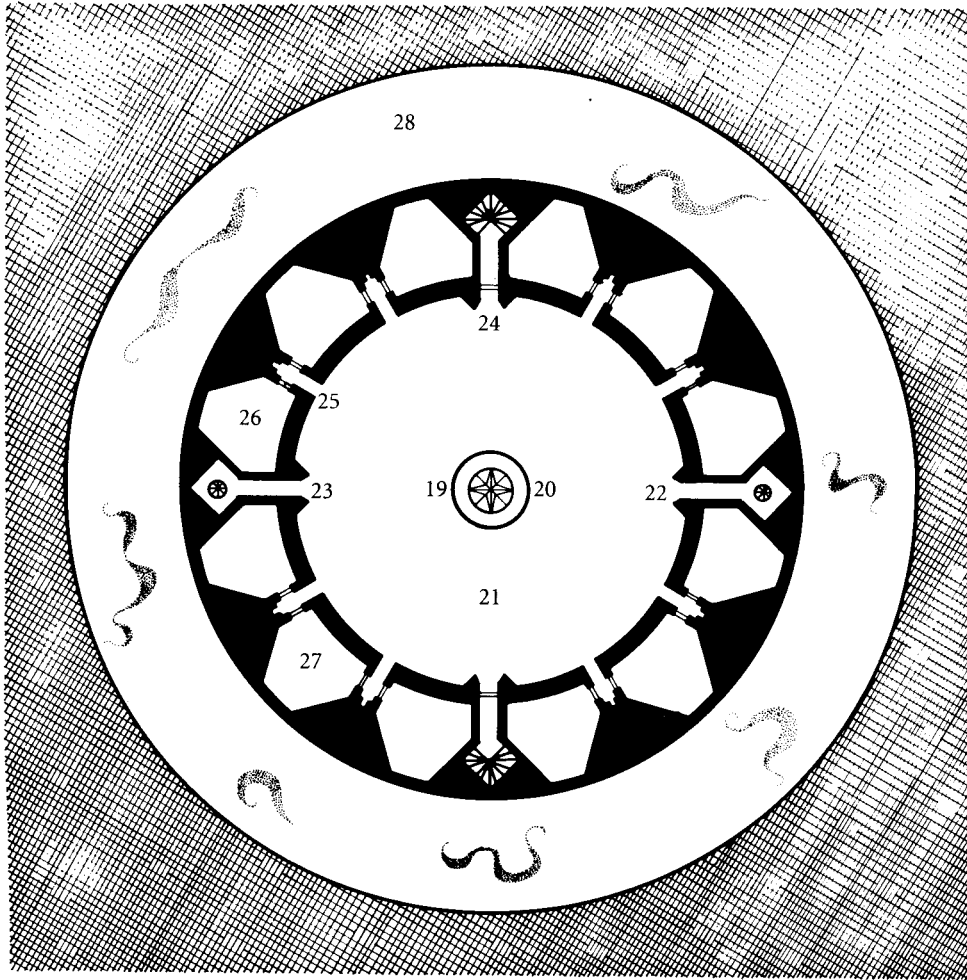


SHÆHESH

Entrance Level

SHÆHESH

Containment Level



CONTAINMENT LEVEL

19. Kirzelæn.**20. Chasm.**

21. Access Platform. The Kirzelæn rises through the volcanic chasm at the center of the access platform. A thick bulwark, from which chambers were hollowed, rings the platform.

22. Antechamber. The typical elongated, diamond-shaped doorway gives access to each of the two anterooms. Within stands the middle portion of the transport pillars.

23. Transport Pillar.

24. Stairwell. Doors identical to the inner doors (#11) on the entrance level give access to the stairwell. It spirals down to a room at the level of the floor of the containment zone (#28). Another door, embedded with kregora, rularon, and eog, opens into the moat.

25. Access Corridor. Gives access to the seclusion chambers and storage areas used by the Essænce-lords when they built Shæhesh.

26. Seclusion Chambers. Quarters for Mhari, Pæl, and their assistants.

27. Storage. Once held supplies for construction as well as pre-prepared foodstuffs.

28. Containment Zone. The focus ring (#7) on the entrance level causes a small fraction of Essænce fallout. This leftover Essænce spray is channeled into a containment moat where it can be harnessed to provide power for the transport pillars, doors, and other support devices of Shæhesh. Nets of kregora and rularon are embedded within the walls

and floor of the moat along with rods of eog. Those who obtain a view of the containment moat see rose and azure mists enfolding floating violet globes of light and gold and silver showers of glittering dust. Those who gain access to the moat experience extreme variations in power points as well as the side effects of nausea and vertigo.

SHIELD LEVEL

29. Kirzelæn.

30. Plug. A huge læn polyhedron plugs the volcanic fissure that plunges another 1000' to the magma chamber below. The læn is imbued with spells that control magma, ensuring Paltæl's quiescence. The ghost of Dirizæl haunts primarily this area (5% chance she is elsewhere).

31. Resonance Pillars. Although these eight pillars look and feel like gemstone crystal, they are in fact harmonic resonances (sound or chords) trapped by magic. The air molecules (and Mhari Ridæn's molecules, in one pillar) are frozen, vibrating at pre-established frequencies. The chord progression is well within the range of hearing, and visitors to the shield level are fortunate that the pattern of ten chords, repeated over and over again, is not too loud. The pattern maintains the integrity of the Kirzelæn.

Should Mhari Ridæn's ring be activated here, its harmonics will create an interference pattern in

the crystal of the Kirzelæn. This will have the effect of "unfreezing" the resonance pillars (thus turning off the Kirzelæn) and of shattering the facets of the Kirzelæn. The shards will be swept upwards in the uncontrolled fountain of the Essænce-flow. This burst of Essænce will explode Gethæna's roof, causing the greatest damage in the lands above the underearth realm.

32. Plug Facets. An octagonal facet forms the floor upon which the Kirzelæn and the resonance pillars rest. Trapezoidal facets slant downward from the octagon to meet the curving shields that surround the plug.

33. Shield Panels. Translucent golden læn, embedded with kregora netting, shield the resonance pillars from *outside* magical interference. Inside the shields, of course, interference is possible. No spells may be cast within 5' of the panels.

34. Catwalks. Cross the ditch formed by the plug and the shield panels to the doorways through the shield.

36. Door. Formed of the kregora-embedded læn, the doors otherwise resemble the inner doors (#11) on the entrance level.

37. Ring Chamber. The Kirzelæn can be hazily seen through the translucent shield panels.

38. Antechamber. The typical elongated, diamond-shaped doorway gives access to each of the two anterooms. Within stands the lower portion of the transport pillars.

39. Transport Pillar.

5 THE TASK

The adventurers must enter Shæhesh, find their way to its shield level, and shatter the Kirzelæn using Mhari Ridæn's ring. Whether their object is the freeing of the imprisoned Essænce-lord or the freeing of the imprisoned Ishru, Gethæna's sky must be broken.

STARTING THE PLAYERS

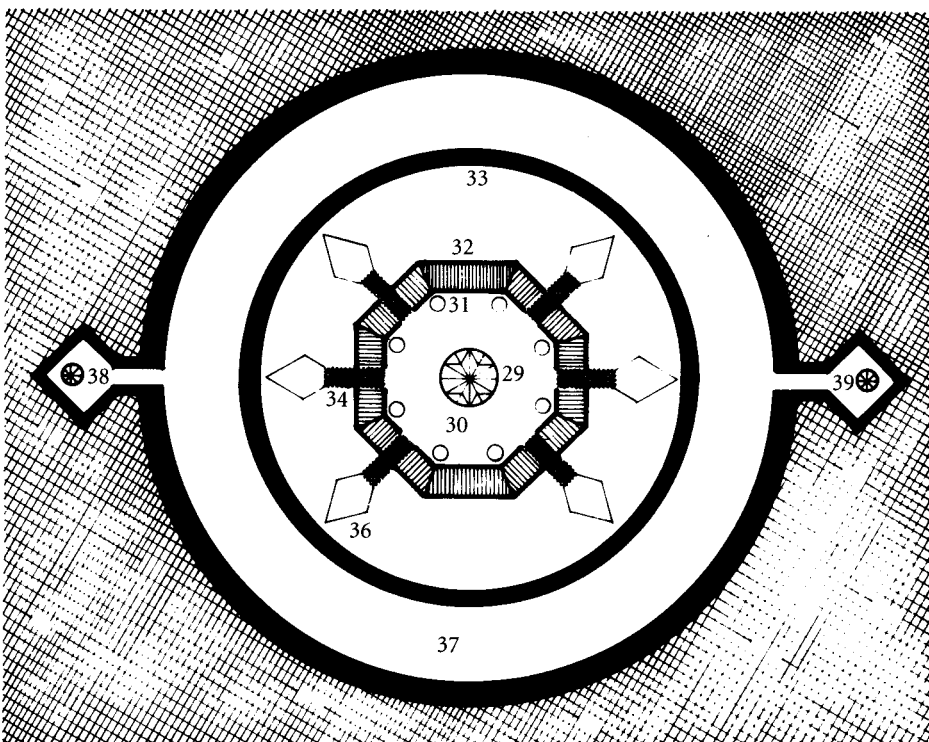
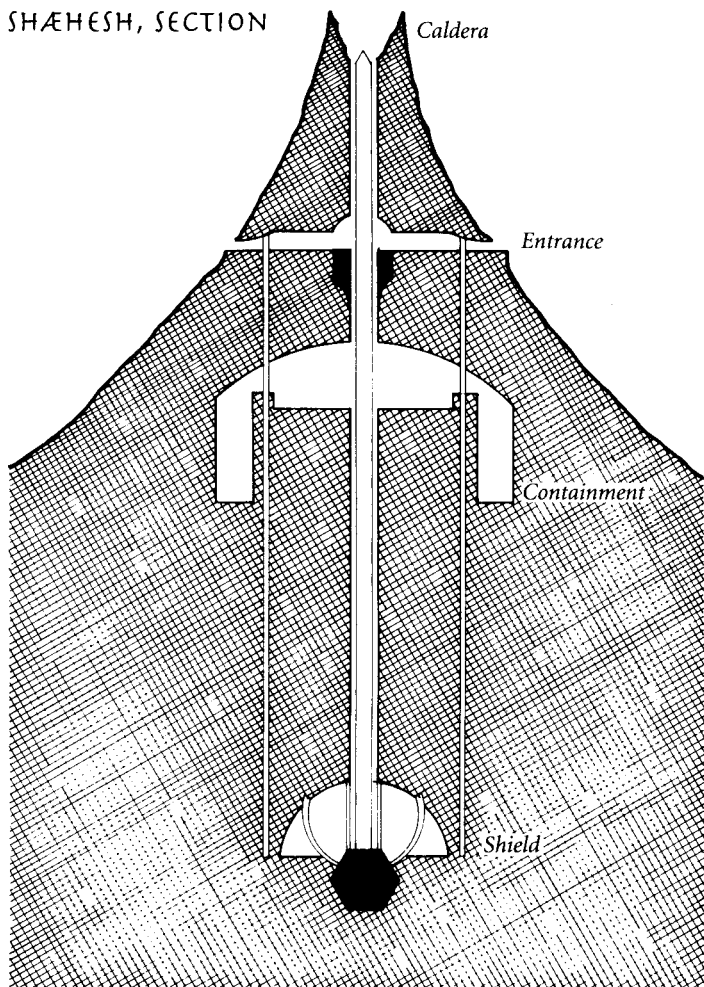
PCs who have promised to liberate Pæl Dhæk's daughter will naturally turn their attention to Shæhesh once they obtain the Narsirabæn (the adventure of *Bathym's Treasures*). Other reasons for shattering the Kirzelæn might include friendship with Orias or Lucibel or the desire to thwart the goals of the Heresia Combata. The latter reason could be a powerful motivator for Dain Sædhun adventurers. Should the Eh'taza Bathym steal the Narsirabæn from the PCs, he would launch a war on the Ishru that would probably destroy Kangled, Tangeval, Stedron, and Stondepin in the process. If he won, his fellow conspirators would make far worse neighbors for the few Dain Sædhun that survived than the current Ishrun regime.

AIDS

The possession of Mhari Ridæn's items, particularly her ring, is necessary to free the Essænce-lord from the resonance pillar in which she is trapped. The PCs should have obtained these artifacts in the earlier adventure *The Legacy of Mhari Ridæn*. They may also have the Linnæn if they defeated Bathym's Taza. The Linnæn will operate the doors of Shæhesh, allowing someone other than Mhari's descendant to move freely about the complex.

If the PCs visit Gazha before coming to Shæhesh, they will have floorplans which should make their task much easier. Additionally, they may have the knowledge that the Nuld, the Taza, and Eh'taza will be absorbed back into the Ishru, from whom they came, when Gethæna's roof shield is turned off. (In some ways the Ishru and their minions are like a case of multiple personality, except each personality has grown its own body to inhabit. The story mosaics of Gazha hint at this analogy.)

SHÆHESH, SECTION



SHÆHESH

Shield Level

The PCs may also have Orias and Lucibel accompanying them as allies, providing that Myrlænís survived the adventure of *Bathym's Treasure* and that the PCs took the initiative to seek allies.

OBSTACLES

The first obstacle the PCs face is relatively minor: the *Rune of Agony* on the only entrances to Shæhesh. Of course, if none of them is a descendant of Mhari Ridæn and they do not possess the Linnæn, entering the complex will prove to be quite a challenge. The PCs would then probably need to use a *Teleport* spell. An alternative might be flying (or climbing!) down the volcanic chasm of Paltæl.

Adventurers who have not visited Gazha or Bashæn may be puzzled by the transport pillars. They will need to discern how to operate them in order to most easily gain access to the shield level where Mhari is located.

Curious PCs may discover trouble if they explore the containment level too thoroughly. The excess Essænce collected there could have serious and unexpected side effects.

The most significant obstacles will be any Ishru, Eh'taza, and Taza who remain opposed to opening the prison of Gethæna. As discussed above (*The NPCs*), these foes could be a variety of individuals. Since all the Ishrun minions possess *Gate* spells (see section XIV, *GM Notes*), it will be easy for them to gather to fight the PCs in Shæhesh.

The ghost of Dirizæl will be hostile under any circumstances. She will not cease her attack, once the PCs encounter her, until she is destroyed. Since she was a Lord of Essænce in life (fortunately, for the PCs, an immature one), her ghost will be a formidable foe.

REWARDS

The major tangible rewards of this scenario come from the peripheral location of Gazha. PCs who looted the treasury there should have no cause for complaint. Of course, moral scruples may have prevented them from stealing items that may belong to Mhari Ridæn or Pæl Dhæk rather than their enemy Niyoreh Jirel.

If the adventurers were freeing Mhari for her father, then they will have earned whatever reward he promised them. Most likely this would be information. However, he would probably have the connections to commission a magic item made to spec for one or more of the PCs (if so desired).

The most significant reward, for PCs with a conscience, will be their success at having "done the right thing." Liberating a powerful warrior in the fight against the Unlife is a deed of which to be proud. And freeing repentant wrongdoers (the Ishru) who intend to make restitution for their sins is also no small achievement.

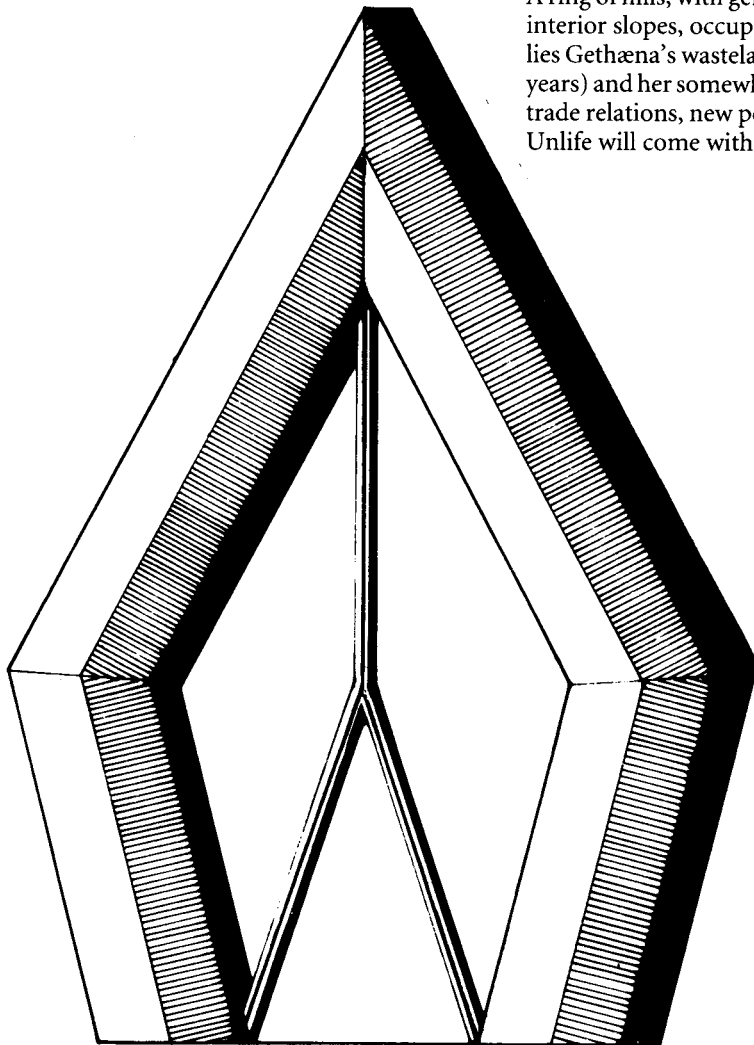
6·AFTERMATH

The devastation in central Uj will be truly awesome. Gethæna and its surrounding wastelands occupied an area approximately 120 miles across underneath the desert. When the earth and rock forming its roof flies upward and out, the effect should be as though an unimaginably large explosion occurred. Fortunately, the region is sparsely populated. The semi-nomadic Rhiani tribes will be the primary sufferers, along with any travelers who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

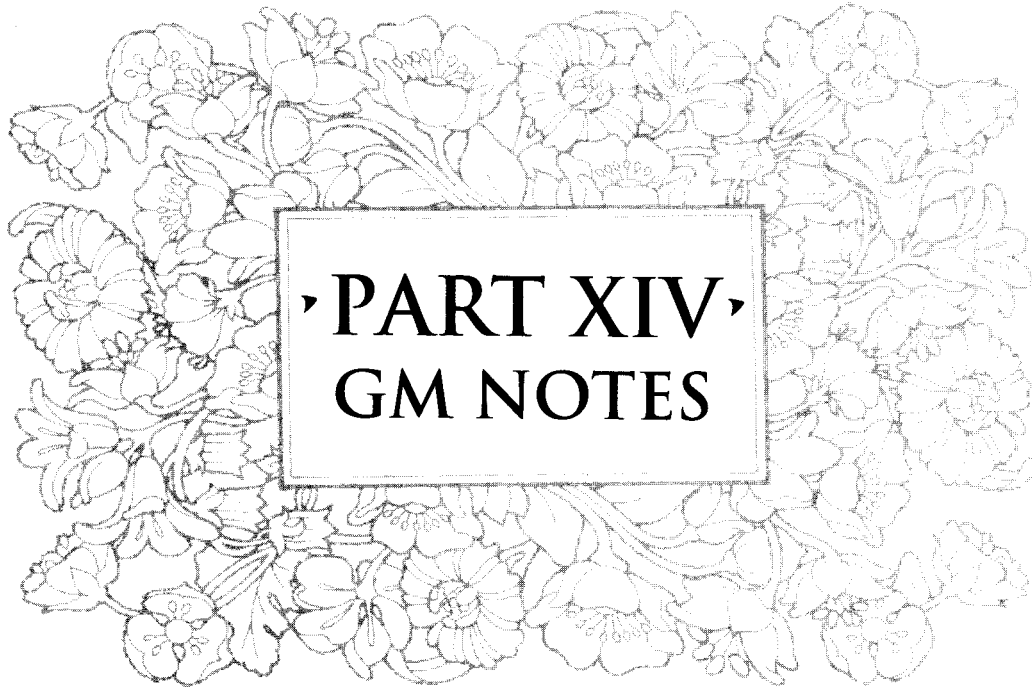
Nor will the Dain Sædhu escape damage from the cataclysm entirely. Some of the debris, including shards of the Kirzelæn, will fall back into Gethæna after reaching the apogee of its trajectory. The rain of soil, sand, and stone will flatten many structures, injuring their inhabitants as well as those without shelter.

Mhari Ridæn's first concern, upon her liberation, will be those who suffer because of it. This includes any wounded PCs and the general populace in the area affected by the disaster. An Essænce-lord bent on healing can accomplish much. Her second concern will be Pæl Dhæk. She will want to speak with him, but should realize that her presence in Niyoreh's vault will waken this dread leader of the worldslayers. She may charge the PCs with a message to be delivered when they claim their reward from Pæl. She will probably return to the havens of Stelar Ahkail to determine the status of any survivors there.

When the dust settles, the land of Uj will have new terrain forms. A ring of hills, with gentle inclines on their exterior flanks and steep interior slopes, occupies the central barren plains. Within the hills lies Gethæna's wastelands (which will become more fertile over the years) and her somewhat broken circle of obsidian mountains. New trade relations, new political struggles, and new attention from the Unlife will come with the passage of time.



A DOOR IN SHÆHESH



HE SANDLION MARINÆLLA SPRAWLED ON A HEARTH RUG in a parlor in Nokor Ænan. Hæn sat cross-legged beside her, while Delia lounged on a velvet chaise. One of her cousins sat hunched in an arm-chair. The other paced around the room.

Delia peeped at Peath from lowered eyes. “So incredible that it’s all over! What shall you do next?”

“Return to Eidolon, I suppose.” Peath sighed, and his shoulders sagged even more. “It seems so tame after the adventures we’ve had here.”

“Well, I’m not going back,” interrupted Caidh. He stopped in mid-stride to face the assembled company. “I shall travel across Emer, alone, looking for excitement.”

Delia laughed. “And probably finding it, if I know you! I have a better idea.”

Peath looked at his cousin sharply, while Caidh sniffed with derision.

Delia fiddled with the lock of chestnut hair hanging over her shoulder. “You remember that the Ishru weren’t always imprisoned in Gethæna. They once roamed Kulthea’s surface lands, troubling the inhabitants with all their most sadistic impulses.”

“So?” Caidh resumed pacing. He wondered if he could persuade his foppish friend at home to take up the wanderer’s life with him.

Delia ignored her inattentive cousin. “Lucibel feels remorse for his past sins. He thinks he owes something to men, to elves, perhaps to the Essænce. He is planning to spend the next millennium searching for good deeds to do. And he wants to hire us to help him!”

Peath brightened considerably at this startling invitation and sat up straight. “Orhan be praised!” he exclaimed.

Hæn and Kaia exchanged glances. Marinælla shifted her tail. They had already accepted the Ishrun offer.

Caidh was less enthusiastic. “Oh, Cháron’s light! I’d be someone’s knight in shining armor and have no fun at all!”

Unimpressed, Delia replied: “What do you think you did here? Something evil?”

“No. But I didn’t set out to free captives wrongly imprisoned. Or to reform sinners like Gadrel. Or to enable one of the Unlife’s most powerful foes to fight again. I just wanted to find some entertainment!”

“I think you’ll find discover more interesting situations with Lucibel’s patronage than without.” Delia’s voice then lost its edge, acquired a pleading tone. “Come on, Caidh! It would be too dull without you. Won’t you join the rest of us?” The young woman’s gaze swept across Peath, Kaia, Hæn, and Marinælla.

Caidh kept his lowered brows for a moment more. Then the prospect of adventuring with his new friends made it impossible for him to tease them longer with his pretended reticence. He grinned. “Well, since you put it that way: alright.”



Many unusual people, materials, artifacts, and concepts influence the course of events in Gethæna. The following text provides the Gamemaster with game system stats and other specifics necessary for a satisfying campaign. The glossary at the end of the section should provide help with the myriad strange names and terms.

1·UNUSUAL MATERIALS

The crust of the planet Kulthea harbors a selection of unusual elements. A few, not cataloged in the atlases and lists of the surface dwellers, are unique to Gethæna. Descriptions of these materials, some originating in the underearth realm, some merely hidden there in the course of history, follow below.

BRAIZIUM

Braizium is a bronze-colored alloy occurring abundantly in veins beneath Gethæna’s encircling mountains. It requires high temperatures to work, but does not oxidize or otherwise corrode over time. This quality makes the substance ideal for structures exposed to the elements. Braizium does not hold an edge well, nor does it resist sudden stresses without cracking—thus it is not used to make weapons.

ELECTRIUM

Electrium is made by mixing gold, silver, and iron at high temperatures while flooding the molten metals with Essænce. The resulting alloy is malleable and ductile with a color similar to electrum (gold and silver mixed without the iron and the Essænce treatment). Spells from all three realms of magic can be embedded more easily into electrium than most other materials. (*Imbed I* can be cast as a 1st level spell, *Imbed II* as a 2nd level spell, *Imbed III* as 3rd level, etc.)

ESSICRYSTA

The ancient Lords of Essænce alone knew the secrets of making essicrysta. And only a few individuals living in the Third Era are able to use remnants of the material forged in the past to make new items of their own devising. Essicrysta is a clear, crystalline substance that glows faintly and is always warm to the touch. *Detect Life* spells register pieces of it as living, and *Presence* spells report such as beings with presences! Essicrysta can convert Essænce (as power points) into mass, or mass into Essænce (which it then stores) when connected magically to the proper control device.

IRNWOOD

Darker than shadow, harder than marble, irnwood trees grow only in the forests of Hiroth. Their gnarled branches make black lace when viewed against Gethæna’s bronze sky, and mists of coin-sized, pearly leaves shimmer next to the sinister bark. A mace or a war hammer created from irnwood will never split and is easily embedded with spells. The heartwood of the tree is as black as its bark, and the grain is nearly invisible.

NÆCRYS

Although timber from the irnwoods is deepest black, the trees’ sap is a milky white color. When the fluid is heated, it condenses to form a rubbery glue, useful for laminating textiles, wood, or metal together. More spectacular results are obtained by adding pollen from the albthæmis vine to the sap while it is warming. The pollen acts as a catalyst, transforming the brew into the substance named næcrys. While still warm, næcrys may be molded like clay to form a variety of objects; roof tiles, dishes, furniture, or even the walls of a house are but a few of its potential uses. Once it cools, the substance hardens. Like kiln-fired clay, it can no longer be shaped; unlike clay, næcrys will not shatter when dropped, and it is much lighter than ceramic (rather like non-sticky pine resin, but harder). It is translucent white with an iridescent luster similar to the sheen of mother-of-pearl.

The Dain Sædhu do not use næcrys due to the highly toxic effects of albthæmis pollen as well as the limits they adhere to for products harvested from Hiroth. Næcrys is a more common material among artifacts of the Ishru.

PLACÆNIUM

The process used to make placænum is similar that for næcrys. Ingredients for the recipe include moisture pressed from the flesh of the garælla cactus as the base resin, irænis from Lake Lebæn as a preparatory catalyst, and a drop of Ishrun blood as the primary catalyst. The resulting material possesses all the assets of Næcrys

with the additional virtue of dye absorption. Placænium can be tinted any color by applying a dye before the resin has fully cured. Its natural color is a clear porcelain white, lacking the opalescent whorls that characterize næcrys.

SUNCORAL

The glowing, cherry red of hot coals, cloaked by a shifting aura of ultraviolet purple, these gems are as lethal as they are beautiful. Their heat is so fierce as to melt through any surface but læn, and they bring plague to creatures touched by their deadly corona (see Coralplague, Section 9). Sorcerously shielded, energies channeled, suncoral makes a powerful weapon. It is found in the gem mines, Demoth, located on the periphery of Gamesh.

THORNWOOD

Pliant and bitter as enchantment, the sprays of thornwood bushes bear jade spines and little else. There is a story that the heart's blood of a songbird will produce a crimson, velvety marvel of petal and scent depending from one of the hungry branches. No one has put the story to the test, but a few craftsmen have created bows of thornwood whose accuracy, strength, and longevity are unrivaled. The bushes grow in the desert regions of Gethæna: Zudær, Pæran, and Næph.

TAURITH

Taurith is a silver-blue alloy found near deposits of arinyark. Although it behaves like most metals, molten at high temperatures and solid at cool ones, it loses some of its most valuable properties permanently when softened or melted by heat. These characteristics include: the strength to withstand extreme torque without bending or cracking, the molecular structure permitting it to take and retain a very sharp cutting edge, and the extreme ease with which it can be embedded with Essence spells (not Mentalism or Channeling; see electrium). Therefore, taurith is usually worked cold—a proceeding requiring considerable skill on the part of the alchemist. Taurith marred by heating can be detected by its lack of surface sheen; it cannot be polished to a high gloss.

TRYSTRIMUM

A metal, greenish silver in color, usually found in small nodules (¼" to 1" diameter) among the roots of irnwood trees. Trystrimum is a strong, flexible substance and holds a keen edge (only læn or taurith surpasses its sharpness). Additionally, it can be embedded with Channeling spells or runes with particular ease (see electrium). Only the difficulty experienced in collecting a sufficient quantity makes it little used.

VITREÆN

Another resin material, vitreæn is compounded from the sap of the dirænus vine (grows in the uppermost portions of the irnwoods) and the venom of the glimsinu (snake found in Zudær, Pæran, and Næph). Like placænium, vitreæn may be dyed. However, it is a transparent substance and is naturally without coloring. It makes ideal windows, although that is not its only use. Before the curing process, vitreæn can either be blown like huge soap bubbles or stretched across geometric frames to dry.

2 ITEMS OF NOTE

Of the two items described below, one is an artifact created by an Essænce-lord. Its size and scope dwarf most products of the forge. Yet the other items presented, though insignificant in comparison, could change the balance of power in Gethæna forever.

THE KIRZELÆN

The Kirzelæn is a massive obelisk of golden-glowing essicrysta. It is round, with a diameter of 50', and measures 1000' from base to tip. Its uppermost portion is shaped to form a cone approximately 75' in height. Irregular striations mark the Kirzelæn's surface, both vertically and horizontally. Viewed more closely, the striations are in fact changes in the faceting of the crystalline substance. The pillar was made by fitting together crystals of wildly varying size, from hexagonal matrices with 4-inch sides to duodecahedrons with 20-foot sides. The smaller crystals were grown in the workshops of Gazha, while the larger were formed on the site at Shæhesh. The seams between these puzzle pieces were then fused to form a solid pillar which rises through the volcano Paltæl in central Gethæna.

Peripheral devices surround the Kirzelæn, their effect being a focusing of the Essænce-flow streaming through the column of essicrysta. This Flow emerges from the tip of the Kirzelæn's apex as a thin beam of light that reaches to the incandescent sky. The sky is merely half—the visible half—of the sphere generated by the Kirzelæn. Its unvarying light is as bright as the rays of Kulthea's sun. Its heat is sufficient to fuse the wasteland sands into glass where the sky meets the ground. Fortunately temperatures grow rapidly more moderate with distance from the burning upper hemisphere. The lower hemisphere, hidden below ground, emits neither light nor heat. To the Dain Sædhun spelunker who penetrates the earth deeply enough, it appears to be merely a quivering in the air across the cavern he or she explores.

The sphere generated by the Kirzelæn is 180 miles across. The Ishru, the Eh'taza, the Taza, and the Nuld cannot leave its confines unless they are summoned, just as a warlock might summon a Demon. Even then, they are sucked back to Gethæna upon completion of the task demanded by the summoner.

The essicrysta of the Kirzelæn was inert until exposed to the sonic frequencies coded into each crystal's matrix at its creation by Mhari Ridæn. Once these chords were sounded, the artifact's powers were activated. The sphere enclosing Gethæna appeared. And eight pillars, each vibrating at a different frequency and emitting soft white light, sprang into being around the Kirzelæn's base. Fields of silence come and go between these pillars, creating a progression of chords that sustains the functioning of the Kirzelæn.

THE NARSIRABÆN

There are six Narsirabæn, one for each of the Ishrun princes who rule in Gethæna. The Eh'taza Bathym forged the rods of electrium. Each is eight inches long. An orange jacinth, spherical in shape and faceted, is set at one end. An ornate handgrip of white gold is fastened at the other. Holding the grip, the item's user sights along the rod to aim the field of constraint generated by the Narsirabæn. (Anyone who makes his or her Wands & Staves roll may use the Narsirabæn.)

The field is spherical and appears to be made of bronze light. It can imprison one of the Ishru (or one of their servants). The captive may be summoned from this prison, like a Demon might be summoned, but will be pulled back within the field after he completes the task assigned by his summoner. The field of constraint will last until the Narsirabæn used to generate it is again used to dispel the field or until the item itself is destroyed. Each Narsirabæn generates only one prison field at a time, and the field must be dispelled before it generates another.

The Narsirabæn are keyed to the energies of the Kirzelæn and cannot function if it is destroyed.

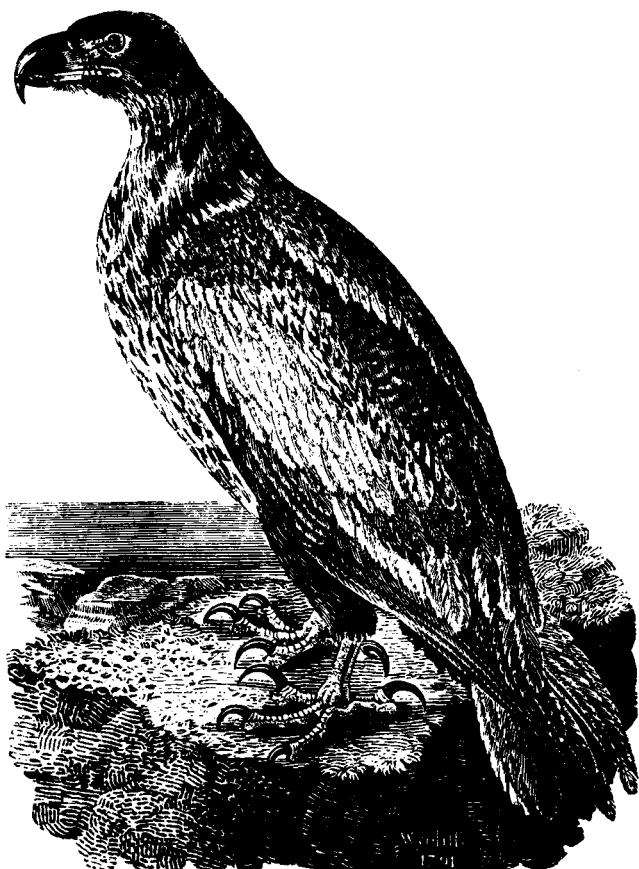
3·ISHRUN REGENERATIVE POWERS

As suggested in myth, the Ishru possess some physical characteristics that differ from those of men and elves. Ishrun bodies *do* have limits (see the column **Hits** in the *Master NPC Table*). They can be injured, maimed, and rendered unconscious. They feel fatigue, hunger, thirst, and pain, among other sensations. However, the conditions they require for life are less strict than those of other species. Food and rest, although necessary, may be shunned for months at a time without ill effect. Of more significance, death itself may be experienced by the Ishru without permanent effect.

When one of the Ishru dies (a fairly frequent event, since they are careless of life), his body fades. Physical objects, such as a spear, pass through the image of the corpse as if it were an illusion. When the image disappears, the Ishru ceases to exist. But the Ishrun sense of self is strong and transcends even non-existence. An Ishru fades back into corporeality the same way he faded out of it. His wounds are healed, and his capabilities remain almost undamaged. Usually, he has returned to a familiar location. (Orias might return to his artist's pavilion, Satarchian to his hunting lodge.)

The chart below specifies the varying durations and penalties associated with fading and non-existence as experienced by the Ishru and their servants.

	Fading	Non-existence	EPs Lost
Ishru	1 rnd	6 minutes	6,000
Eh'taza	6 rnds	6 days	12,000
Taza	12 rnds	60 days	24,000
Nuld	18 rnds	6 years	48,000



EAGLE OF THE GRASSLANDS

4·SPELLS OF THE ISHRU

At their birth, the Ishru were endowed with more than flesh and bone. A limited, natural ability to channel the Essænce was also granted to them. Many made further research into the three realms of power (Essence, Mentalism, and Channeling) and learned more spells with which to assert their will. Yet their original powers retain a central, cherished position in their repertoires. These original spell lists are described below.

VICTORY'S FRIENDS / VICTORY'S WREATH / VICTORY'S NEMESIS

- 1—**Allseeing Eyes** (P*) **D:** 1 hr/lvl **R:** S Caster can see invisible things anywhere he can normally see and his attacks have no penalty.
- 2—**Swiftess** (U*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** S Caster may move and perform maneuvers at twice his normal speed.
- 3—**Physical Might** (P*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** S Doubles the caster's strength; in melee the caster delivers twice the normal concussion hits and adds +10 to the attack roll.
- 4—**Sorcerous Might** (D*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** S Caster gets +15 to all RRs against Essence, Mentalism, and Channeling spells.
- 5—**Shapechange** (P*) **D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** S Caster can assume any organic form from half to twice his mass; he can change forms at will (1 change/rnd), but does not obtain any special abilities different from his own.

WAR'S VEIL / DISCORD'S VEIL / WAR'S WEAPONS

- 1—**Terror** (M*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' Target fears caster and attempts to flee.
- 2—**Confusion** (M*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' Target is incapable of making decisions or initiating action; he may continue to fight current foes or in self defense with a penalty of -10 from attack rolls.
- 3—**Discord** (M*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' Targets (1/lvl) are incapable of cooperating or agreeing with one another.
- 4—**Loathing** (M*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' Target loathes object or person specified by caster and will attempt either to flee from it or to destroy it, 50% chance each.
- 5—**Charm** (M*) **D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 50' Any sentient creature believes caster is a good friend.

EVIL'S TRUCE / DOOM'S TRUCE / FATE'S TRUCE

- 1—**Telekinesis** (F*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl (C) **R:** 100' Caster can move one object (up to 10 lbs/lvl in mass) 1'/lvl/second with no acceleration. Living beings, magical items, or items secured by either get a normal RR. If the caster stops concentration before the duration of the spell ends, the object remains stationary unless moved by a force superior to that exerted by the spell.
- 2—**Merging** (F*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl (C) **Range** S Caster can merge into any solid inanimate material (up to 1' in depth); he is inactive but aware of surrounding activity and may exit at any time up to the total duration.
- 3—**Long Door** (F*) **R:** S Caster teleports to any point 100' away or less; there may be intervening barriers, but they do not affect the success of the spell as long as the specified point is clear.
- 4—**Return** (F*) **R:** S Caster will return by teleport to a place of refuge, specified (and immutable once specified) before first use of the spell, no matter the distance intervening from subsequent locations. Casters over 15th level may specify one extra place of refuge for every level above 15th up to a total of 10. Such casters may choose to which refuge they will return.
- 5—**Gate** (F*) Caster summons comrades in his fighting force to his aid. Two comrades per level of the caster may be so summoned, and they will appear 5 rnds after the spell is cast. Nuld may summon only Nuld. Taza may summon Nuld or other Taza. Eh'taza may summon Nuld, Taza, or Eh'taza. Ishru may summon Nuld, Taza, Eh'taza, or Ishru (the latter happens almost never). This spell may be used for communication with the physical transfer aborted.

VICTORY'S FRIENDS (Mentalism) / VICTORY'S WREATH (Essence) / VICTORY'S NEMESIS (Channel)	WAR'S VEIL (Mentalism) / WAR'S WEAPONS (Essence) / DISCORD'S VEIL (Channel)	EVIL'S TRUCE (Mentalism) / DOOM'S TRUCE (Essence) / FATE'S TRUCE (Channel)
1 Allseeing Eyes 2 Swiftess 3 Physical Might 4 Sorcerous Might 5 Shapechange	1 Terror 2 Confusion 3 Discord 4 Loathing 5 Charm	1 Telekinesis 2 Merging 3 Long Door 4 Return 5 Gate
SOUL'S BANE (Mentalism)	MISCHIEF'S GIFT (Channel)	PAIN'S CLOAK (Essence)
10 Minor Phantasm 11 Shadow 12 Stealth 13 Sleep 14 Pacify 15 Comfort 16 Tongues 17 Thoughts 18 Age 19 Youth 20 Soulflames	10 Keys 11 Dreamgift 12 Masks 13 Minor Quest 14 Suggestion 15 Blindness 16 Hypnosis 17 Enchanted Sleep 18 Youth 19 Beauty 20 Geas	10 Illumination 11 Locations 12 Knock 13 Stealth 14 Unsight 15 Seek 16 Voice Manipulation 17 Tangled Path 18 Forget 19 Reflections 20 Twins
HUNTER'S CHOICE (Essence)	SAGE'S WILL (Essence)	MAKER'S WAY (Mentalism)
10 Stealth 11 Landing 12 Unpresence 13 Animal Eyes 14 Blend 15 Suggestion 16 Weakness 17 Stun 18 Blink 19 Blast 20 Deathwind	10 Beginnings 11 Identities 12 Writings 13 Living in the Past 14 Seek 15 Lethargy 16 Command 17 Stasis 18 Passwall 19 Sending 20 Lifegiving	10 Grace 11 Pacify 12 Alien Eyes 13 Roving Eyes 14 Tongues 15 Find the Path 16 Farsight 17 Seek 18 Sticks to Serpents 19 Whirlwind 20 Longest Door

SOUL'S BANE

- 10—**Minor Phantasm (E*) D:** 1 minute/lvl **Range** 100' Creates the image of one object or being that will move according to the caster's desires while he concentrates. If the caster stops concentrating, the image remains but ceases to move. The caster may resume concentration, resuming control over the phantasm. The image must be of a size that will fit in a 6' R sphere.
- 11—**Shadow (E*) D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' Target and objects on his person appear to be a shadow and are almost invisible in dark areas.
- 12—**Stealth (P*) D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' Enables the target to move with absolute silence; deliberate actions, such as talking, will create noise however.
- 13—**Sleep (M*) D:** 1 minute/lvl **Range** 100' Target falls into a deep sleep from which he cannot be awakened for the duration of the spell.
- 14—**Pacify (M*) D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** 100' Target will take no offensive action, abandons hostile thoughts or intentions, and will fight only in self defense.
- 15—**Comfort (M*) D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' Allows target to operate at full potential despite wounds, hunger, thirst, or fatigue by temporarily blocking the perception of these conditions. Double the food, water, rest, healing, etc. will be required after the use of this spell to replenish the body's reserves (and to remove the attendant penalties).

16—**Tongues (I*) D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' Enables the caster and his audience, when they do not share the knowledge of a common language, to understand one another as if they did.

17—**Thoughts (I*) D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** 100' Caster may have a silent, mental conversation with one other.

18—**Age (F*) D: P R:** 100' Target will take on the characteristics of age: wood will crack and dry, stone will crumble, metal will rust, and mortal beings will become infirm, then die. The degree of effect depends on the wishes of the caster; he may inflict up to 4 years/lvl.

19—**Youth (F*) D: P R:** 100' Reverses the effects of aging, whether natural or the results of a spell; up to 4 years/lvl.

20—**Soulflames (E) D: — R:** 100' Tongues of purple flames lick out from the fingers of the caster. All in their path are affected; physical results are determined on *Rolemaster's Fire Ball Attack Table*. Mental effects are determined on the chart below.

1-50 War's Veil: *Confusion*

50-75 War's Veil: *Terror*

76-88 Target's hair turns white from fright; target is stunned for 2 rnds.

89-94 Soul's Bane: *Age* (8 years); target is stunned for 5 rnds.

95-99 Soul's Bane: *Age* (24 years); target is stunned for 10 rnds.

100 Target dies of fright; soul flees.

MISCHIEF'S GIFT

- 10—**Keys** (E*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **The image of a key appears in the caster's hand. The key has a 50% chance of unlocking any lock in which the caster tries it.**
- 11—**Dreamgift** (M*) **D:** V **Caster may design a dream of his choosing and send it to anyone whom he has met at least once face to face while that person sleeps; physical distance will not affect the success of this spell.**
- 12—**Masks** (F*) **D:** 1 hr/lvl **R:** 100' **Alters the form of the target's face according to the caster's desires; if the caster has studied an individual, the target can take that exact appearance.**
- 13—**Minor Quest** (M*) **R:** 100' **Target is impelled to complete some minor task (as specified by the caster) immediately. Suitable tasks would be activities such as honing the blade of one's sword, mending a tear in one's clothing, replenishing the woodpile in one's camp, etc.**
- 14—**Suggestion** (M*) **D:** V **R:** 100' **Target will follow a single suggested act that is not completely alien to him (e.g., suicide, blinding his son, etc.).**
- 15—**Blindness** (F*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** 100' **Target cannot see for the duration of the spell.**
- 16—**Hypnosis** (M*) **D:** V **R:** 10' **Target remains standing or sitting while gazing into space for up to 1 minute/lvl. Following this, he will perform a series of actions (up to 1/lvl of caster) with the same limitations as Suggestion, as specified by caster.**
- 17—**Enchanted Sleep** (M*) **D:** 1 year/lvl **R:** T **Target falls into a deep sleep from which he cannot be awakened for the Duration of the spell unless a Remove Curse spell is used.**
- 18—**Youth** (F*) **D:** P **R:** 100' **Reverses the effects of aging, whether natural or the results of a spell; up to 4 years/lvl.**
- 19—**Beauty** (F*) **D:** P **R:** 100' **Target's Presence is raised by as much as 2 pts/lvl of caster. This spell may be used only once per target.**
- 20—**Geas** (M*) **D:** V **R:** 10' **Target is given one task; lapse in effort results in Confusion until effort is resumed; failure results in a penalty determined by the caster.**

PAIN'S CLOAK

- 10—**Illumination** (F*) **D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' **Lights a 10' R sphere around the point designated. The point may be a moving one so long as it is defined; e.g., "the evil Magician's shoulder."**
- 11—**Locations** (I*) **D:** C **R:** S **Caster receives a vision of the immediate area around the object, person, or event whose location is sought.**
- 12—**Knock** (F*) **R:** 100' **When cast on a door, there is a 50% chance that a door fastened with a normal lock will fly open, and a 90% chance that one secured by a magical lock will do so (failure means there is a 10% chance of triggering attached traps). Rolls are open-ended, and the quality of the lock may modify the roll.**
- 13—**Stealth** (P*) **D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' **Enables the target to move with absolute silence; deliberate actions, such as talking, will create noise however.**
- 14—**Un sight** (P*) **D:** 1 hr/lvl or V **R:** 100' **All in the presence of the target are affected by a subtle disinclination to look straight at him. For all practical purposes, he is invisible. Unless an individual has absolute certainty of his presence (looking directly at the target when the spell was cast, using the spell Presence, etc.), the target cannot be seen by him. If the target is struck by a violent blow or makes a violent move, he becomes visible before the end of the duration of the spell.**
- 15—**Seek** (I*) **D:** C **R:** S **Caster receives a vision of all the ways to a desired location or object from the place where he is standing.**
- 16—**Voice Manipulation** (F*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** 100' **Target can throw his voice, creating the illusion that he is standing elsewhere.**

- 17—**Tangled Path** (M*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' **Target becomes disoriented while he moves; his confusion causes him to follow a tortuous route whose end is not the destination he envisioned, but that desired by the castor.**
- 18—**Forget** (M*) **D:** P **R:** 100' **Target forgets a segment of experience (1 minute/lvl of caster) totally; caster may choose which segment is to be forgotten.**
- 19—**Reflections** (F*) **D:** P **R:** 100' **Creates several visual images of the target (1 image/lvl of caster) which mirror his actions. Detection of the authenticity of any one image can only be accomplished through spells or the use of a sense other than sight. Touching an image dispels it, leaving the others intact.**
- 20—**Twins** (P*) **D:** 1 wk/lvl **R:** S **Caster becomes two people, each identical to the other excepting their gender: one is male, the other female. Each twin is autonomous and may act independently. As time progresses, they acquire different memories and inclinations. When the spell duration ends, the two personalities merge to become one person again. The caster then has both sets of memories; his physical location is that of one of his twin selves, 50% chance each. (Note: when Gadrel uses this spell, he takes considerable pain to ensure that his twins are not seen together. This policy produces considerable confusion regarding his identity.)**

HUNTER'S CHOICE

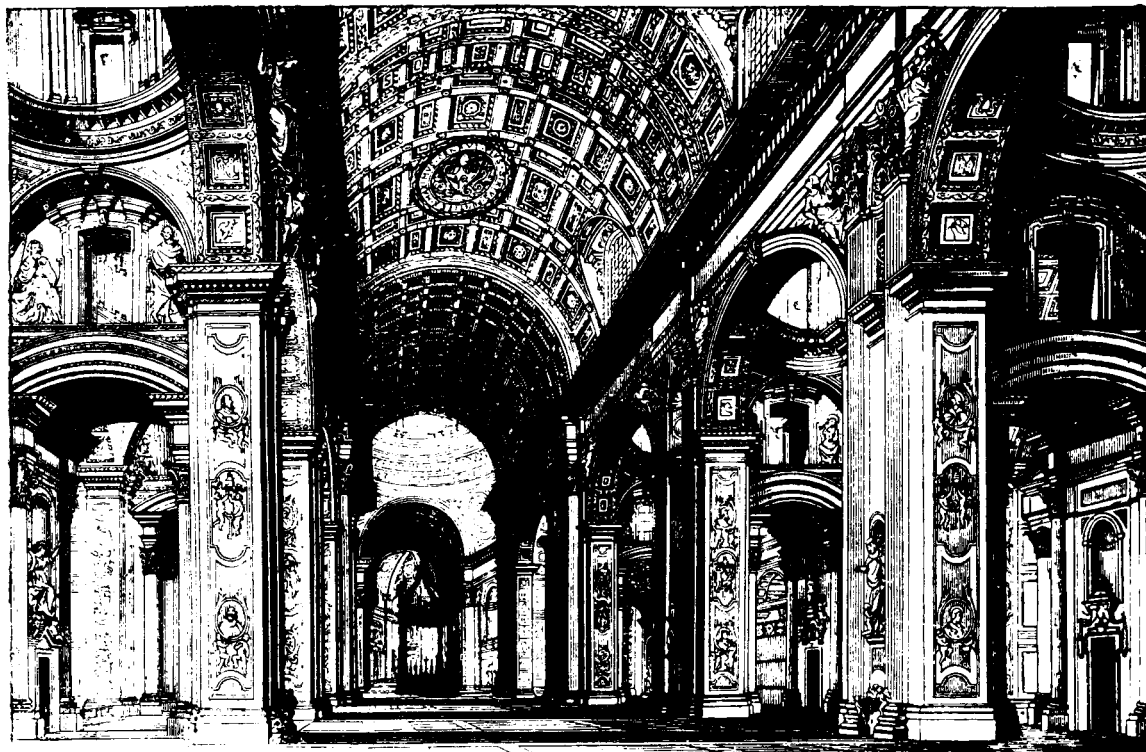
- 10—**Stealth** (P*) **D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' **Enables the target to move with absolute silence; deliberate actions, such as talking, will create noise however.**
- 11—**Landing** (F*) **D:** until landing **R:** S **Allows caster to land safely from a fall up to 20'/lvl and to subtract that distance from longer falls when calculating their severity. (E.g., a 20th level caster could fall 400' without any damage; a fall of 425' would deliver damage to him like a fall of just 25'.)**
- 12—**Unpresence** (P*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** S **Caster appears to have no presence and cannot be detected by spells such as Detect Life, Nature's Awareness, or Presence.**
- 13—**Animal Eyes** (P*) **D:** C **R:** 100'/lvl **Caster may see through the eyes of any animal in range. The animal must be seen or located through the use of another spell for initial contact.**
- 14—**Blend** (F*) **D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** S **Caster and objects on his person take on the visual texture, color, and form of his surroundings; he is invisible when motionless; if he moves slowly, he obtains a +50 bonus to his stalking skill.**
- 15—**Suggestion** (M*) **D:** V **R:** 100' **Target will follow a single suggested act that is not completely alien to him (e.g., suicide, blinding his son, etc.).**
- 16—**Weakness** (F*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' **Halves the target's strength; in melee, he delivers half normal concussion hits and subtracts 20 from his attack roll.**
- 17—**Stun** (F*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' **Target is stunned and cannot move or parry.**
- 18—**Blink** (F*) **R:** S **Caster is teleported anywhere within 10' of his original location. No reorientation is necessary, and he may act immediately. This spell is ideally suited to "blinking" behind someone engaged in melee and hitting this combatant before he realizes what has happened.**
- 19—**Blast** (F*) **R:** 30' **A blast emanating from the caster affects friend and foe alike within range. Results are determined on Rolemaster's Shock Bolt Attack Table; use crush rather than electricity criticals.**
- 20—**Deathwind** (F*) **D:** 5 rnds **R:** 100' **A wind sweeps from the caster's outheld palm in a straight line to the edge of his range. The flesh of any living being in its path dries and sifts as powder to the ground, leaving the skeleton. The process is swift: the last victim often witnesses the skeleton of the first before succumbing himself.**

SAGE'S WILL

- 10—**Beginnings** (I*) **D:** C **R:** S Caster receives a vision revealing the origins of a person, thing, or concept.
- 11—**Identities** (I*) **D:** C **R:** S Caster receives knowledge of the common name associated with a person, place, or thing.
- 12—**Writings** (I*) **D:** 1 hr/lvl **R:** S Caster can read and understand text written in a language and/or alphabet unknown to him.
- 13—**Living in the Past** (I*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** S Caster will receive a vision in which he relives a short portion of the life of a famous, historical figure. The person may have died up to 100 years/lvl of caster ago.
- 14—**Seek** (I*) **D:** C **R:** S Caster receives a vision of all the ways to a desired location or object from the place where he is standing.
- 15—**Lethargy** (F*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' Target feels almost paralyzed and may move or perform maneuvers at half his normal rate.
- 16—**Command** (M*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** 100' Target is forced to obey caster for the duration of the spell.
- 17—**Stasis** (H*) **D:** 1 year/lvl **R:** 10' Caster can preserve the body of the dead, dying, wounded, or healthy. This prevents any further deterioration or damage due to injury or aging and prevents the soul from leaving the body unless it has already done so. Target remains in a coma for the duration of the spell or until awakened by the caster. Upon awakening, the target continues life where he left off, dying if the causal wounds have not been repaired, living if they were or if there were no injuries.
- 18—**Passwall** (F*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** T Caster creates a doorway through any solid inanimate material; it may measure up to 6' high, 3' wide, and 3' deep.
- 19—**Sending** (F*) **R:** 10' Caster teleports target to a point up to 500' away; caster may "send" target through barriers by specifying distances as long as the arrival point is clear; caster may not "send" himself.
- 20—**Lifegiving** (H*) **D:** P **R:** T Caster can give life to one dead being by restoring the lost soul. Target's soul must still exist, and there must be an unoccupied body (not necessarily its own) to which it can return. No recovery time is necessary, unless there are wounds present on the body. (This spell does not heal wounds.)

MAKER'S WAY

- 10—**Grace** (P*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** S Increases caster's agility and coordination. Adds +25 to all maneuver rolls; adds +10 to all attack rolls in melee.
- 11—**Pacify** (M*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** 100' Target will take no offensive action, abandons hostile thoughts or intentions, and will fight only in self defense.
- 12—**Alien Eyes** (P*) **D:** C **R:** 100'/lvl Caster may see through the eyes of any being within range. The being need not be seen or located prior to initial contact.
- 13—**Roving Eyes** (P*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100'/lvl Caster's point of vision may be moved independently of his location; he may not send it through walls or closed doors, although he may send it around them if there is a passage he himself could negotiate.
- 14—**Tongues** (I*) **D:** 10 minutes/lvl **R:** 100' Enables the caster and his audience, when they do not share the knowledge of a common language, to understand one another as if they did.
- 15—**Find the Path** (I*) **R:** S Caster receives knowledge of the path to follow in order to exit a labyrinth or other confusing structure. This spell will counter a *Tangled Path* spell or rune.
- 16—**Farsight** (P*) **D:** 1 minute/lvl **R:** S Caster can perceive detail accurately at great distances, 1000'/lvl.
- 17—**Seek** (I*) **D:** C **R:** S Caster receives a vision of all the ways to a desired location or object from the place where he is standing.
- 18—**Sticks to Serpents** (F*) **D:** 2 rnds/lvl **R:** 100' All sticks and branches within range turn to serpents and attack the caster's foes by biting or constricting, depending on size.
- 19—**Whirlwind** (F*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 100' Creates a 10' R whirlwind that delivers an 'A' impact critical to everyone inside its effect (each round) and reduces movement by 80%. Caster can move the location of the whirlwind 1'/rnd.
- 20—**Longest Door** (F*) **D:** 1 rnd/lvl **R:** 10' Creates a portal in the air, within range, through which one can see a locale within 10 miles/lvl of caster, as chosen by caster. Anyone may step through this portal and arrive safely at the observed place.



A HALL IN NOKOR PERAN

5. SPELLS OF MYRLÆNIS

Myrlænis has learned the unusual spells described below as a result of belonging to an obscure religious sect.

SHAMAN'S INTUITION

- 1 Rituals I
- 2 Knowing I
- 3 Longing
- 4 Regrets
- 5 Rituals II
- 6 Face Painting
- 7 Knowing II
- 8 Body Painting
- 9 Bone Chant
- 10 Dreams of Remorse I
- 11 Knowing III
- 12 Rituals III
- 13 Robes of Skin
- 14 Dreams of Remorse II
- 15 Claws of Agony
- 16 Knowing IV
- 17 Rituals IV
- 18 Dreams of Remorse True
- 19 Talons of Peace
- 20 Hogan Wisdom
- 25 Rituals True
- 30 Smoke of Hues
- 50 Intuition True

SHAMAN'S INTUITION

- 1—**Rituals I** (M) **D**: 1 hour/lvl **R**: T Victim must engage in a ritualistic behavior (counting, repetitive motions, washing) before performing a specific ordinary task, such as drawing a weapon, speaking a certain phrase, eating a meal, getting into bed for sleep. The caster must specify one ritualistic behavior and one task or action affected. When successful, the spell causes a syndrome that resembles obsessive compulsive disorder. The victim wastes a lot of time and is less effective and efficient.
- 2—**Knowing I** (I) **D**: 1 rnd (C) **R**: T Caster learns of one experience or object that the subject finds rewarding, and one that is considered punishment. (E.g., A pet lover would enjoy receiving a dog as a gift, while an allergic asthmatic would find such an experience punishing.)
- 3—**Longing** (M) **D**: V **R**: T Target longs for one particular event, circumstance, or possession, as specified by caster. The longing does not cease until the desired goal is met.
- 4—**Regrets** (M) **D**: 1 year/lvl **R**: T Target regrets one action he or she performed or failed to perform in the past. Caster must have specific knowledge of the action in order to cast this spell.
- 5—**Rituals II** (M) **D**: 1 day/lvl **R**: T As *Rituals I*, except the caster may specify two actions or tasks that trigger preceding ritualistic behavior.
- 6—**Face Painting** (I/M) **D**: 1 min/lvl **R**: T Target may paint his or her face with the blood, tears, or saliva of another being and experience the emotions felt by the other during the time prior to when the target obtained the bodily fluids (1 minute/lvl of caster).
- 7—**Knowing II** (I) **D**: 2 rnd (C) **R**: T As *Knowing I*, except the caster learns two rewards and two punishments.
- 8—**Body Painting** (I/M) **D**: 1 minute/lvl **R**: T Target may paint his or her body with the blood, tears, or saliva of another being and experience the bodily sensations felt by the other during the time prior to when the target obtained the bodily fluids (1 minute/lvl of caster).
- 9—**Bone Chant** (I) **D**: V **R**: S Caster may chant while holding a bone. His or her chant will tell the detailed story of how the being lost the bone, whether through death or injury.

10—**Dreams of Remorse I** (M) **D**: time range—1 minute/lvl; dream—1 minute/lvl; remorse—P **R**: T Target falls into a deep sleep and dreams of the most recent deed he or she performed from the viewpoint of another involved in the situation. When target awakens, he or she feels remorse for any wrongs done. This spell may be combined with *Face Painting* and *Body Painting* to fix the dreamer's point of view and to increase the vividness of the dream.

11—**Knowing III** (I) **D**: 3 rnd (C) **R**: T As *Knowing I*, except the caster learns three rewards and three punishments.

12—**Rituals III** (M) **D**: 1 week/lvl **R**: T As *Rituals I*, except the caster may specify three actions or tasks that trigger preceding ritualistic behavior.

13—**Robes of Skin** (M) **D**: 1 rnd/lvl **R**: T Target must drape him- or herself with a pelt to receive the benefits of this spell. The pelt melds with the target's skin, conferring all the advantages that belonged to the creature from which the pelt derived. E.g., A polar bear pelt would protect against the cold; a Dragon skin would confer improved armor class and resistance to elemental attack spells; etc.

14—**Dreams of Remorse II** (M) **D**: time range—1 hour/lvl; dream—5 minutes/lvl; remorse—P **R**: T As *Dreams of Remorse I*, except that target dreams of any deed done in last few hours (1 hour/level of caster).

15—**Claws of Agony** (M) **D**: 1 rnd/lvl **R**: T Phantasmal claws protrude from the caster's fingers. Anyone touched by the claws experiences the sensations of razor-sharp claws ripping through his or her body—without receiving any actual physical damage. The shock, however, does cause damage. Use the *Claw/Talon Attack Table*, replacing all criticals with stress criticals.

16—**Knowing IV** (I) **D**: 4 rnd (C) **R**: T As *Knowing I*, except the caster learns four rewards and four punishments.

17—**Rituals IV** (M) **D**: 1 month/lvl **R**: T As *Rituals I*, except the caster may specify four actions or tasks that trigger preceding ritualistic behavior.

18—**Dreams of Remorse True** (M) **D**: time range—target's lifetime; dream—10 minutes/lvl; # dreams—as many as ill deeds done; remorse—P **R**: T As *Dreams of Remorse I*, except that target dreams of any deed done in his or her lifetime. Target will dream every time he or she sleeps, until all his or her evil deeds have been dreamed.

19—**Hogan Wisdom** (M) **D**: 1 rnd/lvl **R**: T Target perspires profusely for the duration of the spell. Each round, one poison is purified, one curse removed, or one disease cured. At the end of the purification process, the target receives a vision conveying significant information (GM's discretion) about achieving a goal important to him or her.

20—**Talons of Peace** (H) **D**: 1 rnd/lvl **R**: T Phantasmal claws protrude from the caster's fingers. Anyone touched by the claws experiences the sensations of relaxation and the cessation of any pain where the claws pass. Each round the caster touches a target, he may cast any one spell from the Base Lay Healer lists of 20th lvl or below.

25—**Rituals True** (M) **D**: P **R**: T As *Rituals I*, except the target is permanently afflicted. The caster of the spell may break the spell; *Remove Curse* will also cure the target.

30—**Smoke of Hues** (F/M/H) **D**: 1 rnd/lvl **R**: 100' Causes smoke emitted by an existing source (camp fire, torch, forest fire, etc.) to assume different colors (blue, green, purple, etc.) as chosen by the caster. One fire source may emit smoke of only one color, or a combination. Targets enveloped by the smokes suffer the following effects:

- Red—*Rituals I*
- Orange—*Longing*
- Yellow—*Regrets*
- Green—*Dreams of Remorse I*
- Blue—*Claws of Agony*
- Purple—*Talons of Peace*

50—**Intuition True** (M/I/H) **D**: 1 rnd/lvl **R**: T Caster may use any one spell of lower level on this list each round, even when spell durations cause more than one spell to be active during a given round.

6 MASTER NPC TABLE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	MovM
THE ISHRU								
Amianthus	26	95	1(-75)*	N	N	90bs	—	15
Magician. Grand Duke of Pæran. +30 sword, translates any language, <i>Water Bolt</i> 3x/day; flower (see Items of Note); ring x4, continuous <i>Deflections I</i> ; belt, +25 OB, <i>Bladeturn</i> 5x/day; earring, continual <i>Slyears</i> , protects head as helm. 416 PP. All Base Magician lists 25, Spell Enhancement 25, Shield Mastery 25, Rapid Ways 25, Spirit Mastery 25, Lofty Bridge 25, Spell Reins 25, Delving Ways 25, Elemental Shields 25, Victory's Wreath 5, War's Weapon 5, Doom's Truce 5, Sage's Will 20. SD 90, Co 92, Ag 95, Me 101, Re 91, Qu 100, Pr 99, In 89, Em 102.								
Gadrel	25	95	1(-75)*	N	N	115wp	30da	10
Illusionist. Prince of Væshim. Two +30 whips, cold criticals accompany concussion criticals, 50% entangles missiles aimed at bearer; ring, +25 DB, x4, protects head as helm, <i>Triad of Ice</i> 5x/day; +30 throwing dagger, concealed. 300 PP. All Base Illusionist lists 25, Rune Mastery 25, Physical Enhancement 25, Gate Mastery 25, Detecting Ways 10, Elemental Shields 25, Delving Ways 10, Invisible Ways 10, Living Change 25, Spirit Mastery 25, Spell Reins 25, Lofty Bridge 25, Spell Enhancement 25, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5, Pain's Cloak 20. SD 51, Co 93, Ag 90, Me 71, St 98, Qu 100, Pr 98, In 73, Em 100.								
Lucibel	24	90	1(-85)*	N	N	125bs	20ts	25
Mentalist. Lord of Aënan. +30 sword, silver with lapis lazuli hilts, sheathed in a fold between the dimensions, it is accessible only to its owner's hand and invisible until drawn; 7 rings (see Items of Note). 384 PP. All Base Mentalist lists 25, Delving 10, Cloaking 20, Damage Resistance 20, Attack Avoidance 20, Self Healing 20, Illusions 10, Detections 20, Spell Resistance 20, Sense Mastery 20, Shifting 20, Movement 20, Mind's Door 20, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5, Soul's Bane 20. SD 76, Co 90, Ag 100, Me 79, Re 73, St 95, Qu 102, Pr 102, In 99, Em 89.								
Orias	26	130	1(-60)	N	A/L	140fa	120fa	15
Bard. Lord of Migdol. +30 falchion, non-fumbling, changes form to throwing blade at will, teleports back to wielder's hand; viper gauntlets (see Items of Note); sandals, <i>Fly</i> 3x/day, +50% to maneuvers; belt, +25 DB, x3, <i>Bladeturn</i> 3x/day; chariot, <i>Fly</i> 3x/day (with horses), +50 blades on wheels. 234 PP. All Base Bard lists 25, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5, Maker's Way 20. SD 85, Co 99, Ag 95, Me 94, Re 75, St 100, Qu 102, Pr 100, In 85, Em 80.								
Sachiel	23	125	4(-110)	N	L	115bs	135cp	20
Ranger. Duke of Næph. +30 dancing sword, will fight for an unlimited length of time independent of its wielder's hand; belt, x3, <i>Invisibility</i> 3x/day, <i>Deflections III</i> 3x/day; +30 composite bow; arrows (see Items of Note); bracers, +30 DB, 10% critical resistance; dragonscale jerkin, AT 4, 207 PP. All Base Ranger lists 20, Victory's Nemesis 5, Discord's Veil 5, Fate's Truce 5, Mischief's Gift 20. SD 70, Co 95, Ag 99, Me 82, Re 71, St 99, Qu 101, Pr 100, In 100, Em 73.								
Satarchian	21	130	1(-100)	N	N	125ra	—	10
Monk. Duke of Gamesh. +35 rapier, <i>Lightning Bolt</i> 3x/day, detects presences continually, gives initiative (strike first), permits two strikes each round; sash, +30 DB; regenerates 10 hp/rnd; earring, x4, stores 3 spells of any level; ring, <i>Farsight</i> at will, +100% to all maneuvers. 252 PP. All Base Monk lists 20, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5, Hunter's Choice 20. SD 49, Co 100, Ag 91, Me 63, Re 81, St 101, Pr 98, In 72, Em 100.								
THE EH'TAZA								
Abigor	16	55	1(-80)	N	N	70MA(Rank 3)	50ts	25
Monk. Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Heresia Combata. Grey silk sash, x3 PP multiplier. Bracers, +20 DB. 96 PP. Monk's Sense to his level. Evasions, Body Renewal, Monk's Bridge, Body Reins to 10th level. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce to 5th level. Abigor has short, black hair and black eyes. His usual garb is a grey haori and grey trousers. He is discrete, and his demeanor a blend of self-assurance and deference. He enjoys watching birds and tending the hawk mews.								
Alocer	15	56	15(-30)	N	N	75bs	65ts	15
Bard. Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Member of the Heresia Combata. Mandolin, +20 to any Essence spell after its strings are strummed (duration: 5 minutes). Cloak, confers AT(DB) 15(-30). Boots, wearer can walk at 30 mph for 1 hour each day. +15 Broadsword, +5 throwing stars (3). 30 PP. Sound Projection to his level. Controlling Songs, Lores, Item Lore to 10th level. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapon, Doom's Truce to 5th level. Alocer wears a blouse, breeches, and cloak of maroon silk. The leather of his boots is also maroon. His long wavy hair is black and his eyes deep blue. His mandolin goes with him everywhere, protected in a case of lacquered inwood. He composes both songs for voice and instrumental pieces.								
Iblis	12	50	1(-65)*	N	N	60da	—	5
Mystic. Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Member of the Heresia Combata. +20 dagger; mantle, +25 DB, casts <i>Shield</i> at will; wand, <i>Stonefires</i> ; earring, x4. 144 PP. All Base Mystic lists 12, Lofty Bridges 5, Victory's Wreath 5, War's Weapons 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 75, Co 95, Ag 87, Me 73, Re 78, St 85, Qu 97, Pr 98, In 87, Em 97.								
Melchom	12	50	1(-65)*	N	N	50bs	—	20
Magician. Eh'taza to Amianthus. +20 sword; belt, +25 DB, casts Elemental Shields; <i>Heat Armor</i> at will; ring, x5, casts Shield Mastery; <i>Shield</i> at will. 120 PP. All Base Magician lists 12, Rapid Ways 10, Shield Mastery 10, Dispelling ways 10, Spell Enhancement 10, Lofty Bridge 10, Invisible Ways 10, Detecting Ways 10, Elemental Shields 10, Spell Wall 10, Unbarring Ways 10, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 71, Co 73, Ag 99, Me 77, Re 89, St 89, Qu 98, Pr 92, In 59, Em 97. A personable scholar, Melchom spends much time discussing various literary works with his master. He is well-liked by the feline steed, Wisdom, and frequently accompanies him on riding excursions when Amianthus is disinclined to forsake his library.								
Naberus	17	145	1(-115)	N	N	145MA	110da	20
Warrior Monk. Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Member of the Heresia Combata. Agate bracers, +30 OB, Unbarring Ways: <i>Undoor True</i> 3x/day, regenerates 5 hp/rnd; amethyst ring, x4, +25 DB, Spell Wall: <i>Spell Shield True</i> at will. 136 PP. Essence's Perceptions 10, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 94, Co 95, Ag 98, Me 89, Re 78, St 99, Qu 100, Pr 95, In 79, Em 98. So small in stature as to seem a child (4'9"), her slight liquid grace warns the wise of her formidable combat abilities. An austere, secret face surrounding discrete grey eyes conceals her thoughts and loyalties from observers. She wears a short, grey kimono (haori) and trousers.								
Wisdom	13	100	3(-60)	N	N	70LCI/90LBa/90LBi	—	35
Panther Mentalist. Mount to Amianthus. Earring, +20 OB, +20 DB, +20 to spell attacks, x4. All Base Mentalist lists 13, Self Healing 10, Detections 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 92, Co 93, Ag 89, Me 87, Re 93, St 98, Qu 102, Pr 99, In 89, Em 82.								

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	MovM
Belial	15	65	1(-50)	N	N	90bs	80da	20
Bard. Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Member of the Heresia Combata. +20 sword, gives initiative to wielder; harp, +15 to all Controlling Songs; earring, +25 DB; ring, x3. 125 PP. All Base Bard lists 15, Movement 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 89, Co 98, Ag 99, Me 73, Re 74, St 97, Qu 100, Pr 98, In 87, Em 82.								
Dagon	15	110	1(-55)	Y	N	155fa	165cp	20
Rogue. Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Heresia Combata. +25 falchion, intelligent, Delving Ways: <i>Death's Delving</i> 3x/day; gloves, +25 detecting and disarming traps, Illusion Mastery: <i>Phantasm</i> 15x/day; feather (in cap), +25 DB, protects head as helm; ring, +25 OB, x3. 45 PP. War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 72, Co 96, Ag 99, Me 75, Re 73, St 94, Qu 93, Pr 93, In 81, Em 79.								
Frost	16	150	3(-40)	N	N	100LBa/85LTs	—	25
Warhorse Fighter. Mount for Gadrel. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Horse shoes, +25 OB, +20 DB, x2. 96 PP. War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 93, Co 100, Ag 85, Me 89, Re 73, St 102, Qu 100, Pr 98, In 89, Em 95.								
Ilgar	13	125	1(-105)	N	N	95MA(Rank 4)	115sh	30
Warrior Monk. Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Heresia Combata. Headband, acts as a helm. +15 shuriken (5). 39 PP. War's Weapons, Victory's Wreath, Doom's Truce to 5th level. Ilgar wears the white silk noru originating in Dain Sædhun culture. Were it not for his pale grey eyes, he would look like one of these natives. His short hair is dark brown, and his skin is tanned. He keeps a wooden flute tucked into a fold of his garments, playing the instrument only during his frequent visits to Stondepin and Kangled.								
Scox	16	100	1(-40)	N	N	150bs	125da	15
Thief. Eh'taza to Gadrel. +30 sword, sharpness: removes appropriate limb with critical of B severity or more; +35 throwing dagger, teleports back to wielder's hand; ring, x4, protection from cold criticals; ring, +20 DB, <i>Longdoor</i> 2x/day; earring, <i>Invisibility</i> 3x/day. 192 PP. Detecting Ways 5, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 74, Co 91, Ag 96, Me 73, Re 75, St 98, Qu 99, Pr 95, In 87, Em 100.								
Urian	17	70	1(-55)	N	N	95fa	80lb	10
Bard. Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Flute, +25 to all spells, casts <i>Sleep Song</i> at will, teleports to Urian if removed from his person; +25 falchion, dances to free wielder's hands, delivers cold criticals with crits of B severity or greater; +20 long bow, permits wielder to shoot 2x/rnd; ring, +25 DB; earring, x4. 204 PP. All Base Bard lists 17, Brilliance 5, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 85, Co 95, Ag 93, Me 76, Re 79, St 99, Qu 101, Pr 100, In 95, Em 100.								
Astaroth	16	165	1(-50)	N	N	175wm	175sl	20
Fighter. Eh'taza to Lucibel. Member of the Nictum Aureate. +25 war mattock, additional shock crit with criticals; +25 sling; sling stones, deliver secondary shock crit; pectoral collar, +25 DB, +10 to all RRs; headband, protects head as helm, x3. 69 PP. Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 79, Co 95, Ag 98, Me 63, Re 65, St 99, Qu 100, Pr 98, In 83, Em 86. A wild, fierce figure of a man, tall (6'7") and well-muscled. Blue-black hair hangs to his shoulders in a multitude of tiny braids. A silver pectoral collar, set with blue gems (to match his eyes), protects his magnificent chest. Scarves of blue silk cover his loins.								
Azæl	17	110	18(-25)	Y	A/L	80ml/95fa	60sp	10
Ranger. Eh'taza to Lucibel. Member of the Heresia Combata. Breastplate, resists criticals to the torso 15% of the time. +15 falchion. Lance casts <i>Soulflames</i> 1x/day. 34 PP. Moving Ways, Path Mastery, Inner Walls, Nature's Guises to his level. Nature's Way to 10th level. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce to 5th level. Azæl makes a hobby of rescuing victims of the Ishru and the Nuld. Its amuses him, but is not due to any truly philanthropic motivation. He wears a breastplate and greaves of blue placænium ornately carved. His shield matches this ensemble, as does his lance. He usually travels on horseback. His short, black hair is concealed by a placænium helmet, the visor of which often hides his blue eyes.								
Chamos	18	70	1(-100)	N	N	85katana/75MA	50sh	20
Monk. Eh'taza to Lucibel. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Member of the Heresia Combata. +25 katana, sharpness: removes appropriate limb with critical; bracers, +25 to martial arts attacks. +25 DB, +25 vs. Essence spells; earrings, x4, +25 vs. all detection spells; five +20 shuriken, return to caster by teleport. 216 PP. All Base Monk lists 18, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 94, Co 96, Ag 98, Me 85, Re 83, St 99, Qu 101, Pr 100, In 87, Em 101.								
Quietude	17	90	4(-40)	N	N	100LHorn/30MBa/50MTs	—	5
Unicorn Mentalist. Mount for Lucibel. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Member of the Heresia Combata. Chain braided into mane, x3; Horn, of <i>Dragon Slaying</i> , casts Dark Lore: <i>Absolution</i> 1x/day, Special Abilities (all continuous or at will): Dispelling Ways: <i>Dispel True</i> , Spirit Mastery: <i>True Charm</i> , Attack Avoidance: <i>Deflections III</i> , Speed: <i>Haste True</i> , Sense Mastery: <i>Disillusion True</i> , Cloaking: <i>Camouflage</i> . 204 PP. All Base Mentalist lists 17, Damage Resistance 10, Brilliance 10, Self Healing 10, Illusions 10, Mind's Mastery 10, Mind's Door 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 79, Co 96, Ag 89, Me 86, Re 73, St 92, Qu 98, Pr 102, In 92, Em 91.								
Tamiel	13	85	1(-45)	N	A/L	115lk	95lk	15
Thief. Eh'taza to Lucibel. +25 long kynac; gloves, +25 picking locks and disarming traps, protect arms as greaves; boots, +25 stalking, levitate at will, protect legs as greaves; cloak, +25 hiding in shadows, +25 DB; ring, <i>Invisibility</i> 5x/day, x3. 78 PP. Mind's Door 5, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 69, Co 93, Ag 95, Me 67, Re 71, St 96, Qu 98, Pr 97, In 86, Em 91. Her exotic visage, adorned by almond shaped eyes and high cheek bones, is framed by long, blue-black hair twisted into a hundred tiny braids. She is tall (6'0") and slender, mysteriously cloaked in azure satin.								
Urial	12	50	1(-65)*	N	L	—	45sh	20
Mystic. Eh'taza to Lucibel. Ten +15 shuriken; bracelet, +25 DB; boots, <i>Fly</i> at will, +10 to maneuvers, act as leg greaves; silver headband, <i>Friend Speech</i> and <i>Inner Thoughts</i> at will, x4. 96 PP. All Base Mystic lists 12, Mind's Door 12, Movement 12, Self Healing 12, Cloaking 12, Speed 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 74, Co 94, Ag 99, Me 73, Re 72, St 85, Qu 101, Pr 99, In 94, Em 97. Long chestnut curls, restrained by a silver headband, tumble around her merry face. She is short (5'4") and slight, and rarely remains still. Blue leather boots, matching her short tunic, protect her small, tapping feet.								
Agares	18	54	1(-50)	Y	N	60sc	—	10
Seer. Eh'taza to Orias. Member of the Heresia Combata. Red placænium shield, +25 DB. Red placænium helmet, 360° vision. Belt, x4 PP multiplier. 216 PP. All Base Seer lists, Movement, Speed, Mind's Door, Mind Mastery, Self Healing, Detections, Attack Avoidance to his level. Brilliance, Cloaking to 10th level. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, Evil's Truce to 5th level. Agares wears a quilted jacket and flowing trousers of red silk. His golden curls and blue eyes are customarily hidden by his visored helm of red placænium helmet. His personality is brutal and sadistic. He shows little of the finesse typical of Gadrel and of Gadrel's minions. Yet he would blend more easily with the court of Nokor Væshim. He seems out of place in Nokor Migdol.								

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	MovM
Alastor	13	140	20(-45)	N	N	155th	140lb	5
Fighter. Eh'taza to Orias. Member of the Ordæum Novis. +15 two-hand sword; tabard, +25 DB, confers AT 20, no encumbrance; +10 long bow; ring, x3. 78 PP. Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 75, Co 92, Ag 85, Me 43, Re 65, St 99, Qu 98, Pr 95, In 87, Em 83.								
Despair	17	150	3(-20)	N	N	95LbA/80LTs	—	10
Warhorse Fighter. Mount to Orias. Horse shoes, +20 OB, deliver cold crits, x2. 68 PP. Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 69, Co 97, Ag 92, Me 62, Re 63, St 99, Qu 98, Pr 95, In 81, Em 82.								
Fury	17	150	3(-20)	N	N	95LbA/80LTs	—	10
Warhorse Fighter. Mount to Orias. Horse shoes, +20 OB, deliver heat crits, x2. 68 PP. Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 67, Co 96, Ag 93, Me 60, Re 65, St 99, Qu 98, Pr 96, In 80, Em 80.								
Samæl	17	70	1(-35)	N	N	70bs	—	5
Mentalist. Eh'taza to Orias. +20 sword, continuously detects presences; bracelet, +20 DB, Mind Control: <i>True Charm</i> 3x/day, Nature's Guises: <i>Animal Form True</i> 1x/day; silver ankle, +20 OB, x5. 170 PP. All Base Mentalist lists 17, Mind's Door 17, Movement 17, Sense Mastery 17, Illusions 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 93, Co 89, Ag 85, Me 87, Re 72, St 96, Qu 95, Pr 98, In 81, Em 95. Always the gentleman, Samæl's unruffled urbanity copes admirably with most situations. Blatant displays of raw power, use of weapons, or manipulation of the Essence are rarely necessary for the attainment of his goals. At odds with his suave manner, a viper-green tunic, hemmed in points around the knees, and a matching cap and feather clash virulently with his copper hair.								
Turel	16	50	1(-50*)	N	N	60bs	—	15
Astrologer. Eh'taza to Orias. Member of the Heresia Combata. Vest, casts <i>Sphere of Lights</i> 7x/day, duration 7 rnds, a sphere formed of small sparks of light whirls around the wearer adding a +50 bonus to his DB. +10 broadsword casts a <i>Shockbolt</i> 3x/day. Silver torque, x4 PP. 192 PP. All Base Astrologer lists to his level. Light's Way, Spell Defense, Barrier Law, Detection Mastery, Lore, Sound's Way, Lofty Movements to 10th level. Victory's Nemesis, Discord's Veil, Fate's Truce to 5th level. Turel wears a black silk blouse, fitted black trousers, low boots and a vest made from an ornate black-on-black brocade. He is taciturn, retiring, except when designing and executing light shows for the court. In his performer's persona, he is outgoing and enthusiastic.								
Bathym	14	55	1(-65)*	N	N	75da	—	5
Alchemist. Eh'taza to Sachiël. Member of the Heresia Combata. +25 dagger; ring, casts <i>Shield</i> at will; rod, <i>Firebolt</i> ; ring, regenerates 10 hp/rnd; earring x5. 210 PP. All Base Alchemist lists 14, Shield Mastery 10, Rapid Ways 10, Lofty Bridge 10, Invisible Ways 10, Spirit Mastery 10, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 55, Co 94, Ag 89, Me 71, Re 75, St 99, Qu 98, Pr 96, In 79, Em 98.								
Belphegor	13	120	1(-65)	Y	N	150lk	150lk	10
Rogue. Eh'taza to Sachiël. +20 long kynac, of <i>Changing</i> : throw and return at will; +30 lock pick, casts Unbarring Ways: <i>Opening II</i> 3x/day; bronze earring, +25 DB, <i>Invisibility</i> 3x/day; ring x2. 78 PP. Victory's Nemesis 5, Discord's Veil 5, Fate's Truce 5. SD 74, Co 91, Ag 90, Me 75, Re 83, St 98, Qu 98, Pr 94, In 97, Em 76. Known as the highwayman of Næph, Belphegor takes it upon himself to safeguard travelers of the Dain Sædhu that venture into Sachiël's realm. In times past, his role was the reverse, plundering and murdering unfortunate wayfarers. He wears browns and bronzes to blend with the desert terrain.								
Chorozon	18	60	1(-55)*	N	N	80da	—	5
Illusionist. Eh'taza to Sachiël. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Member of the Heresia Combata. +30 dagger, Unbarring Ways: <i>True Lock</i> 1x/day, Living Change: <i>Passing</i> 3x/day; ring, +20 DB; earring, x5. 180 PP. All Base Illusionist lists 18, all Closed Essence lists 18, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 75, Co 96, Ag 85, Me 84, Re 83, St 81, Qu 91, Pr 97, In 63, Em 99. The dawning sun embroidered on her tabard seems to mirror her fiery hair in its rays. Residual splendor lights her eyes, pools of molten silver. She is a tall (6'1") almost inhuman figure.								
Cunning	15	110	3(-50)	N	N	75LbI	—	10
Wolf Seer. Mount for Sachiël. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Member of the Heresia Combata. Silver collar bearing spikes, x4, +20 DB, casts <i>Deflections III</i> at will. 120 PP. All Base Seer lists 15, Mind Mastery 10, Telekinesis 15, Movement 10, Mind's Door 10, Sense Mastery 10, Self Healing 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 71, Co 95, Ag 91, Me 71, Re 75, St 98, Qu 99, Pr 98, In 84, Em 87.								
Garm	17	45	15(-45)	N	Y	40bs	—	5
Mystic. Eh'taza to Sachiël. Mesh greaves, +45 DB. Black lace cloak, AT 15. Ironwood ring, x2 PP multiplier. 102 PP. All Mystic Base lists to his level. Brilliance, Self Healing, Attack Avoidance, Cloaking, Mind Mastery, Mind's Door, Speed, Shifting to 10th level. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, Doom's Truce to 5th level. Garm wears a somber green silk shirt and trousers beneath a cloak of heavy black lace. Greaves formed of a black placænum mesh cover his forearms and his lower legs. He frequently affects a mask of gemtail feathers. His hair and eyes are black. He once led a cult of Taza that drank blood as a form of worship.								
Rimon	16	140	1(-45)	N	N	150bs	150cp	15
Rogue. Eh'taza to Sachiël. +20 sword of enchanted green stone, Spell Reins: <i>Reversal True</i> 3x/day, 50% shatter weapon of parrying foe; green headband, protects head as helm, +25 DB, x3. 96 PP. Victory's Nemesis 5, Discord's Veil 5, Fate's Truce 5. SD 71, Co 94, Ag 95, Me 73, Re 74, St 99, Qu 99, Pr 96, In 98, Em 76. Long green-black hair pours down the grey-black suede of her jumpsuit. Cool, jade eyes probe her world for provocation, unaccompanied by any lighter spark of excitement, to draw her jade sword.								
Beast	16	150	4(-40)	N	N	120LCI/95LbI/155LCI	—	35
Lion Fighter. Mount for Satarchian. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Bronze claw caps, +25 OB, x2, +20 DB. 96 PP. Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 84, Co 95, Ag 83, Me 81, Re 63, St 99, Qu 101, Pr 101, In 85, Em 83.								
Fumaroth	14	55	1(-55)*	N	N	50da	—	20
Mystic. Eh'taza to Satarchian. +15 dagger; cloak, casts Confusing Ways: <i>Shifting</i> at will; mask, Mystical Change: <i>Face Shifting True</i> 3x/day; stone ring, casts x3 <i>Fireballs</i> 5x/day; glove, Solid Alteration: <i>Mold Solid</i> 1x/day; glass ring, x5. 140 PP. All Base Mystic lists 14, Mental Cloaking 5, Illusions 5, Essence Hand 5, Unbarring Ways 5, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 84, Co 88, Ag 98, Me 73, Re 94, St 91, Qu 100, Pr 95, In 83, Em 98. More than mystery surrounds the person of Fumaroth. A citron-yellow, satin cloak and hood muffles his figure. An ivory mask hides his visage. A velvet glove clothes one hand. Only the left hand, bearing two rings, remains unclothed. His anonymity is a useful quality when he wishes to discard his distinctive dress and impersonate an enemy.								

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	MovM
Haborym	14	55	1(-65)*	N	N	75lk	—	20
Seer. Eh'taza to Satarchian. +20 long kynac; headband, acts as a helm, x4, +15 to RRs vs. Mentalism; ring, +25 DB, casts Damage Resistance: <i>Unpain 100%</i> 3x/day. 96 PP. All Base Seer lists 14, Movement 14, Mind's Door 10, Shifting 10, Self Healing 10, Spell resistance 10, Cloaking 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 87, Ag 99, Me 78, Re 69, St 82, Qu 99, Pr 96, In 85, Em 89. Quiet and humble, Haborym is one of the few souls in Gethæna who prefers to live and let live. He has a garden in which he works devotedly, except when drawn forth by orders from his master. While tending the flowers and herbs, he wears robes of amber, russet, and apricot.								
Iscaaron	13	65	1(-90)	N	N	70MA	—	15
Monk. Eh'taza to Satarchian. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Bracers, +20 OB, +20 DB, <i>Icebolt</i> 3x/day; earring, x4. 104 PP. All Base Monk lists 13, Detecting Ways 5, Essence Hand 5, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 88, Co 95, Ag 95, Me 65, Re 76, St 99, Qu 100, Pr 97, In 81, Em 97.								
Malphus	14	55	1(-45)*	N	N	65bs	—	10
Magician. Eh'taza to Satarchian. Member of the Ordæum Novis. +15 sword; mantle, +20 DB; ring, casts Blur at will, x4. 128 PP. All Base Magician lists 14, Lofty Bridge 14, Spirit Mastery 14, Spell Enhancement 10, Shield Mastery 10, Rapid Ways 10, Invisible Ways 10, War's Weapons 5, Victory's Wreath 5, Doom's Truce 5. SD 90, Co 91, Ag 92, Me 71, Re 69, St 99, Qu 97, Pr 90, In 72, Em 98.								
Valafar	15	45	17(-40)	Y*	Y	45bs	—	5
Sorcerer. Eh'taza to Satarchian. Member of the Heresia Combata. Greaves of taurith mesh, add +40 to DB. Cloak, confers AT 17. Taurith diadem, x4 PP multiplier, casts <i>Mass Bladeturn</i> 5x/day, continual <i>Mind Shield</i> . Shield of mesh, -50 to any directed spells cast at the bearer. 180 PP. All Base Sorcerer lists, all Closed Essence lists to his level. All Open Essence lists to 10th level. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, Doom's Truce to 5th level. The silver-blue metal of taurith, curved in baroque curves and spirals, forms greaves on Valafar's arms and legs, adorns his brow as a diadem. The Eh'taza carries a shield of black placænium, cut away in a lace pattern, permitting a direct line of sight through its protective mesh. His cloak is the black and silver pelt of a gleamtiger. His demeanor is fierce, resembling that of a hunting cat in the midst of a kill.								
THE TAZA								
Dema	7	65	1(-40)	Y	A/L	90bs	90cp	10
Rogue. Taza to Lucibel. Cavalier's costume. Speed 40. 14 PP. Illusions to her level. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, and Doom's Truce to 5th level.								
Durak	14	155	18(-10)	N	N	165scythe	165bg	10
Fighter. Taza to Satarchian. Cloak, acts as AT 18, unencumbering. +30 scythe (use scimitar table), can be thrown as a boomerang. 14 PP. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, and Doom's Truce to 5th level.								
Eiran	10	90	1(-45)*	Y	A/L	140fa	135cp	5
Rogue. Taza to Orias. +20 falchion; +15 composite bow; ring, x2. 20 PP. Cloaking 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 73, Co 85, Ag 85, Me 71, Re 76, St 100, Qu 98, Pr 93, In 77, Em 78.								
Eshæ	10	90	1(-120)*	N	N	120MA(Rank 4)	80sl	10
Warrior Monk. Taza to Orias. +15 bracers; +10 sling; earring, x2. 20 PP. Cloaking 10, Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5. SD 66, Co 89, Ag 91, Me 69, Re 76, St 99, Qu 100, Pr 91, In 81, Em 72.								
Garnid	16	130	16(-20)	N	N	145br	130sp	0
Rogue. Taza to Amianthus. Full-length coat of electrium chainmail, +20 DB, +50 vs. Heat. +15 bastard sword. 16 PP. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, Doom's Truce to 5th level.								
Hennas	15	45	1(-5)	N	N	—	40ts	5
Mystic. Taza to Gadrel. Twisted silk headband, acts as a helm. 45 PP. All Base Mystic lists to her level. All Closed Mentalism lists, Attack Avoidance, Cloaking to 10th level. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, and Evil's Truce to 5th level.								
Krinek	15	55	16(-15)	N	N	60	50	15
Bard. Taza to Sachiel. Cream-colored tunic, acts as AT 16, unencumbering. Cloak, of <i>Displacement</i> , 50% chance that an attack misses entirely. Flute, casts any spell from the Controlling Songs list, 50 PP. 30 PP. All Base Bard lists to 10th level. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, and Evil's Truce to 5th level.								
Kyrial	9	90	20(-85)	Y	Y	110fa	110da	5
Rogue. Taza to Satarchian. Saffron placænium breastplate, greaves, and shield. Speed 100. 9 PP. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, and Doom's Truce to 5th level.								
Nemu	5	35	1(-30)	N	N	55MA(Rank 2)	25sh	15
Monk. Taza to Sachiel. Speed 40, Strength 40, Landing 40. 10 PP. Unbarring Ways, Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, and Doom's Truce to her level.								
Noryn	5	45	18(-25)	Y	A/L	50bs	30cp	5
Ranger. Taza to Sachiel. Green placænium breastplate, greaves, and shield. Speed 20. 5 PP. Victory's Nemesis, Discord's Veil, and Fate's Truce to his level.								
Orfeo	9	40	16(-40)	N	A/L	50fa	—	20
Mentalist. Taza to Satarchian. Saffron placænium chain coat. Short, curly brown hair. Falchion in belted scabbard. Ring, +20 DB. Speed 80. 18 PP. All Closed Mentalism lists, all Base Mentalist lists to his level. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, and Evil's Truce to 5th level.								
Perissa	7	45	1(-60)	N	N	50fa	40da	15
Bard. Taza to Lucibel. Belt, +40 DB. Speed 30. 14 PP. Mind's Door, Controlling Songs, Liquid Manipulation (irænis as water) to her level. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, and Doom's Truce to 5th level.								
Ræn	16	130	1(-50)	N	A/L	150ra	130da	20
Rogue. Taza to Orias. Blue leather arm and leg greaves, 15% chance resistance to any arm or leg criticals. Silver hair clip, +30 DB, acts as a helm. Kilt, swirls to deflect missiles, +75 to DB. 16 PP. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, and Evil's Truce to 5th level.								
Shaloray	12	132	20(-20)	N	N	155bs	125ky	20
Fighter. Taza to Lucibel. Full plate armor forged of black placænium (unencumbering). No helmet. +30 black læn sword, of <i>Sharpness</i> , casts <i>Ice Ball</i> 1x/day. 12 PP. Victory's Friends 5, War's Veil 5, Evil's Truce 5.								
Tæmia	9	50	14(-20)	N	A/L	55bs	45cp	10
Bard. Taza to Satarchian. Saffron chain shirt and greaves. Speed 60. 18 PP. All Base Bard lists to her level. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, and Evil's Truce to 5th level.								

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	MovM
Thæn Warrior Monk. Taza to Lucibel. Black haori and hakama. Speed 60. 7 PP. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, and Evil's Truce to 5th level.	7	65	1(-60)	N	N	75MA(Rank 3)	60sh	20
Zharu Thief. Taza to Lucibel. Black leather breastplate and greaves over black trousers and shirt. Speed 40. 7 PP. Victory's Friends, War's Veil, and Evil's Truce to 5th level.	7	45	10(-15)	N	A/L	75bs	60da	15
Zulath Warrior Monk. Taza to Satarchian. Saffron haori and pants. Headband acts as a helm. Speed 100. 9 PP. Victory's Wreath, War's Weapons, and Doom's Truce to 5th level.	9	90	1(-85)	N	N	85MA(Rank 3)	40sh	25
THE DAIN SÆDHU								
Dæru Onvin Lay Healer. Alcaid of the Dain Sædhu. +20 sword, intelligent, independently casts any of the spells from the Detections lists up to 20th level and informs wielder, 60 PP; noru, +25 DB; earring, x5; staff of office, intelligent, independently casts any spell from the Attack Avoidance list up to 20th level and/or Mind's Door: <i>Long Door 500'</i> 3x/day, 210 PP. All Base Lay Healer lists 14, Movement 14, Mind's Door 10, Speed 10, Liquid Manipulation 10, Shifting 10, Gas Manipulation 10, Cloaking 10, Detections 10. SD 88, Co 84, Ag 89, Me 86, Re 87, St 85, Qu 95, Pr 100, In 88, Em 89.	14	50	1(-65)*	N	N	75bs	—	5
Dyæna Mærin Animist. Member of the Tælsiprene. Partner in Onvin's tædhi. +25 sling, permits 2 shots each rnd; bracelet, x3, +20 DB. 108 PP. All Base Animist lists to 12th lvl; Symbolic Ways, Creations, Locating Ways, Muscle Law, Bone Law, Weather Ways, Lofty Movements, Spell Defense to 10th lvl. SD 97, Co 71, Ag 86, Me 88, Re 68, St 65, Qu 96, Pr 100, In 99, Em 78. A handsome woman, just past childbearing age, she is learned in herbal lore and keeps a store of medicines in stock. She takes a grandmotherly approach with the children of the tædhi, reserving most of her energy for civic and political responsibilities.	12	85	1(-35)	N	N	—	75sl	5
Mikæ Larq Mentalist. Member of the Tælsiprene. Partner in Orqis' tædhi. +20 sword, teleports to owner's hand if dropped or stolen; earring, x3, +15 DB. 60 PP. All Base Mentalist lists 10, Movement 10, Mind's Door 10, Speed 10, Shifting 10, Spell Resistance 10, Detections 10, Self Healing 10, Cloaking 10. SD 67, Co 91, Ag 88, Me 78, Re 71, St 95, Qu 98, Pr 99, In 81, Em 84. One of the few redheads born among the Dain Sædhu, Mikæ covers his fair skin with many extra folds of his noru whenever outside. He is a busy man, but radiates good cheer. Somehow he manages to continue his professional work as a weaver and to care as nænu for his three year old son, Lishæ, without neglecting his political duties.	10	45	1(-55)*	N	N	75bs	—	5
Nevrælia Orqis Seer. Dain Sædhun ambassador to Lucibel. +30 dagger, invisible to all except wielder, detects presences continuously; earring, x4, +15 to all RRs; bracelet, +20 DB, <i>Shadows 3x/day, Facades II 3x/day, Invisibility to I' 3x/day, Camouflage 3x/day</i> . 72 PP. All Base Seer lists 9, Movement 9, Mind's Door 9, Telekinesis 9, Mind Mastery 9, Speed 9, Sense Mastery 9, Illusions 9, Self Healing 9, Cloaking 9. SD 93, Co 97, Ag 86, Me 65, Re 87, St 87, Qu 99, Pr 96, In 87, Em 81.	9	40	1(-60)*	N	N	80da	—	5
THE LOREMASTERS								
Jaizel Arbeleth Dyari (Dark Elf) Monk. Loremaster. +30 sword, <i>of Slaying Nuld</i> ; +20 composite bow; bracers, +15 OB; white silk cloak, +25 DB, <i>Invisibility to I' 6x/day</i> ; rularon headband, +50 against Mentalism RRs, detects invisible at will, acts as a helm. 300 PP. Monk's Bridge 25, Body Reins 25, Monk's Sense 25, Body Renewal 25, Unbaring Ways 10, Detecting Ways 10. SD 87, Co 95, Ag 99, Me 87, Re 76, St 98, Qu 100, Pr 100, In 93, Em 100.	25	110	1(-110)	N	N	85bs/90MA	85cp	20
Pserchia Qæa Panthë Mentalist. Loremaster. Navigator of the Ovain Talunea. Spyglass compass; +25 sword, detects illusion at will; +30 sling; silver collar, acts as a helm, +15 to all RRs, x3; silver belt, <i>Invisibility I' R 5x/day</i> ; jade hair clip, +20 DB. 216 PP. All Base Mentalism lists 18, Delving 18, Cloaking 18, Damage Resistance 18, Attack Avoidance 18, Self Healing 18, Detections 18, Shifting 10, Mind's Door 18, Movement 10, Speed 10. SD 85, Co 94, Ag 98, Me 88, Re 89, St 99, Qu 100, Pr 102, In 102, In 91, Em 93.	18	85	1(-65)*	N	N	100bs	70sl	20
THE NAVIGATORS								
Sajys Tyrpian Laan Ranger. Navigator of the Yja Inrelu. Disk compass; purple cloak (uniform), +30 DB, casts <i>Camouflage</i> at will; +20 falchion; silver headband, x5, protects head as helm, +10 to all RRs; +25 long bow, casts <i>Nightvision</i> at will. 200 PP. All Base Ranger lists 20, Detection Mastery 10, Sound's Way 5. SD 79, Co 95, Ag 95, Me 81, Re 97, St 95, Qu 97, Pr 94, In 99, Em 92. Member of the other guild of Navigator's with seasonal access to Gethæna, Sajys has even more reserve than than the aloof Taurea. He stares down his arrogant, aristocratic nose with cold violet eyes as though contemptuous of all he sees.	20	110	1(-45)*	N	N	100fa	85lb	15
Taurea Kinzj Rhiani Illusionist. Navigator of the Ovain Talunea. Spyglass compass; green tunic (uniform), casts <i>Featherfall</i> at will; green boots, +50 to all maneuvers, <i>Leaping 5x/day</i> ; +15 sword, delivers cold crits; silver ring, x4, casts <i>Shield</i> at will. 240 PP. All Base Illusionist lists 16, all Closed Essence lists 10. SD 82, Co 89, Ag 98, Me 99, Re 86, St 90, Qu 98, Pr 95, In 87, Em 100. As Pserchia's successor to guide duty in Gethæna, Taurea has also inherited a fondness for the underearth realm. She keeps the Panthë well-informed of guild activities, but avoids the intrigues in which Pserchia embroils herself.	16	50	1(-45)*	N	N	55bs	—	20
Weapon abbreviations: ba—battle axe, bg—boomerang, bl—blow gun, bo—bola, br—bastard sword, bs—broadsword, c9—cat of nine tails, cl—club, cp—composite bow, cs—cabis, da—dagger, dg—dag, fa—falchion, fl—flail, fo—foil, gé—gé, ha—hand axe, hb—halbard, hcb—heavy cross bow, ir—irgaak, ja—javelin, ka—katana, ky—kynac (short, throwing), lb—long bow, lcb—light cross bow, lk—long kynac (melee), ls—lasso, ma—mace, MA—Martial Arts (strikes or sweeps & throws), mg—main gauche, ml—mounted lance, ms—morning star, ne—net, pa—pole arm, qs—quarter staff, ra—rapier, ro—rock, sb—short bow or horse bow, sc—scimitar, sh—shuriken, sl—sling, sp—spear, ss—short sword, tf—tonfa, th—two-hand sword, tr—trident, ts—throwing star, wh—warhammer, wm—war mattock, wp—whip.								

7 MASTER MILITARY TABLE

Type/Rank	Race	#	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Shield	Melee OB	Missile OB	MovM
NOKOR PÆRAN (WARHOST OF AMIANTHUS)									
<i>Shield & banner device: a white lotus flower on a purple field</i>									
Palace Guards	Tænulu Nuld	2,100	6	166	3(40)	Y	77ma	77hcb	10
Host Soldiers	Tænulu Nuld	27,700	6	166	3(40)	Y	72fl	68lcb	10
Host Scouts	Dænulu Nuld	6,200	6	136	3(45)	N	64ra	77da	15
Host Captains	Taza	35	12	112	1(75)	Y	106ms	106ts	20
(Captains' Mounts)	Medium horse	210	3	130	3(30)	N	50LTs	—	30
Host General	Taza	1	18	118	1(75)	N	125ma	125sp	20
(General's Mount)	Heavy horse	6	4	150	3(20)	N	65LTs	—	20
NOKOR VÆSHIM (WARHOST OF GADREL)									
<i>Shield & banner device: a silver horse on a grey field</i>									
Citadel Guards	Tænulu Nuld	1,700	6	166	3(40)	Y	77fa	77lb	10
Host Soldiers	Tænulu Nuld	26,900	6	166	3(40)	Y	72c9	68bg	10
Host Scouts	Dænulu Nuld	7,400	6	136	3(45)	N	64tr	77ne	15
Host Captains	Taza	35	12	112	1(75)	Y	106ra	106ls	20
(Captains' Mounts)	Medium horse	175	3	130	3(30)	N	50LTs	—	30
Host General	Taza	1	18	118	1(75)	N	125dg	125cs	20
(General's Mount)	Heavy horse	5	4	150	3(20)	N	65LTs	—	20
NOKOR ÆENAN (WARHOST OF LUCIBEL)									
<i>Shield & banner device: an unadorned black field</i>									
Castle Guards	Tænulu Nuld	1,400	6	166	3(40)	Y	77bs	77ts	10
Host Soldiers	Tænulu Nuld	29,200	6	166	3(40)	Y	72fa	68hcb	10
Host Scouts	Dænulu Nuld	5,400	6	136	3(45)	N	64mg	77da	15
Host Captains	Taza	35	12	112	1(75)	Y	106bs	106ml	20
(Captains' Mounts)	Medium horse	190	3	130	3(30)	N	50LTs	—	30
Host General	Taza	1	18	118	1(75)	N	125lk	125ky	20
(General's Mount)	Heavy horse	6	4	150	3(20)	N	65LTs	—	20
NOKOR MIGDOL (WARHOST OF ORIAS)									
<i>Shield & banner device: a coiled red viper on a blue field</i>									
Keep Guards	Tænulu Nuld	2,500	6	166	3(40)	Y	77ra	77cp	10
Host Soldiers	Tænulu Nuld	27,400	6	166	3(40)	Y	72ka	68bo	10
Host Scouts	Dænulu Nuld	6,100	6	136	3(45)	N	64tf	77ts	15
Host Captains	Taza	35	12	112	1(75)	Y	106fa	106lcb	20
(Captains' Mounts)	Medium horse	245	3	130	3(30)	N	50LTs	—	30
Host General	Taza	1	18	118	1(75)	N	125th	125hcb	20
(General's Mount)	Heavy horse	7	4	150	3(20)	N	65LTs	—	20
NOKOR NÆPH (WARHOST OF SACHIEL)									
<i>Shield & banner device: a forest green wolf on a grass green field</i>									
Fastness Guards	Tænulu Nuld	1,600	6	166	3(40)	Y	77sc	77lcb	10
Host Soldiers	Tænulu Nuld	26,600	6	166	3(40)	Y	72ms	68lb	10
Host Scouts	Dænulu Nuld	7,800	6	136	3(45)	N	64fo	77da	15
Host Captains	Taza	35	12	112	1(75)	Y	106mg	106bo	20
(Captains' Mounts)	Medium horse	175	3	130	3(30)	N	50LTs	—	30
Host General	Taza	1	18	118	1(75)	N	125br	125sb	20
(General's Mount)	Heavy horse	5	4	150	3(20)	N	65LTs	—	20
NOKOR GAMESH (WARHOST OF SATARCHIAN)									
<i>Shield & banner device: a golden lion rampant on a brown field</i>									
Bastion Guards	Tænulu Nuld	1,900	6	166	3(40)	Y	77ha	77hcb	10
Host Soldiers	Tænulu Nuld	30,000	6	166	3(40)	Y	72wh	68cp	10
Host Scouts	Dænulu Nuld	4,100	6	136	3(45)	N	64ss	77da	15
Host Captains	Taza	35	12	112	1(75)	Y	106sc	106sl	20
(Captains' Mounts)	Medium horse	280	3	130	3(30)	N	50LTs	—	30
Host General	Taza	1	18	118	1(75)	N	125ir	125ge	20
(General's Mount)	Heavy horse	8	4	150	3(20)	N	65LTs	—	20

8 MASTER BEAST TABLE

Type	#	Lvl	Size/Speed	Hits	AT(DB)	Attack OB Primary/Secondary/Tertiary	Critical Table
Cliffhawk	1-2	2	S/VF	25	1(60)	40MC1/40SPi/—	Norm
Dunerat	5-50	1	S/MF	5	1(30)	0SBi/—/—	Norm
Gleamtiger	1	10	L/VF	200	8(30)	110LC1/70LBa/130LBi	Large
Glimsinu	1-4	1	S/VF	10	1(50)	25LSu/—/—	Norm
Jackal	2-30	2	M/F	70	3(40)	45MBi/—/—	Norm
Jadeback	1-50	1	T/F	4	1(55)	10SSu/—/—	Norm
Jewelsting	1-2	1	T/VF	2	1(40)	10SSu/—/—	Norm
Kingcat	1-5	1	S/VF	35	3(60)	30SC1/20SBi/40SC1	Norm
Lizard, poisonous	1-10	1	T/VF	8	1(80)	40SPi/—/—	Norm
Sandlion	1-5	8	L/VF	125	3(50)	85LC1/85LBa/120LBi	Large
Spearfish	1-2	8	H/F	450	8(20)	100HHo/—/—	Super Large
Spineshark	1-5	5	H/VF	500	8(60)	120HCl/—/—	Super Large
Wolf	2-20	3	M/F	110	3(30)	60LBi/—/—	Norm

9 POISONS

Toxins abound in the underearth realm. Produced by exotic fauna and flora or the quixotic environment itself, they are a very real threat to any traveler. The knowledgeable may obtain them in the wild with ease. The ignorant may die without knowing the cause with equal ease.

The Ishru keep vast stores of poisons and often give them away upon request, although gold or a favor may be the required price. The Dain Sædhu stock many for military use against the Ishru, but discourage their collection by private citizens. It should be noted that although most of the substances listed below affect all individuals similarly, a few which are lethal to most species do not kill the Ishru or their servants.

NAME: albthæmis

Source: vine with dark green leaves and many-petaled white blossoms

Form: pollen/inhale

Effect: violent behavior (causing injury and/or death) for 1-4 hours followed by loss of memory of that time

Lvl: 8

Frequency: moderate (Forests of Hiroth)

NAME: cobaltange

Source: stunted tree bearing fruits with fuzzy electric-blue skins and white pulpy flesh

Form: fruit/ingest

Effect: heart stops in 1-7 rnds

Lvl: 20

Frequency: moderate (grasslands)

NAME: convivius

Source: small, delicate stalks with purple flowers; they grow in clusters, resembling moss from a distance

Form: pollen/inhale

Effect: severe burns in the lungs; one year bed rest and healing to prevent death

Lvl: 5

Frequency: moderate (Ænan)

NAME: coralplague

Source: aura of suncoral

Form: disruption of biochemical processes/proximity to aura

Effect: fever, hair loss, and dehydration followed in most cases by death

Lvl: 10

Frequency: very rare (Mines of Demoth)

NAME: diamiri

Source: slender stalk bearing bell-like white flowers

Form: oil, crushed from petals/contact

Effect: feels soothing when applied to skin, but causes local muscles to relax completely for 1-2 hours, incapacitating the appropriate limb for the duration

Lvl: 5

Frequency: very rare (Forests of Hiroth)

NAME: ivorayn

Source: white fern

Form: root/ingest

Effect: blindness and severe headache for 1-2 hours

Lvl: 3

Frequency: moderate (Forests of Hiroth)

NAME: joirhas

Source: jewelsting venom, tail stinger

Form: clear fluid/inject, apply to wound

Effect: loose sense of balance for 1-10 hours; unable to stand

Lvl: 5

Frequency: rare (desert)

NAME: lavænus

Source: orchid-like flower, black in color with white interior

Form: pollen/inhale

Effect: slow, euphoric death (2-12 hours) as blood turns into likrysium

Lvl: 20

Frequency: very rare (Ænan)

NAME: likrysium

Source: victim to poisoning by lavænus

Form: black, sticky liquid/ingest

Effect: 500 PP available to victim and knowledge of the highest spells on lists known to him followed by death in 1 hour and accelerated (immediate, no rounds of delay) departure of the soul

Lvl: 25

Frequency: very rare (see lavænus)

NAME: lorkydia

Source: blue, spiny cactus

Form: clear fluid/inject, apply to wound

Effect: forget the concept of language for 10 hours; cannot speak or understand other's speech; limited to simple gestures

Lvl: 10

Frequency: moderate (desert)

NAME: merylias

Source: shrub bearing white leaves and green berries

Form: berry/ingest

Effect: complete amnesia for 1 year; eyes turn green

Lvl: 8

Frequency: rare (Ænan)

NAME: olochia

Source: jadeback venom

Form: green fluid/inject, apply to wound

Effect: coma; recover in 1 month or more (possibly never); roll D100 every month after the first; an unmodified 95 or more means the victim awakens

Lvl: 20

Frequency: common (desert)

NAME: ophiar

Source: lizard venom

Form: clear fluid/inject, apply to wound

Effect: 50-100 hits

Lvl: 7

Frequency: rare (desert)

NAME: palesis
Source: lizard venom
Form: yellow fluid/inject, apply to wound
Effect: temporary insanity; victim capable of only random actions for 1-4 hours
Lvl: 10
Frequency: very rare (desert)

NAME: palutrys
Source: glimsinu venom
Form: golden fluid/inject, apply to wound
Effect: paralysis and death in 1-5 rnds
Lvl: 20
Frequency: rare (desert)

NAME: pleasurethorn
Source: thorns of the velvetbloom plant
Form: clear fluid/inject, apply to wound
Effect: for 2-4 hours all pain is transformed into exquisite pleasure (victim able to enjoy 4x normal hits *while poison lasts*)
Lvl: 15
Frequency: very rare (desert)

NAME: rosælis
Source: pressed from fruit of velvetbloom plant
Form: clear, red fluid/ingest
Effect: Ishru & servants—euphoria producing great wit and humor, lasting 1-4 hours. Non-Ishru—brain liquifies in skull, causing death in 6-12 rnds.
Lvl: 10
Frequency: very rare (desert)

NAME: sælenis
Source: ground cover with small, blue leaves and pink flowers
Form: pollen/inhale
Effect: 100-200 hits
Lvl: 8
Frequency: moderate (Ænan)

NAME: shimmerdeath
Source: Lake Lebæn and its tributaries
Form: sparkling blue liquid/ingest
Effect: Ishru & servants—euphoria inducing irresponsible behavior for 6-12 hours. Non-Ishru—skin, hair, and nails turn blue; painless death in 10-100 days.
Lvl: 15
Frequency: common (Lake Lebæn)

NAME: solgenus
Source: distilled from fruit of cobaltange
Form: bubbly purple liquid/ingest
Effect: Ishru & servants—euphoria coupled with extreme violence for 1-2 hours. Non-Ishru—loss of sentience: all temporary mental stats become 1.
Lvl: 10
Frequency: moderate (grasslands)

NAME: sparklysium
Source: small bush producing silvery berries
Form: berry/ingest
Effect: bleed to death through stomach; vomit blood 12-24 rnds before dying.
Lvl: 4
Frequency: common (grasslands)

NAME: sporifum
Source: white moss
Form: pollen/inhale
Effect: sleep 1-6 hours
Lvl: 2
Frequency: moderate (Forests of Hiroth)

NAME: thystine
Source: sap of albhæmis vine
Form: syrupy green liquid/ingest
Effect: Ishru & servants—euphoria and hallucinations for 1-6 hours. Non-Ishru—permanent blindness; optic nerve burned.
Lvl: 8
Frequency: moderate (Forests of Hiroth)

NAME: velvain
Source: blue vine with circular blue leaves
Form: clear sap/inject, apply to wound
Effect: 10-50 hits
Lvl: 5
Frequency: rare (Ænan)

NAME: verulia
Source: bush with yellow blooms
Form: clear sap/inject, apply to wound
Effect: 25-75 hits
Lvl: 5
Frequency: moderate (Ænan)

NAME: zulium
Source: jewelsting venom, pincers
Form: pink fluid/inject apply to wound
Effect: convulsions 1-6 rnds, followed by death
Lvl: 20
Frequency: rare (desert)

10·HEALING HERBS

NAME: cherrybright
Source: cherrybright shrub in the grasslands of Væshim, Gamesh, and Migdol
Form: berry/ingest
Effect: heals 12 hits
Frequency: moderately common

NAME: dezercry
Source: the wastes outside Gethæna's circle of mountains crystallize near the perimeter where the sky-roof touches the sands; some concentrations air pollens generated by Gethæna's flora reach this fiery area; crystallized sands imbued with sorrowmoss spores are dezercry
Form: powder/inject
Effect: regenerates any one limb
Frequency: moderately common at its source (extremely difficult to obtain)

NAME: palutrys
Source: venom from the fangs of the glimsinu
Form: liquid (fermented)/ingest
Effect: repairs any one organ
Frequency: rare

NAME: satinpetal
Source: the blooms are produced by a bush that grows in the forests of Hiroth
Form: flower/salve
Effect: reduces fever
Frequency: moderately common

NAME: scardust
Source: pollen from the scagrass that covers the plains of Væshim, Gamesh, and Migdol
Form: tea/ingest
Effect: heals 2-6 hits; wounds so healed do not scar
Frequency: extremely common

NAME: shadefruit
Source: shadebushes in the forests of Hiroth
Form: fruit/ingest
Effect: lifekeeping (1 day)
Frequency: common

NAME: sparkleberry
Source: shrub growing in the grasslands of Væshim, Gamesh, and Migdol
Form: berry/ingest
Effect: stops bleeding; 5 points/rnd or less
Frequency: moderately common

NAME: velvetbloom
Source: blooms from a briar growing in Hiroth; only those splashed with the blood of a gemtail have the Lifegiving property
Form: flower/salve
Effect: Lifegiving
Frequency: extremely rare

NAME: zulium
Source: venom from the pincers of the jewelsting
Form: resin (evaporated liquid)/ingest
Effect: relieves 2-10 rounds of stun
Frequency: rare

11·GLOSSARY A

Abigor—Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Heresia Combata.

Ægron—Native tongue of the Dain Sædhun.

Ænan—Meadowland territory in Gethæna's north-west governed by Lucibel.

Æran—An old Emerian myth holds that Khæn was the eldest son of the first man to live on Kulthea.

Agares—Eh'taza to Orias. Member of the Heresia Combata.

Ah'marinar—Cavern located in the Chukus Stani; revered by the Dy'evruinus.

Ahkail—The virtual name chosen by the Uruth Stelar. It means "Comet's Bane." Stelar's order picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.

Akusa—Word meaning "village" in the tongue of the Dy'evruinus.

Alastor—Eh'taza to Orias. Member of the Ordæum Novis.

Albhæmis—Vine growing in the forests of Hiroth. Its pollen is poisonous when inhaled.

Alcald—Political leader of the Dain Sædhun.

Alocer—Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Member of the Heresia Combata.

Amianthus—Ishru; Grand Duke of Pæran.

Arys—Alias for Orias.

Arzhæna—Dain Sædhun martial artist; daughter of Fæna and Bron; ideal as a player character.

Astaroth—Eh'taza to Lucibel. Member of the Nictum Aureate.

Atastazhi—Term used for the afterlife as conceptualized by members of an obscure religious sect.

Azæl—Eh'taza to Lucibel. Member of the Heresia Combata.

B

Bæliru—Dain Sædhun term meaning roughly "husband." Any of the adult male partners in a tædhi may appropriately be called bæliru by an adult female partner.

Bænu—Dain Sædhun term meaning roughly "father." It is used to indicate the relationship of an adult male partner in a tædhi to any child in the tædhi.

Baleril—Shrub growing in Ænan that bears berries important in the diet of the meadow gazelle.

Bashæn—Ancient site built by the Lords of Essænce in the region now named Zudar. Dain Sædhu legends claim it was a pleasure palace.

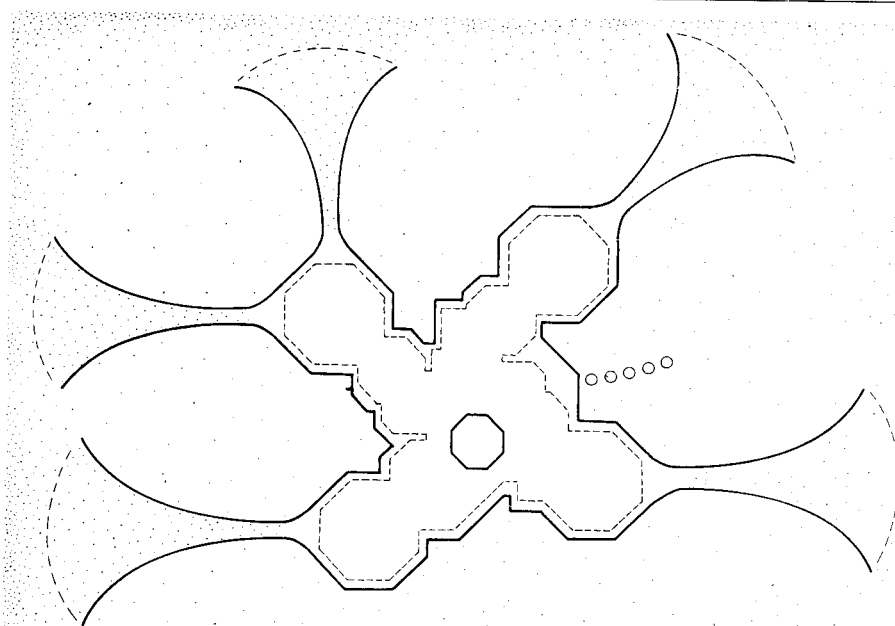
- Bathym**—Eh'taza to Sachiël. Leader of the Heresia Combata.
- Beast**—Leonine Eh'taza under Satarchian. Member of the Nictum Aureate.
- Belial**—Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Ordæum Novis. Member of the Heresia Combata.
- Belphegor**—Eh'taza to Sachiël.
- Braizium**—Bronze-colored alloy found in the mountains encircling Gethæna. Primarily used as a building material.
- Bron**—Dain Sædhu; cannot walk; member of Fæna's tædhi.
- Byrtænu**—Dain Sædhu hermit; member of an obscure religious sect; Lænu's teacher.

C

- Caidh**—Adventurer who traveled to Gethæna on a Demon's back.
- Catdove**—Gentle birds who nest in the shadebushes of Hiroth.
- Chæl**—Essence forge used by all the Ishru as agreed by treaty. Located in Væshim. Large deposits of arinyark give the forge its unique properties.
- Chæru**—Dain Sædhu; child in Fæna's tædhi; daughter of Nenæ and Pær; she was kidnapped by Gadrel.
- Chaluruka**—Ceremony marking a female's coming of age among the Dy'evruinus.
- Chamos**—Eh'taza to Lucibel. Member of the Nictum Aureate, the Ordæum Novis, and the Heresia Combata.
- Cherrybright**—Fruit of a shrub that grows in the grasslands of Gethæna.
- Chorozon**—Eh'taza to Sachiël. Member of the Nictum Aureate, the Ordæum Novis, and the Heresia Combata.
- Chudiis**—Demon who brought the adventurer Caidh to Gethæna.
- Chukus Stani**—Mountains in the Spine of Emer just north of the Gap of Uj.
- Cobaltange**—Shrub bearing blue-skinned fruits or the fruit of these shrubs.
- Convivius**—Purple-flowered shrub growing in Ænan whose pollen burns the lungs when inhaled.
- Coralplague**—Disease caused by exposure to unprotected suncoral gems.
- Cunning**—Wolf Eh'taza under Sachiël. Member of the Nictum Aureate. Member of the Heresia Combata.

D

- Dæheema**—Fatal disease; its major symptom is the appearance of ring-shaped bruises all over an afflicted person's skin.
- Dænulu**—Smaller, more wiry breed of Nuld.
- Dæru Onvin**—Famed Alcaid of the Dain Sædhu who held office when the sky-roof of Gethæna was broken.
- Dagon**—Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Heresia Combata.
- Dahlusa**—Robe of silkweave worn by the Dain Sædhu. It consists of a voluminous tunic belted by a sash.
- Dain Sædhu**—Race of men living in Gethæna.
- Delia**—Adventurer who traveled to Gethæna with a Navigator's help. One of her many admirers paid for the trip.
- Dema**—Taza to Lucibel. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.
- Demoth**—Gem mines located in Næph but exploited by all the Ishru as agreed by treaty. Dain Sædhu are not allowed within these tunnels.
- Despair**—Equine Eh'taza under Orias.
- Dezercrys**—Pollen-imbued crystals found in the perimeter desert surrounding Gethæna.
- Dhæk**—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Pæl. It means "Privacy Supreme." Pæl's sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.
- Dhuri kus'ti**—One of the Dy'evruinus; Kaia's uncle.
- Diamiri**—Flower found in the forests of Hiroth. Oil from its petals has a curious relaxing effect.



TÆLETHRAND'S ROOF FORMS

- Dirizæl**—A Worldslayer being prepared by Niyoreh to take the sect's office of Oracle.
- Dischordia**—Alternate name sometimes used for Gethæna by the uneducated.
- Doombringer**—Thematic Demon of Chaos.
- Durak**—Taza to Satarchian. Assigned to guard duty at the Gates of Gethæna.
- Dy'evruinus**—The mountain people (an Anzeti strain) of the Chukus Stani.
- Dyæna Mærin**—Rælriru to the Alcaid Dæru Onvin.

E

- Eh'taza**—Highest ranking servants of the Ishru. They resemble men or elves and possess sophisticated tastes.
- Eiran**—Taza to Orias. Assigned to gather data on the Eh'tazan rebels.
- Elæph**—First letter in the Laminauræ alphabet.
- Electrium**—Silvery gold alloy that accepts embedding (spells and runes) with particular ease.
- Eshæ**—Taza to Orias. Assigned to gather data on the Eh'tazan rebels.
- Essicrysta**—Crystalline substance created by the Lords of Essænce. In one form, it can be used to convert mass to Essænce which is then stored within its matrices.

F

- Fæna**—Dain Sædhu; descendant of Nulænu.
- Færa**—Purchasing power acquired among the Dain Sædhu by demonstrations of integrity, productivity, and leadership.
- Flowmaster**—Title of a K'ta'viir adept.
- Fomwæn**—Lake located in the southwest on the border between Næph and Pæran.
- Fræst**—Uncle to the Dain Sædhu hermits Myrlæniss and Byrtænu.
- Frost**—Equine Eh'taza under Gadrel. Member of the Ordæum Novis.
- Fumaroth**—Eh'taza to Satarchian.
- Fury**—Equine Eh'taza under Orias.

G

- Gadrael**—Diminutive of a proper name (Gadrel) given to boy children by the Galagnini, an Anzeti people living in the foothills of the Spine of Emer south of the Gap of Uj.

- Gadraelia**—Diminutive of a proper name (Gadrella) given to girl children by the Galagnini, an Anzeti people living in the foothills of the Spine of Emer south of the Gap of Uj.
- Gadrel**—Ishru; Prince of Væshim.
- Gæli**—Aunt to the Dain Sædhu hermits Myrlæniss and Byrtænu.
- Gænzhur**—River of iræniss flowing out of Lake Lebæn through the forests of Hiroth.
- Gærin Borul**—Leader of the Dain Sædhu before they settled in Gethæna.
- Gamæris**—Legendary name for a kingdom on an unknown continent that sank beneath the sea.
- Gamesh**—Grassland territory in Gethæna's southeast governed by Satarchian.
- Garnid**—Taza to Amianthus. Assigned to guard duty at the Gates of Gethæna.
- Gazha**—Ancient site built by the Lords of Essænce in the cliffs dropping to Lake Lebæn. Dain Sædhu fairy tales claim it to be the nest of the foul Nightbird.
- Gentail**—Bird with metallic plumage that inhabits Hiroth.
- Gethetair**—Dain Sædhu term translating as "great imbalance." The hermit Myrlæniss used the word as his name for the Gates of Gethæna.
- Gh'uri P'hanib**—Cavern located in the Chukus Stani; opens at its nether end on the Ash Lairs.
- Giruzæsh**—Huge, horned fish that swims in the Lakes Fomwæn, Kressmær, and Glimbourn.
- Gleamtiger**—Predator that roams the grasslands. It is slightly larger than a tiger and possesses stripes of black and silver.
- Glimbourn**—Lake located in Væshim.
- Glimsinu**—Poisonous snake found in the desert.
- Glittergrain**—Grain-bearing grass common in Migdol, Gamesh, and Væshim. Its kernels make a good flour when ground.
- Golan**—Worldslayer raised in Dirizæl's pod. He detested the Oracle-to-be.
- Gregoro**—A proper name given to boy children by the Galagnini, an Anzeti people living in the foothills of the Spine of Emer south of the Gap of Uj.

H

- Haborym**—Eh'taza to Satarchian.
- Hæn**—Guide of the Dain Sædhu. Joined the adventurers Caidh and Peath in their attempt to break Gethæna's sky-roof.

- Hæsig**—Tongue used by the Ishru.
- Hennas**—Taza to Gadrel. Assigned to guard duty at the Gates of Gethæna.
- Heresia Combata**—Group of rebel Eh'taza who intend to imprison the Ishru and govern Gethæna themselves by coalition.
- Hiroth**—Forest of irnwood trees located in north central Gethæna.
- Horseshoe Arch**—Arch shaped like a horseshoe. The straight sides supporting the U-shaped arch frequently step in midway down, resulting in a narrower opening at the bottom of the arch.
- Hothrog**—A Demon whose form combines the body of a man with a jackal's head. Their hands possess only two non-opposing fingers, each sporting a long, steely claw. Hothrog Demons are sometimes named Fairseemers of Zelrethsu, a Demon Beyond the Pale. It is thought they are his minions.



THÆN AND PERISSA

I

- Iblis**—Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Ordæum Novis and the Heresia Combata.
- Ilgar**—Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Heresia Combata.
- Ilsa**—Taza under Lucibel.
- Iphrætur**—Northern tributary of Lake Lebæn.
- Irænis**—A sparkling blue liquid that fills Lake Lebæn. The Ishru drink it like wine. It is poisonous to the Dain Sædhun.
- Irnwood**—Trees with black-barked trunks and white, opalescent leaves. The main species comprising the forests of Hiroth.
- Iscaaron**—Eh'taza to Satarchian. Member of the Heresia Combata.
- Ishru**—Immortals who were born from the spirit of evil exhibited by men. The Ishru were imprisoned in Gethæna by Mhari Ridæn.
- Ivorayn**—White fern in Hiroth whose roots are poisonous.

J

- Jadeback**—Beetle possessing a hard, green exo-skeleton. Inhabits the desert. A much larger insect (giant-sized) bearing the same name lives on Kulthea's surface.
- Jaizel Arbeleth**—Ex-Loremaster who continues to meddle in Gethæna.

- Jewelsting**—Scorpion with brightly colored exo-skeleton that lives in Gethæna's desert. A much larger insect (giant-sized) bearing the same name lives on Kulthea's surface.
- Jirel**—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Niyoreh. It means "Control Over-arching." Niyoreh's sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.
- Joirhas**—Venom from the tail stinger of a Gethænan jewelsting.

K

- Kaia kus'Urnuinen**—Anzeti descendant of Mhari Ridæn; daughter of Urnuinen; called to Gethæna by Pæl Dhæk; ideal as a player character.
- Kalimira**—Youngest child of Mhari Ridæn; defeated the Dragonlord I'hanir Pran'jaib.

L

- Lænu**—Dain Sædhun guide; daughter of Mhora and Pær; ideal as a player character.
- Laminauræ**—One alphabet used by speakers of Old Emer.
- Lancet Arch**—A narrow, sharply pointed arch.
- Lavænus**—Black orchid that grows in Ænan.
- Lebæn**—Lake of poisonous irænis located in northern Gethæna.
- Likrysium**—Black, sticky substance found in the veins of a victim of lavænus poisoning.
- Linnæn**—Hand sculpted from crystal; its magical aura opens the locks securing secret compartments located in the monuments to Mhari Ridæn. Bathym forged the Linnæn.
- Liræn**—Uruth consort to Stelar Akhail. Mother to Mhari Ridæn.
- Liru**—Dain Sædhun term meaning roughly "spouse." Any of the adult partners in a tædhi may appropriately be called liru by one another.
- Lorkydia**—Blue cactus that grows in Zudær, Næph, and Pæran.
- Lucibel**—Ishru; Lord of Ænan.
- Luringæ**—Pictorial characters used by the Ishru for written communication.

M

- Mædu**—Gadrel often took this shape before he was imprisoned in Gethæna. As the Mædu, he resembled a beautiful woman with live serpents writhing around her head instead of hair.
- Mæluun**—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Dirizæl. It means "Power Oracular." Dirizæl's sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.
- Mænsturius**—A shape frequently taken by Amianthus before he was imprisoned in Gethæna. The Mænsturius was a muscular man with the head of a bull. He carried a ball of thread with magical properties.
- Malphus**—Eh'taza to Satarchian. Member of the Ordæum Novis.
- Malupush**—Game of strategy (similar to chess or goh) popular among the Dy'evruinus.
- Marinælla**—Sandlion partner of the Dain Sædhun guide Hæn.
- Melchom**—Scholarly Eh'taza to Amianthus.
- Merylias**—Shrub growing in Ænan; it bears poisonous green berries.
- Mhari**—Uruth who infiltrated the Worldslayers led by Niyoreh and then conceptualized Gethæna.
- Mhora**—Dain Sædhun play director; member of Fæna's tædhi.
- Migdol**—Grassland territory in Gethæna's northwest governed by Orias.
- Mikæ Larq**—Bæliro to the diplomat Nevraëlia Orqis.
- Mirinar**—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Rænis (pod member and playmate with Pæl Dhæk). It means "Jester Enthroned." Rænis' sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.
- Myrlænis**—Dain Sædhun hermit; member of an obscure religious sect, Byrtænu's brother.

N

- Naberus**—Eh'taza to Amianthus. Member of the Nictum Aureate and the Heresia Combata.
- Næcrys**—Pearly, white substance made from a cured resin. It can be poured into molds or spread within frames (like mud or clay, although it is more durable than these materials).
- Nænu**—Primary caretaker of a Dain Sædhun child.
- Næph**—Desert territory in Gethæna's southwest governed by Sachiël.
- Narsirabæn**—Electrium rods set with a jacinth. Each rod can generate a sphere large enough to imprison one of the Ishru or one of their minions.
- Nemu**—Taza to Sachiël. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

- Kangled**—Dain Sædhun city located on the eastern fringes of the forest Hiroth.
- Khæn**—An old Emerian myth holds that Khæn was the younger son of the first man to live on Kulthea.
- Khalidreth Gha'ib**—Word meaning "the Unlife" in the tongue of the Dy'evruinus.
- Kharufier**—Skyburn; Dain Sædhun equivalent of nighttime; the light does not wane, but the temperature is uncomfortably hot (90°F-105°F).
- Kharufræel**—Skychill; Dain Sædhun equivalent of daylight; temperatures are comfortable (75°F-90°F), and business brisk.
- Kingcat**—Small predator inhabiting Hiroth. Domesticated varieties serve as pets in Dain Sædhun households.
- Kirzelæn**—Crystalline pillar located in the volcano Paltæl. It modulates the Essence-flow there, thus creating Gethæna's glowing sky-roof.
- Kohæl**—Mines located in Næph but exploited by all the Ishru as agreed by treaty. Metals are the primary product. Dain Sædhun are not allowed to mine in these tunnels.
- Kressmær**—Lake located in Migdol.
- Krinek**—Taza to Sachiël. Assigned to guard duty at the Gates of Gethæna.
- Kyrial**—Taza to Satarchian. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Nenæ—Dain Sædhun fountain designer; member of Fæna's tædhi.

Nevrælia Orqis—Famed diplomat of the Dain Sædhun who formed a friendship with Lucibel.

Nictum Aureate—Group of Eh'tazan rebels who intend to free the Ishru.

Nimbusæn—Perch adapted to an environment of irænis.

Niyoreh—Worldslayer who ordered the creation of Gethæna. She intended to house there the Demon armies she would free from Chaos and the Void.

Nokor Ænan—The castle of Lucibel; located in the foothills of the mountains edging Ænan.

Nokor Gamesh—The bastion of Satarchian; located in the foothills of the mountains edging Gamesh.

Nokor Migdol—The keep of Orias; located in the foothills of the mountains edging Migdol.

Nokor Næph—The fastness of Sachiël; located in the foothills of the mountains edging Næph.

Nokor Pæran—The palace of Amianthus; located in the foothills of the mountains edging Pæran.

Nokor Væshim—The citadel of Gadrel; located in the foothills of the mountains edging Væshim.

Noru—Robe of silkweave worn by the Dain Sædhun. It consists of a long swatch of fabric wrapped around the torso and secured by elaborate tucks and folds.

Noryn—Taza to Sachiël. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Nulænu—Dain Sædhun woman befriended by Lucibel and killed by Gadrel.

Nuld—Most lowly servants of the Ishru. They are quite violent and resemble bronze-skinned Demons.

O

Ogee Arch—Pointed arch formed with a shallow S-shaped curve on each side.

Olochia—Venom from the Gethænan jadeback.

Ophiar—Venom from one species of Gethænan lizard.

Oræna—Phonetic alphabet used by the Dain Sædhun.

Ordæum Novis—Group of rebel Eh'taza who intend to make Jaizel Arbeleth emperor of all Gethæna.

Ordainer—Thematic Demon of Chaos.

Orfeo—Taza to Satarchian. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Orias—Ishru; Lord of Migdol.

Ovain Talunea—Guild of navigators who have the lands of Uj under their jurisdiction for part of the year. They largely ignore the fact that Gethæna is located below this region.

P

Pæl—Worldslayer who fathered Mhari Ridæn.

Pær—Dain Sædhun woodcarver and carpenter; member of Fæna's tædhi.

Pæran—Desert territory in Gethæna's southwest governed by Amianthus.

Palesis—Venom from one species of Gethænan lizard.

Paltæl—Volcano located in central Gethæna.

Palutrys—Venom from the Gethænan snake named glimsinu.

Paværin—Trout adapted to an environment of irænis.

Peath—Adventurer who traveled to Gethæna using teleport spells.

Perissa—Taza to Lucibel. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Phæbir—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Theola (member of Dirizæl's pod). It means "Vengeance Glorified." Theola's sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.

Phædon—Ancient philosopher who lived in the courts of the Masters of Emer.

Placænium—A cured resin possessing the appearance of fine white porcelain. It can be dyed different hues. The substance is poured into molds to cure or spread within a framework.

Pleasurethorn—Sap from the thorns of the velvetbloom plant.

Pod—The Worldslayers led by Niyoreh assigned their infants to creches or pods, each group raised by a chosen adult. Genetic content was the primary factor considered when designing a pod.

Pranid—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Kæmer (bully in Pæl Dhæk's pod). It means "Pincer Obedient." Kæmer's sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.

Pserchia Qæa—Ex-Navigator of the Ovain Talunea. Currently the Loremaster protecting Gethæna.

Q

Quietude—Unicorn Eh'taza under Lucibel. Member of the Nictum Aureate and the Heresia Combata.

R

Ræliru—Dain Sædhun term meaning roughly "wife." Any of the adult female partners in a tædhi may appropriately be called ræliru by an adult male partner.

Ræmir—Husband of the Dain Sædhun woman, Nulænu, who was befriended by Lucibel and killed by Gadrel.

Ræn—Taza to Orias. Assigned to guard duty at the Gates of Gethæna.

Rænis—Worldslayer who grew up with Pæl Dhæk.

Ridæn—The virtual name chosen by the Uruth Mhari. It means "Redeemer Elect." Mhari's order picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.

Rimón—Eh'taza to Sachiël.

Rosælis—Juice from the fruit of the velvetbloom plant.

Round Arch—Its curve forms a perfect half-circle; round arches may be placed atop rectangular openings for a more elongated effect.

S

Sachiël—Ishru; Duke of Næph.

Sælænis—Flowered ground cover common in the meadows of Ænan.

Sajys Tyrpian—Laan Navigator of the Ija Inreul.

Samæl—Eh'taza to Orias.

Sandlion—Oversized lion that has been domesticated by the Dain Sædhun. They serve as mounts, and their milk is used to make dairy products.

Satarchian—Ishru; Duke of Gamesh.

Satinpetal—Bush growing in Hiroth; petals used in an herbal remedy.

Sawleaf—Palm tree that grows near waterholes in the grasslands of Gethæna.

Scardust—Pollen of the scargrass so common in Gethæna.

Scargrass—Silvery grass predominant in Væshim, Gamesh, and Migdol.

Scox—Eh'taza to Gadrel.

Sentani—Agile gophers who inhabit both the plains and the deserts of Gethæna.

Shadebush—Brown-leaved shrub common in the forests of Hiroth.

Shadefruit—Fruit of the shadebush that grows in Hiroth.

Shadowfern—White fern that thrives in Hiroth.

Shæhesh—Ancient site built by the Lords of Essænce with the volcano Paltæl. Dain Sædhun lore speaks of it as the abode of shapechangers.

Shaka—Worldslayer raised in Dirizæl's pod. She feared the Oracle-to-be.

Shaloray—Taza to Lucibel. Assigned to guard duty at the Gates of Gethæna.

Shimmerdeath—Irænis, the sparkling blue poison filling Lake Lebæn.

Shinaar—Legendary name for an empire on an unknown continent that sank beneath the sea.

Silkweave—White, silky fabric woven from thread spun from leaf filaments of the irnwood trees.

Skyburn—Dain Sædhun equivalent of nighttime; the light does not wane, but the temperature is uncomfortably hot (90°F-105°F).

Skychill—Dain Sædhun equivalent of daylight; temperatures are comfortable (75°F-90°F), and business brisk.

Solgenus—Beverage distilled from the cobaltange fruit.

Solmir—The virtual name chosen by the Uruth Liræn. It means "Illuminatrix." Liræn's order picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.

Sorrowmoss—Ivory-colored moss that covers fallen trees in Hiroth.

Sparkleberry—Berried bush common in the grasslands. Its silvery fruits are smaller than those of the sparklysium.

Sparklysium—Berried bush common in the grasslands. Sometimes confused with the sparkleberry bush.

Spirælín—Small fish with scales that change color to match the fish's surroundings.

Sporifum—Sorrowmoss; covers fallen limbs in Hiroth.

Stavin—Dain Sædhun city planner; member of Fæna's tædhi; ideal as a player character.

Stedron—Dain Sædhun city located in Migdol on the shores of Lake Kressmæ.

Stelar—Leader of the order of Uruths opposing Niyoreh Jirel.

Stondepin—Dain Sædhun city located in Væshim on the shores of Lake Glimbourn.

Suncoral—Gems that emit heat sufficient to melt anything but læn. Usually found within nodes of molten rock.

Suynwæn—Dain Sædhun day consisting of eight watches.

T

Tæbis—Southernmost tributary of Lake Lebæn.

Tædhi—Dain Sædhun family group. Consists of two or more adults and their children.

Tælethrand—Residence of Jaizel Arbeleth and Pserchia Qæa.

Tælsiprene—Governing body of the Dain Sædhun.

Tælsiprenu—Members of the Tælsiprene.

Tæmia—Taza to Satarchian. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Tænulu—Larger, more muscular breed of Nuld.

Tamiel—Eh'taza to Lucibel.

Tangeval—Dain Sædhun city located in Pæran on the shores of Lake Fomwæn.

Tanglewood—Unusual tree growing in the deserts of Gethæna.

Taurea Kinzj—Rhiani Navigator of the Ovain Talunea.

Taurith—Silver-blue alloy which accepts Essence embedding easily.

Taza—The servants of the Ishru who could be called "middle management." They take orders from the Eh'taza. They are responsible for the Nuld.

Thæn—Taza to Lucibel. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Theola—Worldslayer raised in Dirizæl's pod. She resented the Oracle-to-be.

Thornwood—Desert bush growing in Zudær, Pæran, and Næph.

Thystine—Poison distilled from the sap of the althæmis vine.

Transport Pillar—Column of essicrysta used by the Worldslayers as a magical elevator.

Trapunto—Type of padded quilting possessing a design, in high relief, outlined by with single stitches. Often used by peoples dwelling in cold areas to make warm outer garments.

Trefoil Arch—Arch with a peak resembling a three-lobed leaf.

Trystrium—Greenish silver alloy which accepts Channeling embedding easily.

Turel—Eh'taza to Orias. Member of the Heresia Combata.

U

Urial—Eh'taza to Lucibel.

Urian—Eh'taza to Gadrel. Member of the Nictum Aureate.

Urina—Last letter in the Laminauræ alphabet.

Urnuinen—Anzeti great great granddaughter of Kalimira, daughter of Mhari Ridæn.

Uruth—General name given to followers of Utha or descendants of his followers. It does not distinguish between different groups or orders, whose aims became increasingly diverse after Utha's death.

V

Væshim—Grassland territory in Gethæna's northeast governed by Gadrel.

Valafar—Eh' taza to Satarchian. Member of the Heresia Combata.

Varnese—Tongue spoken by the Nuld.

Velvain—Blue-leafed vine growing in Ænan.

Velvetbloom—Briar growing in Hiroth. Some of its flowers have a special healing property.

Verulia—A bush with yellow flowers that grows in Ænan. Its poisonous sap is used by the unscrupulous to coat the edges of their knives or swords.

Vitreæn—A clear, cured resin suitable for use anywhere glass would be employed.

W

Wilæs—Dain Sædhu; descendant of Nulænu; son of Fæna and Bron; he was kidnapped by Gadrel.

Wisdom—Panther Eh' taza under Amianthus.

Worldslayer—General name given to followers of Kadæna or descendants of her followers. It does not distinguish between different groups or sects, whose aims became increasingly diverse after Kadæna's death.

X

Xiotha—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Shaka (member of Dirizæl's pod). It means "Witness Purified." Shaka's sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.

Y

Yja Inrelu—Guild of navigators who have the lands of Uj under their jurisdiction for part of the year. They do not shun Gethæna as the Ovain Talunea prefers to do.

Ynthaleris—A dynasty that ruled a portion of the continent of Agyra in the early Third Era.

Z

Zathan—Limestone caverns located in Pæran and visited by the Ishru on pleasure expeditions.

Zenri—The virtual name chosen by the Worldslayer Golan (member of Dirizæl's pod). It means "Dreamer Exalted." Golan's sect picked virtual names to summarize their public goals.

Zharu—Taza to Lucibel. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Zhat—Dain Sædhun watch; eight watches equals one day.

Zolianth—Many-petaled flower brought to Gethæna by the Dain Sædhu when they first settled in the underearth realm.

Zudær—Desert territory in Gethæna's south where the Great Gates secure the gap giving access to the wastes. No Ishrun prince rules this region.

Zulath—Taza to Satarchian. Assigned by Bathym to retrieve an artifact from the monuments to Mhari Ridæn.

Zulium—Venom from the pincers of the Gethænan jewelsting.

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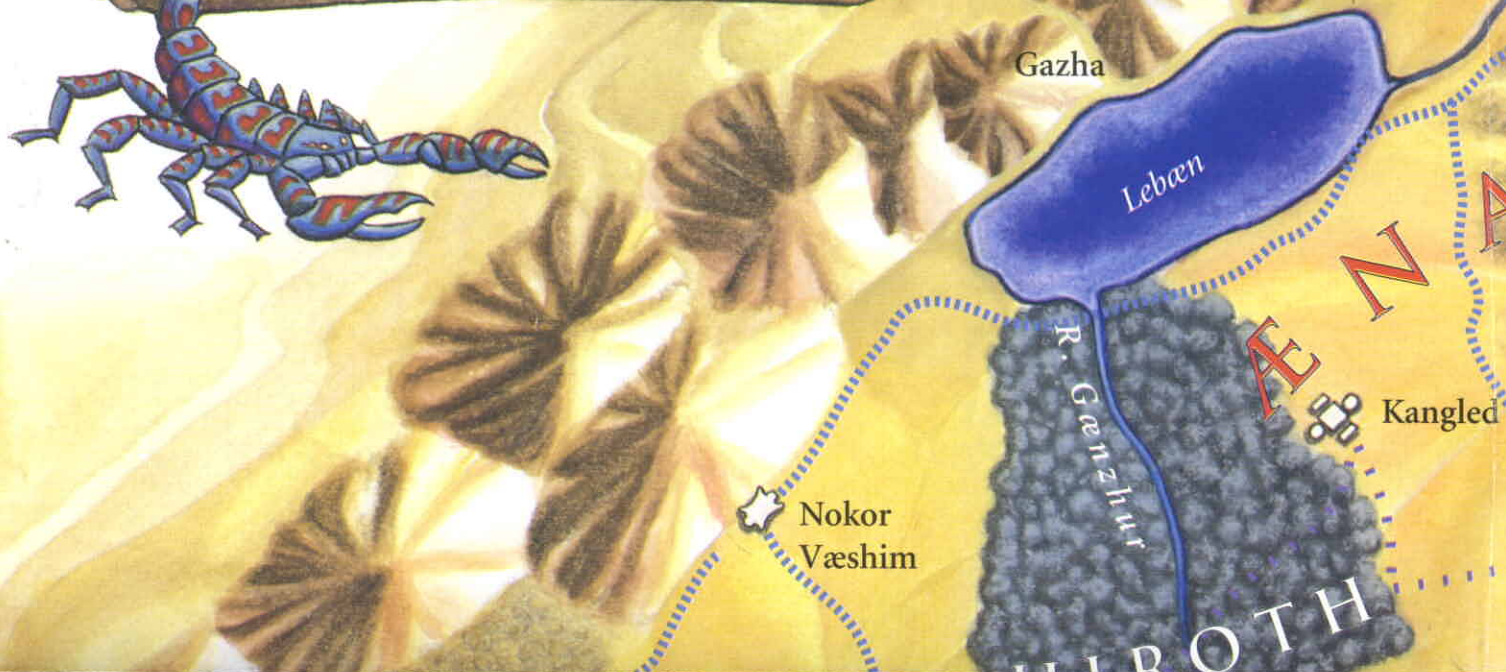
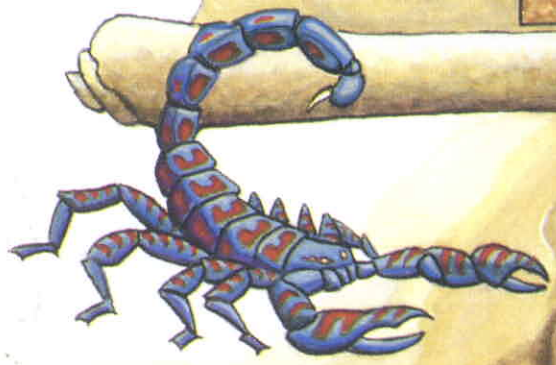
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R. Iphrætur

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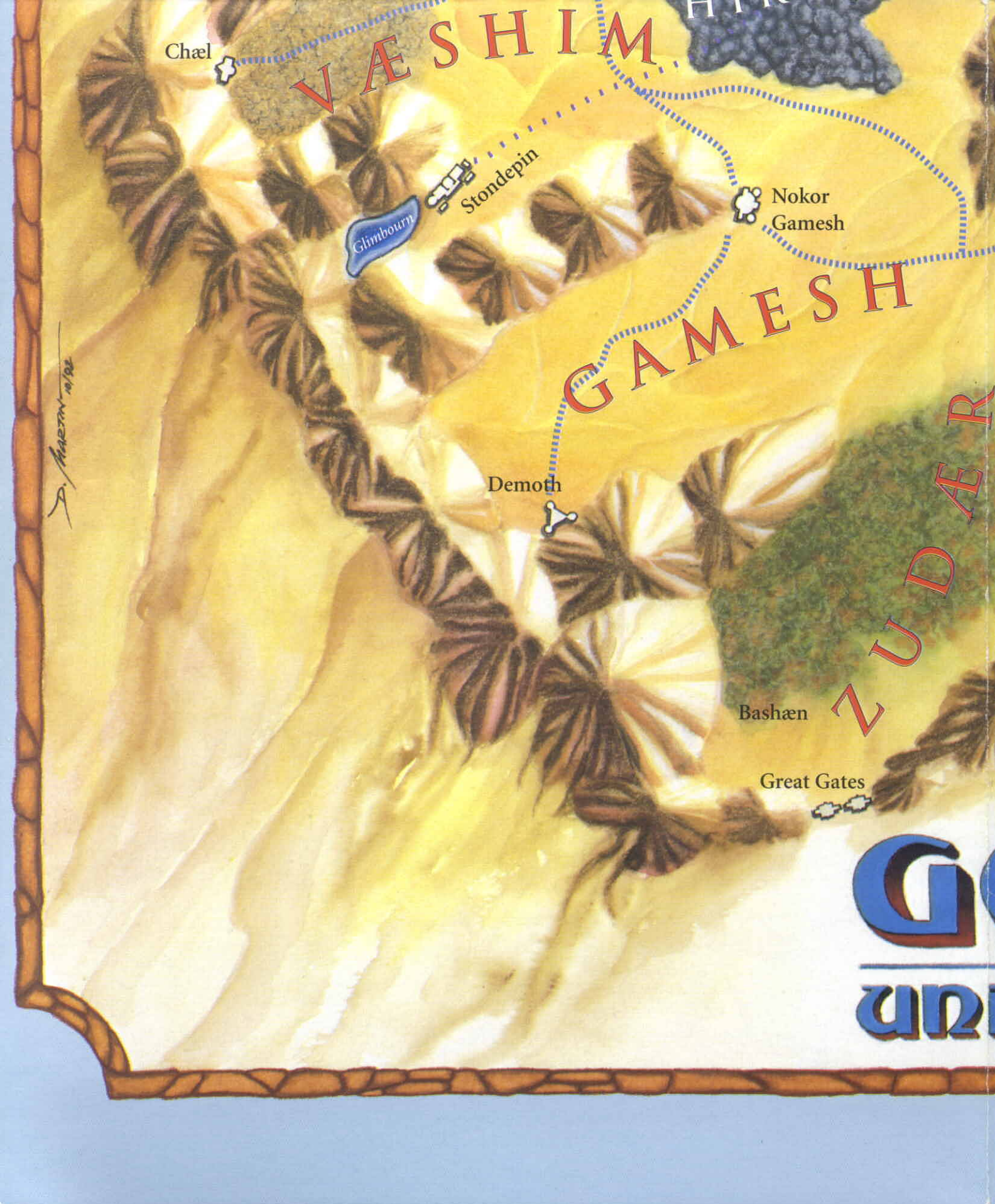
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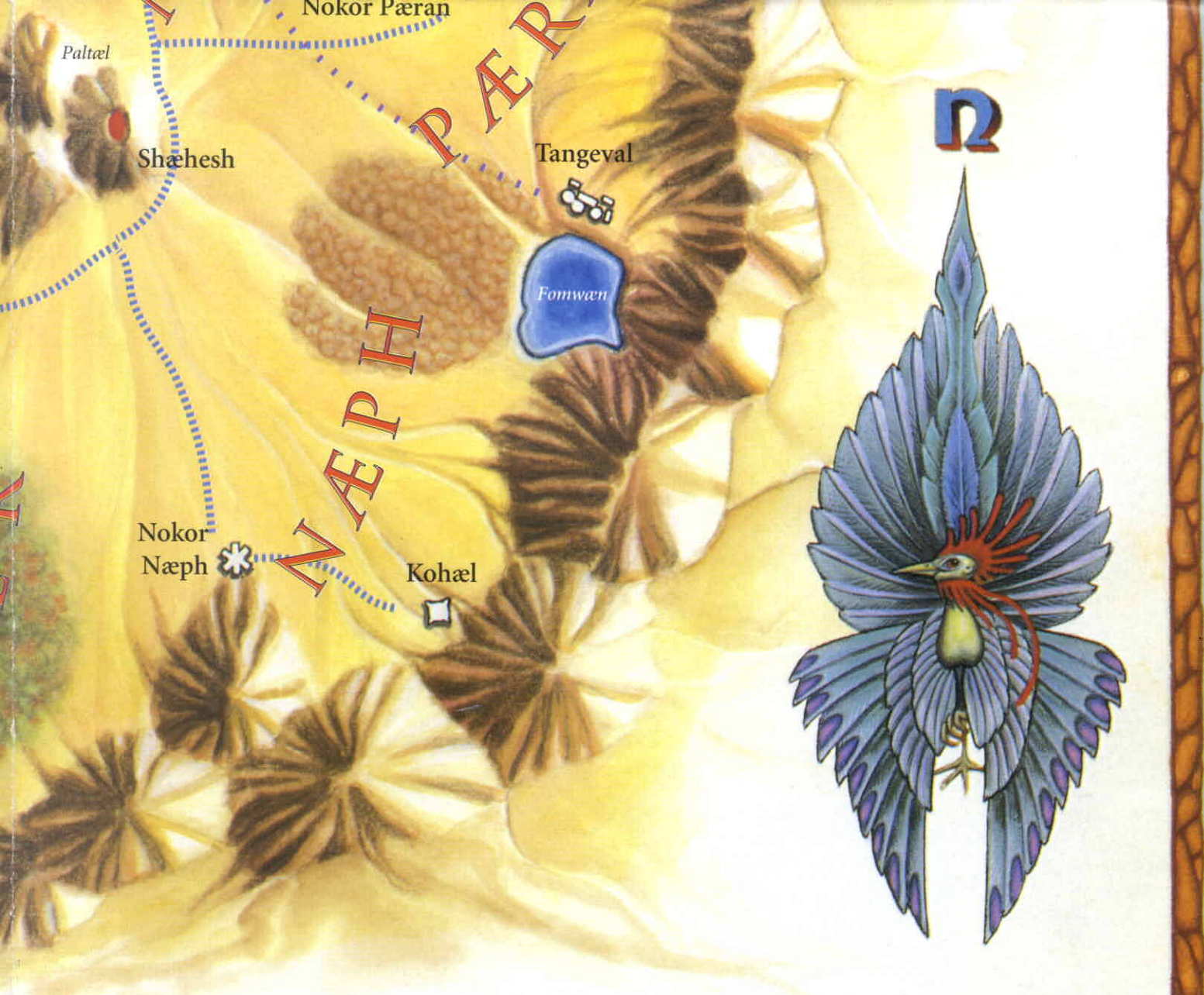
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